

INSPECTION REPORT

**STRETFORD HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY LANGUAGE
COLLEGE**

Stretford

LEA area: Trafford

Unique reference number: 106370

Headteacher: Mrs K Todd

Lead inspector: Mr J W Ashton

Dates of inspection: 19 – 22 January 2004

Inspection number: 258792

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Secondary Modern
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11 – 16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	746
School address:	Great Stone Road Stretford Manchester
Postcode:	M32 0XA
Telephone number:	0161 912 4894
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor Mrs A Jones
Date of previous inspection:	1 - 5 December 1997

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Stretford High School Community Language College is an 11 to 16 secondary modern school of below average size, with 746 pupils on roll. There are more boys than girls in every year group, 110 more overall. Seventy eight per cent of the pupils are from minority ethnic groups, predominantly of Indian and Pakistani heritage. Twenty-four pupils are at an early stage of learning English. Fifteen pupils are in public care, eight are asylum seekers or refugees and two are Traveller pupils. The socio-economic circumstances of the pupils who attend the school are disadvantaged overall. Four in every ten pupils are eligible for free school meals. There is a high level of pupil mobility. Pupils' overall attainment on entry is well below average. An above average 32 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, the most common of which are dyslexia, moderate learning and emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school is a specialist community languages college.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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20380	Neville Pinkney	Team inspector	Science
33179	Brian Beal	Team inspector	Information and communication technology
31129	Jeff Pickering	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology
32147	Ann Wallis	Team inspector	Geography
30794	Gillian Murray	Team inspector	History Citizenship
4829	Ian Waters	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
11975	Thelma McIntosh-Clark	Team inspector	Music
31192	John Stewart	Team inspector	Physical education
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OVERALL EVALUATION

Stretford High School Community Language College is a challenging school to work in, but not uniquely so. Overall test and examination results have declined over the last five years and pupils are underachieving, especially in Years 7 to 9. The attitudes and behaviour of too many pupils and too much of the teaching they receive is less than satisfactory, with a consequent limiting effect upon their learning. Senior leaders and managers, so good at pastoral care and concern for individual pupils, are failing to solve urgent whole-school problems. The effect of all of this is that the school is not providing an acceptable standard of education for its pupils and is therefore giving **poor value for money**. In accordance with section 13(7) of the School Inspections Act 1996 I am of the opinion, and HMCI agrees, that **special measures** are required in relation to this school.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses:

- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory.
- There is too much unsatisfactory and poor teaching, consequently pupils are not achieving as well as they should be and standards are not as high as they could be.
- Pupils' unsatisfactory attendance, their poor punctuality to lessons, and their unsatisfactory attitudes and behaviour are hindering their learning.
- Pupils are not taught sufficiently through the medium of information and communication technology (ICT).
- There is too high a staff turnover, which is hindering continuity of pupils' learning.
- The school's budget is severely overspent, with a consequent effect upon the quality of learning resources.
- Individual pupils are well cared for and relationships between the various cultural groups of pupils are good.
- The breadth of language provision; the provision for religious education and physical education; and that for pupils with special educational needs and for newly arrived pupils whose home language is other than English, are all good.
- Links with the local community are strong.

Improvement since the last inspection in December 1997 is **unsatisfactory** overall.

Some of the key issues identified then have been effectively tackled. For example, ICT facilities have improved. Design and technology teaching is better than it was. The collection and analysis of data have improved. Many staff have developed the expertise to interact more fully with the traditions of the cultures represented in the school. Time for religious education has increased. This said, however, overall standards of attainment have fallen, the quality of teaching and learning has worsened, attitudes, behaviour and punctuality have deteriorated, and leadership and management are less effective. In 2002, the local education authority designated the school as a **cause for concern**.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Current academic standards are **well below the national average**. Pupils' achievement is **unsatisfactory** overall. National test and GCSE results in 2003, continue their declining trend of recent years, and are **well below average**. Results at the end of Year 9 are very low compared to all schools nationally and also very low compared to similar schools. They are well below average for all schools nationally but match those of similar schools at GCSE.

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

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

Attendance rates at the school are **unsatisfactory** and punctuality to lessons is **poor**. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **unsatisfactory**. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **unsatisfactory** overall. Pupils recognise their right to be taught but too many of them are not equally aware of their responsibilities as students to allow learning to take place.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **poor**.

Teaching and learning are **poor** overall. The assessment of pupils' work is **satisfactory**. The taught curriculum is **unsatisfactory** but with some good features. Extra-curricular and enrichment provision are **satisfactory**. The school does not meet statutory requirements for the provision of ICT. The match of staffing, accommodation and resources to the needs of the curriculum is **unsatisfactory**.

The school has **satisfactory** arrangements to ensure the health and safety of pupils. Support, advice and guidance provided for pupils are **good**. There are **satisfactory** procedures in place to involve pupils in its work and development. There are **good** links with other schools and with the local community, and links with parents are **satisfactory**.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the head teacher and senior staff are **unsatisfactory**. Governance is **unsatisfactory**. Governors, this academic year, have begun to challenge the school in ways that it needs challenging. They have not done this effectively enough in recent years.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Some parents are justifiably worried about pupil behaviour and about the leadership and management of the school. Pupils like the helpfulness of their teachers and the friendliness of most other pupils, but some want the staff to be stricter and to sort out the poor behaviour of those who misbehave.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- improve standards and raise pupils' achievement throughout the school;
- improve leadership and management and governance;
- improve pupils' attitudes, behaviour, attendance and their punctuality to lessons;
- improve pupils' understanding of the teachers' right to teach and other pupils' right to learn;
- improve the quality of teaching and learning;
- eliminate the budget deficit as soon as is practicable;

and, to meet statutory requirements, ensure:

- that pupils experience a daily act of collective worship, receive their full ICT entitlement and that their ICT skills are adequate in other subjects in the curriculum;
- that the school prospectus and annual report to parents contain all that they are obliged to contain.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Current academic standards are **well below the national average**. Pupils' achievement is **unsatisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- National test results at the end of Year 9 continued in 2003 their declining trend of recent years, and were very low (in the bottom 5 per cent of all schools nationally).
- GCSE results in 2003 were well below average and have followed a declining trend over the past five years whilst results nationally have improved.
- National test results in 2003 were very low compared to those of similar schools in Year 9 but overall GCSE results matched those of similar schools in Year 11.
- Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory overall in most subjects in Years 7 to 9, but satisfactory in most subjects in Years 10 and 11, reflecting the much weaker teaching in Years 7 to 9.

Commentary

1. Results at the end of Year 9 in 2003 were well below the national average in English and mathematics and very low in science compared to all schools nationally. Compared to schools with similar prior attainment at the end of Year 6, the results for English and science were well below average and those for mathematics were very low. The trend in overall results in English and mathematics is below the national trend for the five years leading up to 2003. The trend in science results matches the national trend. Girls regularly outperform boys in English but by less than they do nationally. In mathematics and science the boys outperform the girls.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 9 – average point scores in 2003 (2002)

Standards in:	School results 2003 (2002)	National results 2003 (2002)
English	28.3 (28.4)	33.4 (33.3)
Mathematics	28.7 (29.3)	35.4 (34.7)
Science	28.2 (28.6)	33.6 (33.3)

There were 134 pupils in the year group in 2003. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The trend in GCSE results over the past five years is a downward one, against a rising trend nationally. They are average compared to schools which had similar national test results two years previously. Girls have mostly outperformed boys at GCSE in recent years but mainly by less than girls outperform boys nationally.

Standards in GCSE/GNVQ examinations at the end of Year 11 in 2003 (2002)

	School results	National results
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	22 (22)	52 (50)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	73 (79)	91 (91)
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	94 (96)	96 (96)
Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects)	24.0 (27.1)	34.7 (34.8)

There were 139 pupils in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Standards observed during the inspection are well below average throughout the school in most subjects, including in all three of the core subjects English, mathematics and science. Notable exceptions are religious education and physical education where standards are closer to average, reflecting areas of relatively strong teaching, particularly in physical education.
4. Achievement throughout Years 7 to 9, is unsatisfactory overall. Weaknesses in teaching, particularly in classroom management, are the major causes of this underachievement. In four subjects (modern foreign languages, design and technology, citizenship and religious education) achievement is satisfactory, and in two other subjects (music and physical education), achievement is good.
5. Conversely, achievement in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory overall, although barely so in some subjects. Achievement in music and citizenship is good, but achievement in geography, art and design, and ICT is unsatisfactory. In geography this is because teacher expectations and classroom routines are not sufficiently well established to keep pupils on task. In art it is because the measures taken to prevent badly behaved pupils from interfering with the learning of the majority, who clearly want to learn, are not sufficiently rigorous. The reasons for unsatisfactory pupil achievement in ICT include: non-specialist leadership and management, and a lack of clear planning, implementation or monitoring of ICT across the curriculum as a whole.
6. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory and for some in Years 10 and 11 it is good. Some good in-class support, especially in English, mathematics and science, supports their progress well. However, in the humanities subjects, geography, history and religious education there is no additional support for behaviour or literacy, which slows progress. Time is wasted when boys, in particular, misbehave or concentrate only intermittently. In Years 10 and 11, the poor attendance of some pupils slows progress but for the majority progress speeds up. Extended holidays of four to six weeks in the Indian sub-continent mean that some pupils miss significant sections of their work, and preparation for examinations is hindered. By the end of Year 11, those pupils who attend satisfactorily achieve well and gain qualifications to help them forward. Last year, 2003, almost every pupil received some accreditation. The achievement of gifted and talented pupils is satisfactory.
7. The achievement of pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) is satisfactory overall, but good for the small number given specialist support. New arrivals achieve well because they receive good support in lessons. They are well integrated into school and are highly motivated to learn. Twenty-four pupils are at the earliest stages of English, although 335 pupils have EAL needs. New arrivals, including asylum seekers, have regular access to mainstream lessons. EAL learners new to English have detailed assessment profiles so their progress can be monitored. The remaining pupils with EAL make only satisfactory progress since the specialists do not have time to train up the bulk of the teachers in school. The numbers of EAL pupils needing support has risen whilst the provision has fallen.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance rates at the school are **unsatisfactory** and punctuality to school and to lessons is **poor**. Attitudes and behaviour are **unsatisfactory**. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **unsatisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In all year groups, unsatisfactory behaviour was observed and this is a concern of a good number of parents.
- Too many pupils do not have good enough attitudes to their work and lack interest in lessons.
- Pupils are keen, interested, and punctual and work hard in some subjects, for example in music and physical education.
- Relationships between teachers and individual pupils, and between most pupils, are good. Pupils of different cultural backgrounds work and socialise together well.
- Pupils recognise their right to be taught but too many of them are not equally aware of their responsibilities as students to allow learning to take place.
- Overall attendance rates are below those achieved nationally and the attendance of pupils in Year 11 is poor. Many pupils are persistently late for school and movement between lessons is far too slow and too casual.

