

INSPECTION REPORT

THE BISHOP DAVID BROWN

Woking

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 125266

Headteacher: Mrs. D. Coppard

Lead inspector: Mrs. C. Worthington

Dates of inspection: 17th – 19th November 2003

Inspection number: 258802

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Performing Arts College
Age range of pupils:	11 -16
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	654
School address:	Albert Drive Woking
Postcode:	GU21 5RF
Telephone number:	01932 349696
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Chairman of governors	M. Stokes
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd February 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Bishop David Brown School is a smaller than average comprehensive, categorised as a performing arts college, with 654 pupils on roll. There is an equal number of boys and girls who come from the local estate in the north east of Woking. The percentage eligible for free school meals (18) is above the national average, this being the most socially deprived ward in Surrey. Two thirds of pupils are white British and one third is of Asian origin. There are four children from refugee families. The percentage of pupils with English as a second language is high at 27 per cent; only a few are at an early stage of learning English. A well above average percentage (40.5) of pupils has been identified as having special educational needs, mainly associated with learning disability, emotional and behavioural difficulty. Nearly 17 per cent have Statements of Special Educational Need (including those with hearing impairment), which is well above the national average. The unit for the hearing impaired currently caters for ten pupils. Attainment on entry to the school is well below average. Only about 50 per cent of pupils who start Year 7 stay until Year 11. The school won the Investors in People award in 2000 and again in 2003, when it was also awarded the Artsmark gold, the education establishment of the year, one of the 100 most improved schools and the headteacher of the year. It is also recognised for its basic skills quality mark, thinking skills, curriculum and healthy schools awards. During the past year, three experienced managers left for promotion.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20609	C. Worthington	Lead inspector	
11104	M. Fleming	Lay inspector	
4486	M. Weller	Team inspector	English
15268	J. English	Team inspector	Mathematics
3735	A. Webb	Team inspector	Science
31963	M. Padmore	Team inspector	Information and communication technology; Design and technology
27666	J. Dockrell	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
32400	M. Champness	Team inspector	History and geography
11258	I. Rushforth	Team inspector	Art and design, citizenship
24026	C. Holland	Team inspector	Music and performing arts
32225	C. Hough	Team inspector	Physical education
10807	P. Quest	Team inspector	Religious education; vocational studies
22540	S. Jaine	Team inspector	English as an additional language
7465	R. Brent	Team inspector	Special educational needs
21899	G. Lawson	Team inspector	Hearing Impairment unit

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a school where the headteacher's initial ambitious vision for future development has now gone beyond the means to support it. The school is **very ineffective** because of the lack of focus on its key educational purpose. Leadership and management do not concentrate enough on improving standards achieved in all subjects by all pupils. Although there are pockets of good teaching and some very dedicated staff, the quality of teaching and learning is poor overall. Pupils' underachievement is widespread. The school receives above average funding due to its specialist status, but provides poor value for money. It needs outside help to enable it to improve.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Poor leadership and management.
- Unsatisfactory curriculum with very poor provision for vocational courses and poor provision for independent learning.
- Well below average standards and unsatisfactory achievement throughout the school, except in English, art and citizenship.
- Much of the teaching is unsatisfactory or poor, but it is good in English, art, and citizenship.
- The school has very good and beneficial community links.
- Provision for the hearing impaired is good.
- Good opportunity is given to pupils in Years 10 and 11 to learn in a workplace environment.

The school's improvement since the last inspection has been poor; none of the key issues has been addressed satisfactorily.

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.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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.*

Pupils enter the school with well below average attainment. They make insufficient progress in Years 7 to 9, where their attainment remains well below average. In 2002, however, higher ability pupils entered for GCSE examinations made very good progress from their well below average Year 9 performance and improved to attain results closer to, but still below, the national average. However, the school only entered about two thirds of the year group for these examinations. In 2003, higher ability pupils again did well in English but underachieved in mathematics, science and ICT. Of the option subjects, pupils taking art did exceptionally well. The small group of pupils taking media studies did well but the majority of those doing GNVQ did not gain a grade and many pupils did not get worthwhile qualifications.