Commentary

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.7	School data	2.8
National data	7.2	National data	1.1

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

8. Overall attendance rates are below the national average despite the increased efforts of staff to encourage regular attendance and to follow up absence. Rates decline as pupils move through school and by Year 11, attendance in lessons is often poor. This has a negative effect on pupils' achievement. Punctuality is poor and too many pupils show a lack of urgency both arriving in school and moving between lessons. Consequently, too few lessons begin promptly and too much learning time is lost.

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	161	39	1
White – any other White background	62	10	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	28	2	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	9	10	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	184	9	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	152	9	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	13	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	63	20	3
Black or Black British – African	15	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	27	15	1
Chinese	12	1	0
Any other ethnic group	8	4	0
Parent / pupil preferred not to say	2	0	0
Information not obtained	n/a	10	0

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

9. Over half of the 75 parents who returned the completed questionnaires were concerned about behaviour in and around the school, a view which is confirmed by the pupils themselves. The number of pupils excluded from the school is moderate. The school has recognised that pupils' behaviour affects learning and it monitors instances of disruptive behaviour and bullying. Members of staff are available to support teachers when pupils' behaviour in lessons deteriorates but these measures have not been effective in bringing about sufficient improvement. Too often pupils who want to learn are prevented from doing so by the disruptive and uncooperative behaviour of other pupils. On several occasions during inspection, pupils deliberately set out to disrupt lessons. Conduct in corridors and around school is also unsatisfactory, with examples of lack of respect and of inconsiderate and noisy behaviour from pupils in all year groups.
10. Most parents who expressed a view feel that teachers expect pupils to work hard and pupils generally agree with this view. Many pupils are keen and interested, working well with each other and listening well to their teachers. In some lessons, pupils' attitudes are good and pupils work hard, especially in physical education and music. However, the attitudes to learning of a significant minority of pupils, particularly in Years 8 and 9 are unsatisfactory and this has a negative impact on progress made in lessons. There is too often a lack of interest and many pupils are inattentive and disregard their teachers. In too many lessons teachers accept noise levels which hinder the learning of others.
11. Staff work hard to promote good relationships in school and pupils report that they mostly get on well with their teachers who, in turn, treat pupils with respect. Instances of racial intolerance are rare.

12. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is unsatisfactory. There are strengths in some areas of the curriculum, which reflect some improvement since the last inspection. Pupils work well together when given opportunities to do so. In music, pupils become aware of the spiritual nature of music. In religious education, they are encouraged to contribute sensitively from their own faith backgrounds. Although the school does not provide a daily act of Collective Worship for all pupils, there is a notable spiritual content to some assemblies. For example, in a Year 10 assembly, pupils listened with interest to the teacher talking about the origins of 'Swing Low Sweet Chariot' and linking this to personal struggles against adversity. Pupils are encouraged to explore and reflect on their own and other cultures. In English, pupils study poetry from other cultures in Years 7 to 11. In music, pupils develop a regard for their own musicianship as well as celebrating music from different cultures. In modern foreign languages, pupils celebrate the international dimension of languages. Through events like Black History Week and International Days, the school seeks to express the richness of the cultural backgrounds of the pupils. There are, however, notable and significant weaknesses. The unsatisfactory behaviour of substantial groups of pupils indicates a lack of self-awareness on the part of these pupils, who deliberately set out to disrupt lessons and consequently disrupt the learning of the pupils who do want to learn and make progress. This is obvious too, in lessons where teachers have to teach above an unacceptable noise level because pupils are inattentive and lack a serious intent to learn. Pupils do understand moral concepts. What is lacking is the impact of this understanding on their day-to-day approach to being in school. Pupils recognise their right to be taught but too many of them are not equally aware of their responsibilities as students to allow learning to take place.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **poor**.

Teaching and learning are **poor** overall, especially in Years 7 to 9.

The assessment of pupils' work is **satisfactory**.

The taught curriculum is **unsatisfactory** but with some good features.

The school does not meet statutory requirements for the provision of ICT.

Extra-curricular and enrichment provision are **satisfactory**.

The match of staffing, accommodation and resources to the needs of the curriculum is **unsatisfactory**.

The school has **satisfactory** arrangements to ensure the health and safety of pupils.

Support, advice and guidance provided for pupils are **good**.

There are **satisfactory** procedures in place to involve pupils in its work and development.

The school's partnership with parents is **satisfactory** and its links with other schools and colleges are **good**.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are both **poor** overall. They are **unsatisfactory** in Years 10 and 11 and **poor** in Years 7 to 9. The assessment of pupils' work is **satisfactory** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Too much teaching and learning is unsatisfactory or worse and too little is good or better, especially in Years 7 to 9.
- Pupils' disruptive behaviour is allowed to hinder learning in a significant proportion of lessons.
- The quality of teaching and learning is consistently at least satisfactory in citizenship, design and technology, modern foreign languages, business studies and physical education.
- Small groups of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) are very effectively taught and new arrivals whose home language is other than English receive good support in lessons, which enables their learning to be good.

- There are isolated examples of very good teaching in mathematics, citizenship, business studies, drama, religious education, and especially, in physical education. Some excellent teaching was seen in music.
- The assessment of pupils' work in order to improve achievement is good in science, design and technology and business studies, but unsatisfactory in, ICT, geography, history, music and Urdu.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 117 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (1%)	8 (7%)	31 (25%)	55 (47%)	18 (16%)	4 (4%)	0 (0%)

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

13. The quality of teaching is poor overall. It was judged unsatisfactory or worse in one lesson in five.
14. The quality of learning is also poor overall. It was judged unsatisfactory or worse in one lesson in four.
15. In Years 7 to 9, teaching is poor overall. It is unsatisfactory, sometimes poor, in almost one lesson in every four in this age group. It is good overall in physical education, but unsatisfactory in English, mathematics, geography, history, art and design, and satisfactory in the other subjects. Learning is unsatisfactory in one lesson in three and a half, which is worse than the teaching at this key stage.
16. In Years 10 and 11, the situation is less serious but still unsatisfactory. Teaching is unsatisfactory, occasionally poor, in one in lesson in every eight. It is good overall in physical education, unsatisfactory in ICT, geography, art and design, and satisfactory in the other subjects. Learning is unsatisfactory in one lesson in every five, which is again worse than the teaching.
17. At the time of the previous inspection, in 1997, teaching was judged never less than satisfactory in most subjects, often good and sometimes very good. A local education authority review, however, judged the school in 2001/2002 to be a cause for concern for, amongst other things, the quality of its teaching and the management of its pupils.
18. There has been a larger than average turnover of teachers in the last two or three years, but that cause for concern is still in evidence. Parents at the meeting with inspectors claimed that some teachers in the school are not skilled enough to control the unruly behaviour of some of the pupils. This was borne out by the inspection. Much of the unsatisfactory and poor teaching and learning was seen to be the result of deliberately disruptive behaviour by a significant minority of pupils. This explains why, in a number of lessons, the teaching was judged better than the learning. Teachers were well prepared and had good command of their subjects, but were battling uphill against pupils' poor punctuality to their lessons and their poor attitudes once they did arrive. In too many of these and other lessons, where it was not just the attitude of pupils which was at fault, a satisfactory climate for learning was never achieved. Too often teachers settled for talking across the constant background of chatter. Teacher absence last year was as high as that of the pupils, a measure of the stress that many of them are under, and a cause of a further difficulty, the need to employ a large number of supply teaching. The result of poor pupil attitudes, and weaker or temporary teaching, is poor learning in which pupils' productivity is too low, their involvement in their own learning is unsatisfactory, and their gains in knowledge, skills or understanding are weak. Weaknesses

in leadership and management are to blame for much of this. The reasons for this are explained in more detail in the leadership and management section of the report.

19. Despite all of the school's undoubted challenges, some successful teaching, even some excellent teaching, does take place, though less than is usual elsewhere, and some teachers are noticeably more effective than other teachers with the same groups of pupils.
20. This more successful teaching in physical education is very well planned, with clear objectives and progressive, challenging tasks; expectations are high and relationships are very good; instructions and explanations are clear and, as a result, pupils listen and concentrate.
21. In business studies, the teaching is vigorous and well planned; again with clear learning objectives that are shared with pupils, and starter activities which effectively consolidate prior learning before the lesson moves rapidly forward as pupils increase the depth of their knowledge and understanding of topics. Challenging resources, together with a very good input from two support assistants, enables all pupils, including those at an early stage of learning English and those with special needs, to learn and achieve to their capacity. Basic skills of classroom management and relationships are exceptional and create warmth in which learning is productive and fun.
22. In music, the teacher's long-term objectives are also clear, and expectations are high. As a result, many pupils, in spite of their tendency to lose concentration, believe in their capacity to succeed.
23. In design and technology, teachers are organised, have good subject knowledge, generate enthusiasm and good attitudes in their pupils with an unambiguous explanation of what they are expected to learn and the methods they are to use. The end of lessons allow some review of learning. The work is designed to allow the highest and lowest attainers to work at their own pace and to allow pupils to learn from each other or for themselves.
24. Some very effective teaching of small groups of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) raises their standards of literacy and numeracy. The school's established teaching assistants are very effective in supporting pupils to keep pace with the regular curriculum. The pattern of external support is complex. Some is devoted to the learning support of small groups and the teachers do not interact sufficiently with the whole staff. The external support of pupils with sensory problems such as hearing impairment is good. However, the recently established behaviour support service is not yet effective, as the assistants are untrained and have few strategies to help pupils to modify and control their behaviour. Some of these assistants have proved transitory so that the school SEN manager has to spend too much time inducting new personnel repeatedly.
25. In many subjects, tasks are modified to ensure that pupils of all levels of capability are challenged effectively so that pupils can progress satisfactorily. The very good policy for gifted and talented pupils has not yet been fully adopted by governors but a register is in place and some training of teachers has occurred. In some lessons, detailed planning ensures that the sequence of activities extends the challenge and, with the help of ICT, pupils can progress at a good rate, as in a Year 10 lesson on euthanasia where pupils were led to grapple with very deep questions. The school is at an early stage of implementation of its work with gifted and talented pupils but the very knowledgeable and energetic coordinator is driving work forward. In several lessons the high expectations of teachers lifted the ceiling of attainment so that all who could aspired to better learning.
26. The teaching of pupils whose home language is other than English (EAL learners) is well prepared for mainstream support and induction classes but there is insufficient collaborative planning with mainstream teachers. Bilingual support in lessons is good, especially when it

draws on pupils' home language. New arrivals receive good support in lessons which enables their learning to be good, but other EAL learners in the same lessons remain unsupported. The detailed profiles on new arrivals give teachers useful information for planning next steps. Where support staff do not have access to lesson activities in advance, support is less structured and relies on staff thinking on their feet.

Assessment

27. The assessment of pupils' work in order to improve achievement is satisfactory overall. It is good in science, design and technology and business studies, but unsatisfactory in ICT, geography, history, music and Urdu. The school has sought to improve the consistency of assessment practice through in-service training and by monitoring the work of departments. Work is marked regularly and graded for attainment and effort using the school system, which is well understood by the pupils. Teachers write supportive comment on pupils' work, but in many subjects there is insufficient guidance about how pupils can improve it. Much work has been done on developing computerised records of attainment information. Targets are agreed with pupils annually across the curriculum, and performance is checked against the agreed targets. In some departments, judgements about current attainment are not sufficiently based on clear evidence against agreed criteria such as the National Curriculum. This limits the value of the system for demonstrating that individual pupils are making appropriate progress, although effective use of assessment data is made in some subjects for setting and planning work.

The curriculum

The taught curriculum is **unsatisfactory** but with some good features. Extra-curricular and enrichment provision are **satisfactory**. The school does not meet statutory requirements for the provision of ICT. The match of staffing, accommodation and resources to the needs of the curriculum is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- There is good provision for new arrivals whose home language is other than English.
- The range of languages offered is good.
- Provision for ICT does not meet statutory requirements for pupils in Years 7 to 11.
- The high turnover of staff has a detrimental effect upon continuity of learning, and there are shortages of learning resources due to the budget deficit.

Commentary

28. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 have an unsatisfactory curriculum overall because statutory requirements for the provision of ICT for pupils are not met. The curriculum provides satisfactorily for boys and girls of all abilities and well for those with special educational needs. The school responds appropriately to the needs of all pupils. For example, in science there are separate groups for some boys and girls which appear to be contributing to raising attainment. A good range of European and community languages is offered to pupils, which enriches the curriculum. An appropriate range of curriculum options is offered to pupils aged 14-16, including vocational courses in applied business studies and in leisure and tourism. The provision of vocational education is an area of the curriculum which the school wishes to develop further. This would broaden the experience of the pupils.
29. Personal development is promoted satisfactorily through the individual development course which includes citizenship, sex, health and careers education. This programme has been well planned but recent staff changes have had an adverse effect on its teaching in Years 8 and 9. Satisfactory careers advice is offered to pupils as they pass through the school.

30. The rising number of pupils who enter the school with special educational needs is both a tribute to the success of the school's provision and a threat to inclusion as the balance of pupils with special needs threatens to outweigh the full range of demand. Over the years a good bank of resources has been built up overall but staffing is stretched. The two specialist rooms organised for inclusion are bright and stimulating. They encourage achievement and promote pupils' self-esteem.
31. In Years 7 to 9, provision for special educational needs is aimed mostly at improving pupils' literacy and numeracy and its implementation is very effective. The computer-integrated learning programme is used successfully to boost literacy and numeracy skills. However, most computers are coming to the end of a useful life although teachers still battle to help pupils make the best use of them.
32. In Years 10 and 11, curriculum provision is flexible and closely matched to individual need. Suitable courses in English and mathematics build on work done earlier. Vocational courses, including travel and tourism and ICT key skills, take pupils forward. Effective partnerships with colleges enable some pupils to do work-related courses. From time-to-time a pupil is best served by a college in Manchester which prepares pupils for personal independence. At the time of the inspection, one pupil was benefiting greatly from these arrangements. A small number of pupils have part-time curricula, with college links and work at home and in school.
33. There is good provision for new arrivals, including asylum seekers, whose home language is other than English. Much of the head of department's timetable is taken up with a small number of pupils new to English. This leads to a large number of induction lessons, fewer in-class support lessons and few opportunities to work developmentally with departments.
34. There is an excellent dedicated resource room for English as an additional language (EAL) where teachers can provide a good induction programme for new arrivals. The good quality of the provision is threatened, however, since the department has been reduced in size whilst EAL needs have continued to increase.
35. Provision for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities is satisfactory overall. There are booster classes and extra lessons in Years 10 and 11 in English, which also make use of visiting poets. The mathematics department has booster classes and an Easter school. The library is well used before school for research and homework. Clubs and team fixtures provide talented pupils with good opportunities in physical education. The school has rearranged the timetable to offer a good, and improving, range of voluntary extra-curricular activities on Friday afternoons. At the moment, only about a third of the school participate in the activities, which are externally provided.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

36. The match of teachers to the demands of the curriculum is unsatisfactory, though variable between departments. Most subjects have qualified specialists but in some departments, such as in geography and history, teachers are not teaching within their specialism. The challenging nature of the school has led to a very high turnover of staff in the past three years. Six of these staff are known to have left because they were unhappy with the school. This instability of staffing and the consequent use of many supply teachers have had a detrimental effect on achievement and behaviour.
37. Arrangements for performance management are good and well used to identify staff development needs. Some in-house training is provided, such as ICT skills, and shared lesson observations to disseminate good practice. The school also provides training for staff from other schools in areas such as anti-racism policies and the training of primary teachers in language teaching. Several successful residential weekends have been held on issues such

as data analysis, pastoral care and teaching and learning development. However, the effectiveness of all this training is doubtful since recent staff turnover rates have been very high, the quality of teaching and learning has not shown any marked improvement, and behaviour management strategies are not wholly effective.

38. Induction programmes for newly qualified teachers and those new to the school are good and effective. The school has good relations with Manchester Metropolitan University and provides placements for approximately a dozen initial teacher training students each year.
39. Accommodation is satisfactory overall. The two, newer, blocks used for English, mathematics and design and technology provide good learning environments. A dedicated room for pupils with special educational needs is of a very good quality. Indoor accommodation for physical education is unsatisfactory. Vandalism causes problems in the toilets and on-going replacement of broken windows drains the school's budget. The newly refurbished library is well used.
40. Resources for learning are unsatisfactory overall. The library has a satisfactory range of books but more are needed. The ratio of computers to pupils is above the national average but some machines badly need replacing, and access to computers is too limited in some subjects. Science, music, art, physical education and mathematics are all short of resources in key areas. For instance, pupils studying for GCSE in music are disadvantaged because of a lack of audio and recording equipment, there are limited three-dimensional resources in art and a lack of reference books. Science is without essential data logging equipment.

Care, guidance and support

The school has **satisfactory** arrangements to ensure the health and safety of pupils. Support, advice and guidance provided for pupils are **good**. There are **satisfactory** procedures in place to involve pupils in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a good level of personal support, with significant numbers of experienced staff employed to provide pastoral care.
- Relationships between staff and individual pupils are good.
- The disrepair of pupil toilets and the lack of adequate washing facilities constitute a health and safety hazard.

Commentary

41. This is a school in which staff genuinely care about pupils and are concerned about their welfare. There is a great awareness of pupils' personal circumstances and great emphasis has been placed on pupils' pastoral support. Changes to the school's systems for supporting pupils' care include the appointment of senior non-teaching staff who are available to respond quickly when help is required. The Pastoral Manager and Year Managers are experienced and have the necessary expertise to fulfil their roles well. They meet daily to discuss any issues, liaise well with teaching staff, with outside agencies and with parents. Pupils report that they are confident to approach staff if they have any worries. Pastoral staff are also involved well in the monitoring of behaviour and attendance. Teaching staff and senior managers also play a large part in the personal support of pupils. Parents agree that the school helps pupils to settle in well.
42. The school has good arrangements in place to ensure that child protection procedures are in place. Risk assessments have been complied with and safe practices are observed in lessons. However a concern raised by parents and pupils about the poor state of pupils'

toilets is justified. Although some were refurbished a few months ago, they have been vandalised and are unhygienic. Doors and toilet seats are missing. The misuse by a few pupils has led to the withdrawal of paper, soap and hand-drying facilities. This constitutes a health hazard and should be addressed by the school as a matter of urgency.