Standards seen during the inspection in many subjects, including mathematics, science and ICT were well below average throughout the school and **achievement is unsatisfactory**, except in English, where standards were close to the national average and achievement overall is good. Pupils' **attitudes and behaviour** are **unsatisfactory** overall, but their response to good teaching is positive. The **social** aspect of their personal development is **satisfactory**, mainly from the school's good provision for citizenship, but their **spiritual, moral and cultural development** is **unsatisfactory**. The level of attendance is unsatisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The **quality of education is poor**. **Teaching and learning** are good in some subjects but generally **poor**, particularly in Years 10 and 11 and the core subjects of mathematics and science. Many unqualified teachers are poorly supervised.

The curriculum is unsatisfactory because many pupils spend time without focused teaching in independent learning and vocational courses. The re-working of traditional patterns of curriculum presentation has produced mismatches of aims and implementation, and poor time management which results in many pupils losing motivation to learn. There is insufficient attention on the school's core function to educate its pupils.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are poor. Leadership is poor because it is steered more towards outside recognition than to improving standards in the school. Governors have supported the school in its major building programme and its performing arts college bid, but they do not monitor the work of the school or the performing arts targets sufficiently. The statutory requirements for the full National Curriculum and for collective worship are not met; governance is, therefore, unsatisfactory. Management is poor because too many senior staff are involved in projects and not in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning, to ensure that all pupils achieve their potential.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Although some parents are satisfied with the school, a significant proportion (over 25 per cent) is not. The school's partnership with parents is unsatisfactory. Many pupils enjoy school and show an interest in their work, but many others are disenchanted and stay away, or misbehave when present. Pupils say that bullying is common and not always handled effectively or fairly. Many detect racial tension.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that all pupils have a full timetable and a taught curriculum to suit their capabilities, and provide those in Year 11 with extra tuition to enable them to achieve some examination success this summer.
- Provide sufficient guidance to unqualified teachers and graduate trainees and monitor their induction and workload carefully.
- Improve teaching and learning to raise standards and achievement, particularly in mathematics, science and the vocational subjects.
- Put measures in place to improve the literacy of pupils whose first language is not English, particularly in Years 7 to 9.
- Ensure that pupils' work is comprehensively assessed and that data collected are used to set targets for individuals and groups of pupils to improve their achievement.
- Improve leadership and management by concentrating on raising standards and improving the quality of teaching rather than outside projects.
- Ensure that all expenditure, including that for Performing Arts, is well directed towards raising standards and achieves best value for pupils' achievements.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Implement the full curriculum entitlement for all pupils
- Provide a daily act of collective worship.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Current standards are well below average throughout the school. Achievement is unsatisfactory overall because of poor teaching.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many pupils do not achieve examination grades in Years 10 and 11.
- Standards in mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) are low.
- Achievement of pupils in Years 10 and 11 in English is good.
- Achievement in citizenship and drama is good.
- GCSE examination results in 2003 in Spanish and media studies were good; in art and design they were excellent.

Commentary

1. Pupils enter the school with well below average standards in English, mathematics and science as shown by their Year 6 National Curriculum test results. Reading age tests taken by pupils currently in Years 8 to 11 and the standardised predictive tests taken by Year 7 pupils show a similar picture. In the Year 9 National Curriculum tests, results have remained well below average over the last three years. The school has not added enough value to its pupils' education because when compared with pupils of schools with similar academic standards, progress and achievement are well below average. When compared with schools with pupils of similar social backgrounds, results in 2002 were in the lowest five per cent of the country. In 2003, results were similarly low in mathematics and science, but better in English, where improvements were seen because the English department had made accurate assessments and only entered those capable of getting a grade for GCSE.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29 (29.2)	33 (33)
mathematics	30.3 (29.9)	34.5 (34.4)
science	28.5 (28.5)	32.9 (33.1)

There were 139 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Standards achieved by Year 11 pupils who enter GCSE/GNVQ examinations are below average. In 2002¹, the percentage gaining A* to C grades was below the national average though average compared with schools with pupils of similar background. They did particularly well in that year, however, making well above average gains, but because their performance at the end of the Year 9 had been so poor, their attainment was, nevertheless, below average.