43. The school has adequate arrangements in place to canvas the views of pupils. Surveys have been carried out by the pastoral team and the results are being acted upon. This includes the 'zoning' of the school to provide younger pupils with a dedicated area at lunchtime and a quiet area within this zone. The school council provides a forum for pupils to express their views and has representatives from each year group, although this does not have a high profile in the school and some pupils are not aware of the identity of their representatives. Appropriate advice is provided for pupils when making choices about courses and careers and the school has arrangements in place to organise suitable work experience placements.
44. The requirements of the special educational needs Code of Practice are met well through pupils' individual education plans (IEPs). The school's IEP model helps subject teachers to tailor work closely to pupils' needs. Other very careful plans are made for those pupils who participate in the Inclusive Curriculum, which is alternative provision in which learning programmes are geared to match pupils' needs precisely and their progress is monitored well. Pupils are well supported, for example, through anger management courses.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

There are **good** links with other schools and with the local community, and links with parents are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although many parents are happy with most aspects of the school's work, some parents have significant concerns about behaviour in school and about the school's leadership and management.
- Information provided for parents in the governors' report and prospectus is incomplete.
- The school has good links with local primary schools, especially in modern languages and physical education.
- It provides a good range of language classes for members of the community.
- Links with local businesses are good.
- Target evenings for parents of pupils across the school are well attended.

Commentary

45. The school has satisfactory arrangements in place to keep parents informed about the work of the school and about their children's progress. Most parents who expressed a view feel that staff are approachable. Communication with parents has improved with the recent introduction of year managers who have taken over much of the liaison between home and school. They follow up concerns of parents as well as issues involving attendance and behaviour. There are an adequate number of consultation evenings, supplemented by additional, well-attended meetings for parents of, for instance, Year 7 pupils to set targets for pupils.
46. Many parents are supportive of the school and feel that it is working well. However, a number of parents have concerns about the behaviour of pupils, bullying and the leadership and management of the school. Inspectors found some of these concerns to be justified, although the school reacts effectively when instances of bullying are reported.

47. Information about the school is unsatisfactory since both the prospectus and governors' annual report to parents have some significant omissions, including national comparisons for examination results. There is no information on special needs provision in the prospectus and the governors' report fails to include any details on the provision for pupils with disabilities. There are other minor omissions. In this respect the school does not comply with legal requirements.
48. The school's status as a language college has raised its profile in the community and the school provides tuition in several languages in the Saturday Community School. In addition, work in partner primary schools supporting the development of modern foreign languages is very successful, appreciated by the primary schools involved and is reported by them to be having a very positive impact on pupils' learning. The physical education department is also very successful in developing very positive links with a local primary school. The school enjoys good links with local businesses which provide expertise and support both in the curriculum and in the management of the school.
49. Many parents liaise closely with the school and are keen to help. Currently a six week course on behaviour management designed for pupils is also attended by a small number of parents who hope to volunteer to help in school when they have completed the course.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the head teacher and senior staff are **unsatisfactory**. Governance is **unsatisfactory**. Governors this academic year have begun to challenge the school in ways that it needs challenging. They have not done this effectively enough in recent years.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- **The leadership** is very good at pastoral care and concern for individual pupils, but ineffective in ensuring that pupils as a whole achieve well enough in their education.
- **Some governors** are less aware than they ought to be of the school's strengths, and especially of its weaknesses. They are only recently beginning to challenge the school's senior leadership as much as it needs challenging.
- **Management** is not effective enough in ensuring that pupils' attitudes and behaviour and the quality of teaching and learning are as good as they should be.

Commentary

50. **Leadership and management are unsatisfactory**, although the departments of design and technology, physical education, business education, religious education and music are all well led. There is clear emphasis by senior leadership upon the caring role for individual pupils but insufficient concentration upon improving teaching, learning, achievement, behaviour, punctuality and the attainment of the student body as a whole. There is no clear overall leadership. Too much time and energy are spent by senior staff in blaming others for the school's declining standards rather than ensuring that the undoubted hard work and dedication of the rest of the staff are focused on where it would have the most effect on morale. This would be in tightening up pupils' standards of behaviour, improving their punctuality to lessons and raising their achievement inside the classrooms.
51. There are good features in some areas of the school. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils whose home language is not English are both well coordinated. Individual pastoral care is well managed. Performance management arrangements for staff are well managed and used to identify training needs. All heads of department are trained in lesson observation skills. The arrangements for the induction of

new staff, particularly newly qualified teachers are good. This said, however, the impact of much of this is ineffective across the school as a whole. Weak senior leadership and management are the main cause of the problem.

52. Senior staff are having to spend too much time patrolling the corridors and encouraging pupils along to their lessons. Too little time and effort are devoted to solving the root cause of this unpunctuality, the lack of any effective sanction or deterrent for the lateness. Too little effort also goes into solving the problems within the classrooms. The strategies used so far are ineffective, exacerbated by an excessively large turnover of staff and subsequent lack of continuity. The quality of teaching suffers from an over-reliance on a particular style of behaviour management which is not successful enough. Added to this is an under-expectation by the school's senior leadership of what pupils in this secondary modern school can achieve. The pupils are seen as particularly 'special' and the school's senior managers believe that there are only two other schools, both in the south east, with comparable difficulties. The pupils are believed to see themselves as failures because they did not succeed in a selective system. They are held to be suffering multiple deprivation because, as well as having low levels of self-esteem, they have special educational needs; or they live in areas of high social and economic deprivation; or for them, English is an additional language. What is not given a large enough priority in the management of the school is the use of more in-class support and more effective deployment of that support. What does not happen often enough is that those senior managers with relatively light timetables actively back up their colleagues in the classrooms. Resources have instead been targeted at the support for individual pupils which is, as a result, a strength of the school. Above all, what is lacking is that leadership from the front which enthuses staff and pupils into believing that they can succeed despite the difficulties that many of them face.
53. **Governance is unsatisfactory.** Some governors are not sufficiently aware of the school's weaknesses and have too positive a view of its strengths. They accept too readily and without questioning sufficiently, what they are told by the school's senior leadership. For example, some governors appear to be unaware why the school is still on the local educational authority's 'cause for concern' list. Governors believe that they are taking firm action to monitor and control spending since discovering that the school overspent its budget by a very substantial amount. But some governors were not aware, until the feedback from inspectors, that full time non-teaching consultancy was being employed this term to strengthen the school's senior management. The governing body is failing to ensure that pupils receive their full entitlement to ICT and this is hindering achievement in some curriculum areas. The school prospectus and governors' report to parents do not meet fully the legal requirements to include all that they should. Pupils do not experience a daily act of collective worship.
54. Financial restrictions are now in place over a five-year period, which are designed to clear the large budget deficit caused by previous financial mismanagement. The consequent limits on the replacement of learning resources and staff are adversely affecting standards and the quality of learning.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	2,797,623
Total expenditure	2,804,379
Expenditure per pupil	3,719

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	-179,517
Balance carried forward to the next	-165,324

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

As befits a specialist languages college, the school offers a wider than average range of modern foreign languages. The two main languages (French and Spanish) taught across the school were inspected in depth, and the two main community languages (Urdu and Punjabi) taught in Years 10 and 11 were also inspected. Other languages, taught only in the Saturday morning sessions, were not inspected.

English

Provision in English is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well below average in Year 9 and Year 11.
- Results in GCSE English Literature, while still well below average, improved significantly in 2003 compared to 2002.
- Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall. There are too many unsatisfactory lessons and pupils are not making enough progress.
- Poor attendance and unsatisfactory attitudes to learning by significant groups of pupils are serious barriers to improving learning.
- There are notable strengths in the English department, which include a determination to raise standards.

Standards and achievement

55. English Language GCSE results in the 2003 examinations were well below average, similar to those in 2002. In English Literature the results at grades A*-C were very much improved from those of 2002. Girls outperformed boys. Results in Year 9 are well below average and have been so for the last two years. Girls outperformed boys in Year 9 but by less than they do nationally.
56. Current standards are well below average in Year 9 and in Year 11. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory in Years 7 to 9 but is satisfactory in Years 10 and 11 in the sense of pupils being sufficiently challenged. Achievement in Year 10 is better than in Year 11. Pupils enter the school with well below average levels of attainment and a large proportion of pupils have various learning difficulties. Those who are recognised as having special educational needs or have English as an additional language support, achieve well because they are taught as separate groups and well supported. There are other pupils in Years 7 to 9 who have a basic fluency in language but who are taught in the normal classes, sometimes without additional support, and these pupils struggle. Speaking skills are satisfactory but listening skills are poor. Reading skills are adequate by Year 9. Writing skills are improving because the English department has made this a priority and, by Year 11, pupils are capable of producing some lively and original writing.

Teaching and learning

57. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall, although satisfactory in Years 10 and 11. There were some good lessons and some satisfactory ones but there were too many unsatisfactory lessons and pupils were not learning as well as they should. All the

unsatisfactory lessons were in Years 7 to 9. Teachers are working hard to raise standards and are striving to establish a culture of learning in lessons. However, a significant number of boys and girls in Years 7 to 9 and some in Year 11 are not interested in learning. Their attitudes and behaviour prevent others from making progress because teachers have to spend too long managing such behaviour. This limits what can be achieved. Poor attendance and punctuality to lessons also affect overall achievement.

58. Despite these weaknesses there are some notable teaching strengths. Teachers know their subject well and the approach to teaching English is consistent across the department. Lesson planning is good and the structured lessons, backed up by good learning materials are beginning to raise standards. For example, the marks gained by pupils in the writing component of the Year 9 tests is improving.

Leadership and management

59. Leadership and management are satisfactory. After a period of staffing difficulties the English department is now almost fully staffed although there are too many shared lessons. The head of department has a clear and determined vision for the subject and staff work well together. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. There is now a more coherent scheme of work backed up by a good range of texts. Satisfactory marking and assessment strategies are in place and there are opportunities for pupils to assess their own work. Despite the difficulties caused by poor attitudes to learning and poor attendance this is a department with the potential and the will to raise standards.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

60. The school has promoted literacy development by sharing responsibility for the initiative through various heads of department and others in the Key Stage 3 Strategy Group. The published Action Plans show the school is keen to extend the strategy and to see it embedded in all subjects. The main thrust for literacy now is through English. The local education authority's literacy advisor is working closely with the English department to good effect. While other subject areas are said to be aware of literacy initiatives, the reality is that it is satisfactory at best, with a number of departments making little contribution to pupils' literacy development.
61. Departments are aware of the importance of literacy but this is not evident in practice in some areas. Literacy development is good in English, where the carefully structured lessons are geared to improving vocabulary and reading and writing skills. In most subjects there is stress on pupils learning the key words of the subject. In a few subjects the opportunities for extended writing are very limited. For example, in history there is not enough writing, particularly extended writing. In art, the amount of annotation is less than usually seen and spelling mistakes are not corrected. In information and communication technology (ICT), word processing is used at a very low level and pupils' writing shows little sense of audience or purpose. In geography, opportunities for developing literacy are missed. Standards of writing in pupils' homework in English as an additional language are generally good, except in Year 11, where pupils' attitudes are careless and dismissive.

Modern foreign languages (French and Spanish)

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum offers a good range of European and community languages.
- Pupils' speaking skills in Years 7 to 9 are weak.
- There have been significant improvements since the previous inspection.
- Teachers use ICT effectively to motivate pupils.

Standards and achievement

62. Results in the GCSE examinations in 2003 in French at grades A*-C and A*-G were below average. Girls performed better than boys, with the difference being marginally greater than that seen nationally. These results show a decline from 2002.
63. Current standards in French and Spanish are below average. Achievement of those pupils who attend school regularly is satisfactory. Over time, pupils acquire a sound knowledge of topic vocabulary and relevant constructions, which they use for different tasks, for example, in matching-up or listening exercises. The department has worked hard to improve pupils' standard of writing, and most pupils write at an appropriate level with a reasonable degree of accuracy. By Year 9, for example, many pupils are acquainted with past tenses, and higher-attaining pupils write about future events. In the Year 11 coursework, pupils display a good knowledge of topic vocabulary, combined with different tenses: higher-attaining pupils are more consistently accurate than other pupils. Listening skills are developing, but pupils' speaking skills in Years 7 to 9 are weak. They lack confidence and are given too few opportunities to speak.
64. Pupils with special educational needs are well provided for, and support assistants work effectively with them. Pupils make progress similar to their peers. Gifted and talented pupils and pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.

Teaching and learning

65. Teaching and learning in French and Spanish are satisfactory. Most teachers teach both languages and know their subjects well. Most lessons begin with a starter activity and pupils are told what they are to learn. Teachers make good use of resources. ICT is used effectively to motivate pupils. Pupils with special educational needs responded well to the electronic whiteboard in a Year 8 Spanish lesson. Teachers manage pupils well, and they generally have a good relationship with them. The attitudes of some pupils, mainly boys, impede the learning process at times. Lesson planning does not always ensure that all pupils are sufficiently engaged, particularly in oral work in Years 7 to 9. Opportunities for pupils to read aloud are missed. Some pupils' unpunctuality to lessons – often by five minutes or more – adversely affects teachers' planning. The foreign language is not used consistently across the department to challenge pupils. Pupils' written work is marked regularly; targets are set and helpful comments appended.

Leadership and management

66. The leadership and management of the department are satisfactory. The curriculum has been enriched: Spanish has been introduced and most pupils study two languages from Year 8. Spanish as an option in Year 10 is in its first year and as yet no pupil studies both French and Spanish. Pupils also have the opportunity to study community languages in Year 10.
67. Improvement since the previous inspection has been significant. The school is now a Specialist Language College. Resources have improved; the department now has its own ICT suite. The director of the language college and the primary languages co-ordinator provide good leadership and management. Together with the head of department, they make an effective team. The school has established very good links with local businesses, several of which have acted as sponsors, and with local primary schools and a special school. Teachers' commitment and hard work are valued. The Saturday community school, open to pupils and parents alike, provides a wide range of European and community languages and has proved very popular.

Community languages (Urdu and Punjabi)

Provision in community languages is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have very good subject knowledge which provides excellent models for pupils.
- The subjects are well resourced including the provision of bilingual support in Urdu which has led to higher standards in lessons.
- Teaching and learning in Punjabi are good.
- Examination results are low as a result of pupils' limited skills in reading and writing.
- There is no scheme of work in place for community languages.

Standards and achievement

68. GCSE results for community languages were below national averages in 2003 and had fallen compared to 2002. The minority of girls taking Urdu performed better than boys overall. There are no examination results for Punjabi at present.
69. Urdu and Punjabi are offered from Year 10 onwards. By the end of Year 11, pupils' skills especially in reading and writing are well below average, although their listening and understanding are good. Pupils taught in large classes do not have opportunities to engage in extended conversation or role-play. Low levels of literacy impede achievement although pupils have developed greater confidence in listening. They listen to authentic speech and understand most of what is said. The behaviour and attitude of boys, especially lower attainers, disrupts their learning and that of others.

Teaching and learning

70. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. They are good in Punjabi and satisfactory in Urdu. Teachers have a very good knowledge of their subject. Their pronunciation provides an excellent model for pupils. Teachers plan lessons and use resources well, including the provision of a bilingual assistant in Urdu. Teachers have enthusiasm for their language. They use authentic speech to challenge pupils' listening skills. Teachers provide for pupils' different levels of attainment in writing. There are insufficient speaking opportunities in lessons. Pupils do not use ICT in lessons. Too much time is spent on whole class activities. Assessment does not give pupils an indication of how well they are doing or what their next steps should be. Homework is set inconsistently. Attitudes to learning are unsatisfactory especially among lower-attaining boys in Year 11, who also take less care in the presentation of their written work.

Leadership and management

71. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The head of department has a clear sense of priorities and direction required. There are good links with the Saturday community school. Pupils who wish to take other languages at GCSE can do so. The resources for community languages are good, including bilingual support in Urdu. ICT is underused, however. Unqualified staff in the department are receiving support to achieve qualified teacher status. Community languages are open to all who wish to study but this creates large teaching groups of widely differing levels of attainment which are difficult to manage. There are no dedicated teaching rooms for community languages. There are no extra-curricular activities at present. Teaching and assessment are not monitored sufficiently. Community languages were not taught at the time of the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Turnover of staff has been a serious limitation in the development of the department.
- Poor attendance and punctuality to lessons adversely affect standards.
- Teachers are caring and want pupils to do their best.
- Relationships among pupils, including different racial groups, are good and most pupils have positive attitudes to mathematics.
- Planning, teaching and the use of resources are inconsistent across the department.
- Approaches to tracking pupil performance do not give enough evidence of progress.
- Some teachers do not cope well with unsatisfactory pupil behaviour, which limits learning.

Standards and achievement

72. Results in the GCSE examinations in 2003 were well below average and lower than in 2002. Boys' and girls' performances were similar to each other. Results in the national tests in Year 9 in 2003 were well below average, lower than in 2002 and with boys outperforming the girls.
73. Attainment on entry to Year 7 is well below average, as seen in standardised tests and National Curriculum levels. Current standards in 2003 are well below the national average in both Year 9 and Year 11. Achievement overall is unsatisfactory. Standards and achievement are adversely affected by poor attendance and punctuality. Progress is unsatisfactory in relation to prior attainment, and results have declined overall in recent years. Pupils in top sets achieve around the national average levels but even these pupils make elementary mistakes such as in a Year 11 class, doubling numbers instead of squaring them. For most pupils, standards in lessons are below and well below average. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make steady, if slow, progress in the development of number skills and in the understanding of algebra, shape and space, and data handling. They are able to use and apply what they have learned in investigations and coursework.

Teaching and learning

74. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall but satisfactory in Years 10 and 11. Most pupils work conscientiously and have a good attitude to mathematics but a minority are not interested and their poor behaviour disrupts the learning of others, which some teachers have difficulty in controlling. The department is implementing ideas from the National Numeracy Initiative, but these approaches are not consistently applied. Lesson plans are not sufficiently informative, introductory sessions to lessons often do not focus on oral questioning and discussion, and ends of sessions are not used for review and assessment. The range of resources to help pupils develop numeracy skills is too limited. Use is occasionally made of computers and graphic calculators, but the application of ICT in mathematics requires further development. Assessment is satisfactory overall. Marking of pupils' homework is good and the grading system is widely used, but class work is not always marked by pupils or by teachers. The procedures for tracking pupils' progress, setting targets and developing pupils' awareness of how to improve are not sufficiently linked to the National Curriculum. This restricts their value for demonstrating progress and matching work to pupils' capabilities.

Leadership and management

75. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Over the two years the head of department has been in post she has provided a good role model as a teacher in the department. Helpful documentation has been produced and department performance is carefully analysed. There

is a programme of monitoring teaching and learning, and valued in-class support is provided for many low attaining pupils. However, improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory overall. Standards and achievement remain too low and teaching approaches and monitoring procedures are not consistently effective.

Mathematics across the curriculum

76. Standards of numeracy are low but there has been some development through application of the National Numeracy Strategy approaches and some pupils are able to discuss how to do calculations. The recall of number facts is generally satisfactory. Pupils have opportunities to apply mathematical ideas in other areas of the curriculum, for example graphical work in science, formulae in ICT, measurement in design and technology and physical education, and number in modern foreign languages. In all these areas some pupils made mistakes in the mathematical work. There is little evidence that other departments are actively considering how they can contribute to the development of numeracy, although the mathematics department has developed a whole-school numeracy policy, and provided training and relevant materials for these departments.

Science

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well below average in Years 9 and 11.
- The behaviour of a significant minority of pupils in many lessons is unsatisfactory and reduces learning.
- Assessment and monitoring of pupils' progress is good.
- The scheme of work does not fulfil statutory requirements in providing ICT.
- Teaching often lacks imagination and fails to engage fully all pupils.
- Pupils with special educational needs receive good support from teachers and classroom assistants and achieve satisfactorily.

Standards and achievement

77. Results in the 2003 GCSE examinations were well below national average but were an improvement on the 2002 results. Boys did slightly better than the girls overall, but it was girls who achieved the few A grades. In the national tests for pupils in Year 9 the results were very low in relation to the national average. The results were not as good as those in 2002. Boys performed better than girls.
78. Current standards in Year 9 are well below the national average. Pupils enter the school with well below average levels of attainment in science and low skills in literacy and numeracy. They are very slow to adopt positive attitudes to learning and so do not build up a secure general knowledge of science from the work covered, and they have very limited ability to apply their knowledge. Practical skills are also slow to develop and their data handling work is below average in quality. Achievement is unsatisfactory in Years 7 to 9 and barely satisfactory in Years 10 and 11. Standards in Year 11 are well below average but recent GCSE results do show an improvement. This indicates that the improved target setting and monitoring are beginning to have a positive impact on standards.

Teaching and learning

79. The quality of teaching is barely satisfactory overall. There was some unsatisfactory and poor teaching in Years 11 and 7 respectively and very little teaching that was good or better. Learning objectives are clear but not consistently shared with pupils or effectively reviewed

towards the ends of lessons. Planning is generally appropriate, but too often lateness to lessons and the unsatisfactory behaviour of a small minority of pupils reduces the rate of learning. Much of the teaching fails to engage all pupils for the whole lesson. Teachers and assistants give good support to pupils with special educational needs, who consequently make good progress. Homework is regularly set and all pupils' work is well marked with supportive comments and guidance for improvement.

Leadership and management

80. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. There is a good scheme of work for Years 7 to 9, but it fails to include work with the use of sensors and data loggers, due to the lack of equipment, and so does not meet statutory requirements. The alternative curriculum in Years 10 and 11 makes good provision for the lowest attaining pupils. Single sex top sets are aimed at addressing the under-achievement of girls. However, strategies for raising the quality of teaching have been less effective. Pupils are regularly assessed and appropriate targets set for them, but target sheets for each unit of work are not consistently used. Since the previous inspection improvement has been unsatisfactory. Standards have not improved, the quality of teaching has declined, and too many pupils' attitudes are often negative.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in ICT is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Resources have improved since the last inspection but they are not used effectively enough.
- Leadership and management lack direction and experience of the ICT curriculum.
- Pupils are not receiving their full statutory ICT entitlement.
- Monitoring and assessment processes are inadequate to improve standards.
- Teaching strategies lack variety and pupils' work contains some basic errors.
- Pupils across the attainment range underachieve throughout the school.

Standards and achievement

81. Most pupils do not have access to a GCSE standard examination in ICT Year 11. The closest to it is the business communication examination which 38 pupils took in 2003, all achieving at least grade G. However, this course does not provide a full ICT entitlement even for the pupils who take it.
82. Current standards are below average in both Year 9 and Year 11. By Year 9, most pupils can perform basic computer tasks but lower-attaining pupils demonstrate difficulties with locating and loading files into the correct application. The range, quality and quantity of work vary considerably between pupils of similar abilities and achievement is unsatisfactory overall because courses do not develop and extend pupils' capabilities. The current carousel arrangement of access to ICT lessons in Years 7, 8 and 9 adversely affects continuity of learning and contributes to this underachievement. In Years 10 and 11, pupils also underachieve because courses continue to consolidate only the basic ICT techniques and tasks are undemanding. Pupils with special educational need achieve satisfactorily, especially those who have specialist support.

Teaching and learning

83. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall. During the inspection teaching was satisfactory in Years 9 and 10 but some unsatisfactory teaching was observed in Year 11. In Years 9 and 10 teaching demonstrates secure knowledge of the subject and the pupils understand their tasks and work well to complete them. The teacher maintains positive

relationships with pupils, has established routines, and planning is adequate. The teaching style is direct but lacks variety. In Year 11, the teacher has to exert more effort on managing behaviour than on organising learning. Pupils arrive late to their lessons and overtly demonstrate their lack of motivation to learn. Activities are mundane and well below the capabilities of the pupils observed. The introduction of teaching units from the Key Stage 3 strategy is extending the range of activities experienced by pupils but lessons are too task driven rather than problem solving and they consolidate merely low level technical skills. Pupils' work contains common basic errors indicating that the quality of teaching experienced by pupils over time has been inconsistent.

Leadership and management

84. Leadership and management of ICT are unsatisfactory. There is no overall vision or strategy for developing ICT to meet the needs of pupils, and leadership and management responsibilities are unclear. The head of technology has line management responsibility for ICT as a subject area but has no ICT teaching commitment. The ICT curriculum, particularly in Year 9, lacks coherence and is inefficient in its use of time. In Years 10 and 11, planning does not identify where pupils can access the statutory curriculum. Monitoring and assessment processes are inadequate to track pupils' progress and inform planning. Resources have improved since the last inspection but their use outside of timetabled ICT lessons is ad hoc and there is no central booking system or effective monitoring.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

85. Provision and especially use of ICT is unsatisfactory across the school. There is no clear planning, implementation or monitoring of ICT across the curriculum. Effective use of ICT was observed only in modern foreign languages, special educational needs and to a lesser extent in mathematics, and this is due to the commitment of individual departments rather than effective co-ordination across the school.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teacher assessment and examination results at the end of Years 9 and 11 are not high enough.
- Most teachers have good subject knowledge and plan their lessons well in order to promote learning, although some of the work set in lessons is not sufficiently challenging and varied to engage the interest of all pupils.
- Teachers lack the strategies needed to manage the behaviour of those pupils who are reluctant to learn.
- Teachers praise and encourage their pupils which gives some of them the confidence to contribute to lessons.

Standards and achievement

86. GCSE results in recent years were well below the national average and pupils attained lower grades in geography than in most other subjects they took.
87. Current standards are well below average in Years 9 and 11 and pupils' achievement over time is also unsatisfactory. Most pupils in Year 9 can describe places and patterns satisfactorily but have difficulty in writing more detailed answers which explain geographical themes. Higher-attaining pupils use specialist terminology with some accuracy but many

pupils, including those with special educational needs and those whose home language is other than English, have limited understanding of geographical words. Most Year 11 pupils can complete independent research successfully, for example, in their coursework studies of tourism in Castleton.

Teaching and learning

88. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall although some satisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. Most teachers have good subject knowledge, structure their lessons well and use praise to encourage their pupils to learn. However, some of the work set is not sufficiently challenging and varied to engage the interest of all pupils. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils in Years 7 to 9 to develop their enquiry skills through fieldwork and the use of ICT. Many pupils lack motivation and have a short attention span so teachers spend time trying to manage behaviour and the pace of learning slows down. Achievement is unsatisfactory because teachers' expectations and classroom routines are not sufficiently well established to keep pupils on task.

Leadership and management

89. The leadership and management of the department are unsatisfactory. There is no head of department for geography. The department is overseen by teachers who have many other responsibilities and hence less time to devote to geography. There have been considerable staff changes in recent years which have had a negative impact on pupils' achievement. Improvement since the previous inspection is unsatisfactory because the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement have declined. However, with the recent appointment of new staff, the department now has the capacity to improve.

History

Provision in history is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers are enthusiastic about the subject.
- The poor attendance, punctuality and behaviour of some pupils adversely affects the learning and achievement of their fellows.
- There are good relationships between teachers and pupils, particularly in Years 10 and 11.
- There are not enough opportunities for extended writing.
- Access to ICT is too restricted.

Standards and achievement

90. GCSE results in 2003 were below the national average. Results in 2002 were also below average but slightly better overall. Girls outperformed the boys.
91. Current standards are below average in Year 9 and in Year 11. Achievement is unsatisfactory overall. Across the year groups girls' achievement is usually better than boys'. There are more boys than girls in most history classes. Poor attendance and lateness to lessons affects the achievement of boys more than that of girls. Higher-attaining girls, for instance in Year 7, work quickly and accurately. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress because of the extra help and appropriate materials provided by teachers. Higher-attaining and gifted and talented pupils have extension work, but are not always stretched enough. Year 9 pupils are able to acquire more factual information but are not given sufficient opportunity to use their initiative. Year 11 pupils are able to make connections; for example, they compare the Irish Penal Laws with

Hitler's Anti Jewish Legislation. The department is aware of the link between literacy skills and achievement in history and hence there is an element of reading and writing in every lesson, but overall there are not enough opportunities for extended writing.

Teaching and learning

92. Teaching is unsatisfactory overall but satisfactory in Years 10 and 11. The initial questioning at the beginning of most lessons consolidates previous learning. The questions put to Year 7 pupils studying Roman Society encouraged them to select information and to think. Too often questions asked during the lesson are closed and pupils are not given the opportunity to develop their answers. Varied approaches interest pupils. For instance, a lesson on the Spanish Armada allows Year 8 pupils to use their knowledge of Spanish. In some classes too much is attempted and too fast a pace is set. Some pupils respond to this direct and energetic teaching but not enough attention is paid to those who may be left behind. The poor behaviour of some pupils adversely affects the learning of their fellow pupils. In Years 10 and 11, pupils' attitudes to the subject are more positive and the teachers are able to teach more effectively. Recruitment into the subject is good. A group of Year 11 pupils appreciate the historical skills they are taught. In a lesson on Irish history the teacher's explanations were balanced by information selected by pupils and produced in answer to careful questioning. Marking is not diagnostic enough. Assessment procedures do not use National Curriculum levels effectively.

Leadership and management

93. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The two specialist teachers collaborate on planning and have introduced some team teaching. Teaching is monitored though not effectively enough to prevent a significant amount of unsatisfactory teaching in Years 7 to 9. The head of department provides materials and guidance for non-specialist teachers. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. Teachers' assessments are not National Curriculum based. Fieldwork opportunities are fewer.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Nearly a half of the teaching and learning is good, a quarter very good.
- Examination opportunities at GCSE have been established for all by the end of Year 11.
- There are harmonious and respectful relationships between all faiths and ethnic heritages.
- Pupils' contributions enrich the subject from a range of faith backgrounds.
- Limited learning support is available in any lesson despite the large numbers of pupils with special educational needs.
- Some unsatisfactory behaviour by boys reduces potentially good lessons to satisfactory ones.

Standards and achievement

94. By the end of Year 11, results in the GCSE short course are average and until this year a small number of pupils have achieved the highest grades. In 2003, the grade boundaries for pupils doing the course work element were raised significantly so that there were fewer high grades.
95. Pupils enter the school with low standards of literacy which impedes achievement. By the end of Year 9 standards are still below expectations but the work of many pupils approaches the average. The good subject knowledge of specialist teachers, especially of world faiths, raises

achievement. Pupils acquire a broad elementary understanding of world religion. They are able to contribute well to raising standards from their own faith heritages and personal experience. Overall standards in Year 11 are below average. The full course standards are below the national average but the school has given pupils such a platform for development that some choose to study philosophy and ethics of religion when they move on at age 16. Pupils develop and show personal viewpoints in more extended personal writing. Pupils' books show some good work on racism and social harmony with sensitive interpretations from the various faith perspectives. They appreciate the complexities of making moral decisions. These features raise pupils' achievements in citizenship. Overall achievement is satisfactory.

Teaching and learning

96. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teaching is well organised and carefully planned in sequences which help pupils to achieve satisfactorily. In some of these well planned and prepared lessons, achievement is not as good as it should be as pupils maintain low level chatter and behaviour is unsatisfactory particularly for boys. With highly effective class management, pupils are challenged well and achievement is good. Sensitive choice of relevant material and careful presentation of sensitive issues develops understanding at a deeper level, as in a Year 10 lesson on euthanasia. Some lessons are heavily dependent on text with pupils reading, writing and speaking, but not always enough of the latter. The lack of learning support assistance reduces the achievement of some pupils with special educational needs, in spite of the careful individual attention which teachers give. Greater diversity of method is needed to help these pupils further, for example more individualised work using computers or audio-visual approaches to build achievement.

Leadership and management

97. Leadership is good. The determined and committed leadership of the head of the subject appointed three years ago has raised the status of the subject in the eyes of pupils. It now makes a much better contribution to their education. Standards and aspirations have risen. The experience of the head of the subject as an examiner and moderator has contributed effectively to this better provision, as has her courage in instituting the short course immediately and a year later the full course GCSE to increase opportunities. Management of the subject is satisfactory, but with the demands on staffing, and the increased responsibilities as head of the humanities, staffing in the subject is over-stretched and more needs to be done to help non-specialist teachers.
98. A great strength of the leadership and management is the way respect is generated between various religions and cultures and modelled sensitively by the teachers. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Better time allocation enables coverage of the local education authority agreed syllabus in Years 7 to 9. Short or full course accreditation is available for all pupils in Years 10 and 11. The subject has a raised status and pupils themselves are seen as a great contributory enrichment to teaching and learning. That no pupils are withdrawn from the subject from all faiths reflects the value and respect teachers place upon pupils.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievements are now satisfactory although poor attendance is slowing progress.
- Pupils' attitudes and relationships with teachers are good.
- Standards remain below average.
- The lack of ICT prevents full delivery of the National Curriculum and computer-aided design and computer-aided manufacturing (CAD/CAM).
- The department is well led.

Standards and achievement

99. The GCSE results in 2003 were well below average, similar to those at the time of the last inspection but less good than in 2002. Girls outperformed boys. Poor attendance prevented eight of the 48 GCSE pupils from sitting the examination.
100. The work in school is below average but improving. Pupils are more capable with practical work than they are at research and designing. Folio work suffers from poor drawing skills and the lack of access to ICT to word process or illustrate data. The best work is produced in resistant materials but much work lacks originality. A Year 8 class made good progress producing travel games. Their pride in their work was noticeable. Pupils in Year 8 are able to investigate mechanisms within simple animated cut-out figures. Year 9 pupils follow the design process to produce snack foods: devising recipes, cooking with confidence and clearing away efficiently. Occasionally pupils do not observe safe or effective working methods, such as when cutting fruit or vegetables in their hands rather than using a chopping board, or marking-out too hastily so that the accuracy of their work suffers, or, very occasionally, they do not make use of safety goggles when using power tools. Year 10 pupils were making satisfactory progress drawing and assembling nets to produce cubes, cones and pyramids for packaging, work more usually done in Year 8. Pupils are pleased to discuss their work but find it difficult to speak in any evaluative way. The way pupils respond to their teachers' challenges and their enthusiastic enjoyment for the subject leads to satisfactory achievement of all pupils.

Teaching and learning

101. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers are organised and have good subject knowledge, generating enthusiasm and good attitudes in their pupils who are keen to learn and to please their teachers. Lessons are well-planned with a clear explanation of what pupils are expected to learn and the methods they are to use. The ends of lessons allow some review of learning. The work is designed to allow the highest and lowest attainers to work at their own pace and to allow pupils to learn from each other or for themselves. Teachers manage their pupils with confidence.

Leadership and management

102. The curriculum limits pupils to working with food, resistant materials and graphics. The department does not offer GCSE courses in electronics or textiles, nor do pupils experience computer aided design or making. The new GCSE catering course adds a valuable further dimension to the department's provision. Good assessment allows pupils to view their progress through target setting and the pinpointing of weaknesses in teaching and learning. The accommodation promotes a good learning atmosphere but the floor of the graphics room is often littered with paper from previous lessons.
103. The department is well led in that the head of department has a clear vision for the future, has generated strong teamwork and the will to continue the department's improvement. The management of the department is satisfactory. Subject documentation is comprehensive.

Teaching and learning are monitored but further training is required to increase its effectiveness. There is no record of risk assessment. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Standards have improved and are still rising. Teaching and learning were largely unsatisfactory and are now satisfactory. Pupils make better use of appropriate tools and work is more accurate. Working areas are well organised.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design and music were inspected in depth and three lessons of drama were sampled. Standards of attainment in drama are below average in Year 9, but were average for pupils in Year 11. The quality of teaching by experienced staff is good and pupils achieve well.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is unsatisfactory throughout Years 7 to 11.
- Standards are well below average.
- Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory and are not monitored effectively.
- Pupils do not use sketchbooks and this affects their achievement.
- The leadership of the new head of department has generated teamwork.
- The use of ICT is underdeveloped, making full delivery of the National Curriculum very difficult.

Standards and achievement

104. The GCSE results in 2003, while being the best in school, were well below average and below those at the last inspection.
105. The work in school is well below average by Years 9 and 11. Funding difficulties prevent pupils keeping a sketchbook. The work is usually based on observation but there remains a reliance on copying. Drawing tends to be another way of making a picture, rather than a means to investigate space, light, texture, or composition. Pupils do not vary the quality of line or scale in their drawings and shading often contradicts rather than accentuates form. Pupils look at Aboriginal Art, and appreciate the way art can reflect spirituality. Different colour portraits in the style of van Gogh, portray different mood or atmosphere. There is good use of textiles in Years 10 and 11 when pupils produce painted and embroidered compositions based on fruit and flowers. Little of the work is annotated and where annotation is present it tends to be descriptive rather than evaluative. Pupils cannot talk about their work in any critical way. The generally unsatisfactory attitudes and behaviour of pupils and the lack of challenge through personal research and analysis have resulted in unsatisfactory achievement overall.

Teaching and learning

106. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. The best teaching occurs in Years 10 and 11 where it is occasionally good. Teachers are concerned for their pupils and encourage co-operation, but learning is slowed by the poor behaviour of a significant minority of pupils. The measures taken to prevent these pupils interfering with the learning of the majority, who clearly want to learn, are not sufficiently rigorous. Pupils shout across the room or interfere with others' work, preventing concentration or reflection. Pupils often ignore their teachers' requests for attention or fail to listen to instructions and are unclear about what they are expected to do. Their failure to use a sketchbook or to draw selectively reduces their knowledge of how well they are doing or how they might improve their work. Their dependence on their teacher for

guidance is almost absolute. Pupils enjoy art and there is an opportunity to raise the expectations of both pupils and teachers by increasing the challenge in lessons, requiring a more enquiring, independent approach to study.

Leadership and management

107. The new head of department provides satisfactory leadership. She has high ambition and clear vision for her department and has generated team spirit in her colleagues, all equally new, and there is significant capacity to improve. The management of the department is unsatisfactory. Teaching and learning are not monitored effectively enough. Training is needed to improve the teaching of printmaking. Schemes of work have been updated, but development planning lacks detail. The curriculum is broad and balanced but the absence of a kiln limits three-dimensional opportunities. The shortage of computers and specialist software prevents full delivery of the National Curriculum. The assessment of pupils' work is in its infancy but provides satisfactory guidance on progress and allows teachers and pupils to set targets to improve performance. There has been unsatisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Standards have fallen and teaching and learning are now unsatisfactory. The curriculum is broader but ICT remains underdeveloped.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good overall.
- Schemes of work and effective systems of assessment are not in place.
- The lack of resources, particularly in ICT, restricts pupils' rates of achievement.
- Pupils have positive attitudes towards music.
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.
- There are not enough opportunities for enriching pupils' experience in music outside the classroom.

Standards and achievement

108. Only a small number of pupils were entered for the most recent GCSE examinations; results obtained were below average.
109. Current standards of attainment are below average, both for pupils in Year 9 and for those in Year 11. In Year 9, pupils cannot read or play simple pieces fluently, or maintain a basic independent part, and because they do not listen sufficiently closely to information and instructions, they do not remember technical language. In Year 11, pupils' performing skills vary from outstanding to basic. Because their musical experience and knowledge of technical vocabulary is limited, they are not able to describe features of music they hear with accuracy.
110. Pupils at all stages achieve well. In Years 7 and 8, pupils are developing fluency in playing and reading from staff notation, and more able pupils are acquiring good ensemble skills. However, pupils' short attention spans, lack of co-operative behaviour, and limited ability to work independently regularly undermine both individual and overall achievement. Some pupils at an early stage of learning English achieve less well because they do not have the vocabulary to express their understanding. Achievement by the large numbers of pupils with special educational needs is good; the achievement of higher-attaining pupils is no better than satisfactory because they are not set work appropriate to their abilities. Unsatisfactory resources restrict the achievement of pupils at all stages. There is no provision for ICT so that pupils can store, develop and refine their composing, and because there is no recording equipment pupils are unable to listen to and appraise their compositions and performances.

Teaching and learning

111. Teaching and learning are good overall. Long-term objectives are clear, and expectations are high. As a result, many pupils, in spite of their tendency to lose concentration, believe in their capacity to succeed. In one excellent lesson, pupils benefited both intellectually and spiritually, in addition to developing a wide range of musical skills, because they were encouraged to relate their work on "Call and Response" to its cultural roots, and to the spiritual impact of the music itself. At times, because the content of lessons is not sufficiently well matched to pupils' needs and abilities, a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching occurs.

Leadership and management

112. The energetic leadership of the recently-appointed head of department has re-established pupils' positive attitudes towards music. Management is broadly satisfactory, but schemes of work and assessment systems are not yet in place, nor is there a means of identifying gifted and talented pupils. Resources are unsatisfactory. Neither the National Curriculum nor the examination requirements for GCSE in music can be taught adequately because there are no computers or recording equipment. The room in which music is taught is too small to allow pupils to move around without disturbing one another.

113. Although extra-curricular activities are at present restricted to a GCSE support group, pupils who play Asian drums bring in instruments and form ad hoc groups. No instrumental teaching currently takes place during the teaching week, but plans are in hand for a limited amount in the near future. Standards have declined since the previous inspection, largely because of disruptions to continuity of staffing, and improvement since the previous inspection is unsatisfactory. However, much has been achieved recently in a comparatively short time, and the department is now well placed to make rapid progress.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' good knowledge and well-planned lessons ensure that pupils acquire new skills and achieve well in Years 7 to 9.
- Leadership is good with a clear vision for improvement.
- Pupils display good attitudes and behaviour in Years 7 to 9, but unsatisfactory attitudes in some Year 11 groups mean that pupils do not achieve as well as they should.
- Provision for extra-curricular activities is good.

Standards and achievement

114. Results in GCSE examinations are well below average. However, pupils often do better in physical education than in their other subjects.
115. Current standards are average in Years 9 and 11, especially in practical activities. Standards in GCSE theory are below average. Pupils enter the school with below average standards but achieve well by the end of Year 9. Achievement by the end of Year 11 in core and examination groups is just satisfactory as a result of unsatisfactory attitudes in some groups which mean that they do not achieve as well as they should. However, in GCSE theory and practical badminton, pupils in Year 10 achieve very well. By Year 9, pupils can respond well to challenge in gymnastics and display good tension, weight bearing and shape when performing pyramid balances in groups. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 11 perform a good range of shots in badminton with above average quality. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve as well as their fellow pupils.

Teaching and learning

116. Teaching and learning are good overall. The most effective lessons are very well planned with clear objectives and progressive, challenging tasks enabling pupils to acquire new skills and knowledge. Expectations are high and, consequently, pupils behave well and show good physical efforts. Relationships are very good, instructions and explanations are clear and, as a result, pupils listen and concentrate. A very good range of teaching styles is seen in GCSE theory lessons in order to motivate pupils. However, whilst learning is satisfactory in Year 11, many girls do not bring their kit and are reticent to participate in activities requiring physical effort. This limits their achievement.

Leadership and management

117. The department is well led. Management is satisfactory, and improving. There is a clear vision for future development but, at present, it is too ambitious. Systems for monitoring pupils' progress are improving. Pupils, and teams for talented performers, have good opportunities to participate in extra-curricular sports. On-site indoor accommodation is unsatisfactory. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

In this curriculum area the focus was on the GCSE course in applied business (double award). The school also provides GCSE courses in business communication and applied leisure and tourism (double award), and these were sampled. There are a variety of work-related college link courses for ten pupils in Year 10 and four in Year 11. On these courses pupils are working towards NVQ level 1 qualifications. It was not possible to observe this provision during the inspection.

Business communication is reported in detail under ICT.

Leisure and tourism is a new vocational GCSE that will be awarded for the first time this year. In the lesson seen, pupils were completing coursework following visits to Alton Towers and Manchester United. Although standards are well below average, achievement is satisfactory in relation to attainment at the start of Year 10. Teaching is satisfactory. Pupils' erratic patterns of attendance are a cause for concern and militate against better achievement and learning.

Business studies

Provision in applied business is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships between teachers and pupils promote learning which is productive and fun;
- challenging resources and effective use of support assistants enable all pupils to learn and achieve to their capacity in lessons; but
- poor attendance and unsatisfactory attitudes outside lessons cause the quality of learning to be just satisfactory although the teaching is good; and
- standards are not high enough.

Standards and achievement

118. The attainment of pupils who begin this course is below average overall. Current standards are below average. The achievement of all pupils, that is, the progress pupils make over time, is satisfactory. This is not just the result of the teaching, which is good overall, and in some lessons close to inspirational. Poor attendance and unsatisfactory response to independent work at home are significant factors in causing the quality of learning and achievement to be just satisfactory.

119. In work seen during the inspection, pupils had a good knowledge of different methods firms use to pay for goods and services and they produced accurate invoices. Higher-attaining pupils made correct inferences about errors in invoices on cash-flows, with the consequent impact on businesses. However, they are less confident at drawing graphs to illustrate fixed and variable costs to indicate the break-even point for a new venture. Lower-attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, are familiar with the advantages and disadvantages of computerised accounting but their limited numeracy skills inhibit the completion of cash-flow forecasts. These pupils are completing coursework in line with expectation but in less detail than those pupils who are identified as gifted and talented. These pupils reach average standards explaining and analysing their answers on, for example, the benefits of good recruitment and training.

Teaching and learning

120. The quality of teaching is good and the learning is satisfactory. Very good teaching is vigorous and well planned with clear learning objectives that are shared with pupils and sometimes make a considerable contribution to learning in other subjects, like citizenship. Starter activities effectively consolidate prior learning before the lesson moves rapidly forward as pupils increase the depth of their knowledge and understanding of topics. This was seen in a lesson on the Animal Liberation Front when pupils learned about the influence of social and environmental factors on the growth and development of industry. Challenging resources, together with a very good input from two support assistants, enabled all pupils, including those at an early stage of learning English and those with special needs, to learn and achieve to their capacity in this lesson. Basic skills of classroom management and relationships are exceptional and create warmth in which learning is productive and fun. The lesson concluded with two questions that made pupils ponder on their conflicting views on animal rights and there was a positive buzz as they left the classroom. In too many cases this quality of learning and very good achievement is not sustained over time. Two aspects of teaching that would further improve its quality are a more regular and active involvement of pupils in assessing their own learning and the wider use of a variety of writing aids to guide the structure of pupils' coursework.

Leadership and management

121. Leadership and management are good. The course is successful. There is clear vision of extending vocational learning with a focus on improving teaching, learning and achievement and raising standards. Planning does not yet include examination targets. Teaching and learning would benefit from specialist accommodation.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very well planned programme of study.
- Good teaching by school staff and outside agencies.
- The course is co-ordinated by the deputy head, but there is no current head of department to continue the development of the subject.
- Citizenship is not timetabled in Years 8 and 9.

122. Citizenship is taught as a separate subject within the school's individual development course. In Year 7 it is delivered in specific lessons, but in Years 8 and 9 it is taught through other subjects and this lessens its overall impact. Some subjects, for example history, include

citizenship specifically in their schemes of work. In Years 10 and 11, teachers use the short course as a foundation for their lessons, but pupils have not yet been entered for the examination.

Standards and achievement

123. The standard of work seen in Years 7 to 9 is below average. Achievement is satisfactory. Pupils show an awareness of social issues. They consider and are able to comment on the problems of the homeless. Higher-attaining pupils write poems which reveal insight and understanding. The importance of literacy is recognised and built upon lower-attaining pupils using structured writing outlines are also able to contribute their ideas. In Years 10 and 11, standards are below average but achievement is good, the result of good teaching. As a result of the confidence gained from the teacher's encouragement and praise, Year 10 pupils are able to join in a discussion of the environmental constraints and ethical issues faced by some developing businesses. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make very good progress where they receive good support from teaching assistants.

Teaching and learning

124. Teaching is satisfactory overall but good in Years 10 and 11. In Year 7, teaching is clear and direct and pupils understand what they are expected to do. Most pupils are involved and interested. They learn well despite the poor behaviour of some boys which is distracting. In Years 10 and 11 the teaching of citizenship to a class studying business education is particularly good. Teaching is vigorous. Explanations are matched to the pupils' needs. As a result, pupils are fully engaged. They are required to think and learning is good. Good class management and guidance results in a lesson which pupils say is fun. A religious education lesson in Year 11 made a very good contribution to citizenship in that work on racism and social harmony was closely related to the lives of pupils.

125. Active citizenship is promoted by the good links made with external agencies. Youth workers co-operate well with the class teacher. In a well-planned and well-structured lesson about rights and responsibilities with Year 10 pupils, the emphasis on key words meant that pupils' learning was focused. They are developing their communication skills. Other outside agencies such as the Police and Fire Service make useful contributions to the course. There are opportunities within the school for pupils to engage in active citizenship. The school council, however, does not have a high profile.

Leadership and management

126. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Detailed schemes of work, a development plan and assessment procedures, including computerised self-evaluation forms, are established. Until a new citizenship coordinator is appointed the deputy head is carrying out a satisfactory holding role in co-ordinating the subject.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	6
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	6
Overall standards achieved	6
Pupils' achievement	5
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	5
Attendance	5
Attitudes	5
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	5
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	5
The quality of education provided by the school	6
The quality of teaching	6
How well pupils learn	6
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	5
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	5
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	5
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the headteacher	5
The leadership of other key staff	5
The effectiveness of management	5

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