¹ 2003 averages are not yet available

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	35.4 (36.4)	48.9 (48.4)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	82.7 (81.4)	91 (90.9)
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	94 (89)	96 (96)
Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects)	32.4 (31.8)	39.2 (39)

There were 95 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. Local education authority analysis of the value added from the end of Year 9 to GCSE in 2002 and 2001 shows that most pupils entered for GCSE achieved as expected in English, mathematics and science, but the picture is very different for 2003, when achievement in English was as expected, but in mathematics and science it was unsatisfactory because the majority of pupils did not achieve the grades expected from their Year 9 results. The inspection showed that the quality of teaching was much weaker in mathematics and science than in English.
4. In some GCSE subjects, achievement was good in 2003, such as art and design, where 93 per cent of the 45 pupils entered gained a grade between A* and C, and success in some option subjects, such as Spanish and media studies, pushed up the GCSE point scores so that they approach the 2002 average for similar schools. However, for English, mathematics and science, the average GCSE point score per candidate who achieved a grade was very low, although the achievement in English was better than that in mathematics and science, again highlighting the difference in provision for the core subjects.
5. The school does not enter all its pupils for GCSE; only about two thirds of the 2003 Year 11 were entered for English, for example, though a few others gained a basic skills certificate. Some pupils were off roll or on e-learning in 2003 and made private entries to GCSE. In GNVQ examinations, the majority of pupils failed to gain a pass grade. A further ten entered GCSE privately and five pupils were off the school roll. Examination data analysis refer to the school entries. During the inspection, many pupils who had been removed from GCSE classes spent several hours on unsupervised 'independent learning' which did not enhance their chances of gaining examination success.
6. Although most pupils who do not use English as their first language speak it well, their lower standards of reading and writing hinder their comprehension of examination questions, and their achievement is lower than it could be; this makes a strong contribution to low achievement and standards in the school.
7. The school's analysis of results according to gender has enabled the problem of difference between boys' and girls' achievement to be tackled with some success so that there is little difference between the achievement of boys and girls in successful subjects or underachievement in the majority. Ethnicity is not analysed but banding shows that currently, more Asian pupils are in the lower band and doing the alternative GNVQ curriculum; current Year 10 and Year 11 pupils have done little or no work towards this course.
8. Standards seen during the inspection were well below average throughout the school. Achievement in Years 10 and 11 was found to be unsatisfactory or worse in mathematics, science, ICT, design and technology, religious education (non-examination), music and general national vocational qualification (GNVQ) courses, and in Years 7 to 9 in all subjects except English and art.

9. The alternative curriculum devised to give pupils of lower academic ability some worthwhile vocational qualifications was observed being successfully run in subjects such as hairdressing and motor vehicle engineering; though no formal assessments were seen, pupils achieved well in the lessons observed.
10. The school uses information satisfactorily from primary schools and its own tests to identify pupils with special educational needs and to set targets for them, including in Statements of Special Educational Needs. However, these are mainly literacy based and do not always cover the full range of additional needs. As a result, the school does not have a clear understanding of the detail of the different types of special and additional needs of many pupils. More use could be made of the information gained by faculties to set pupil targets. Overall, the majority of pupils with special educational needs achieve unsatisfactorily by the end of Years 9 and 11. This is mainly the result of the overall quality of teaching and curricular arrangements. However, there is evidence that the newly developed alternative curriculum is having a beneficial effect on a number of Year 10 pupils, in particular. More could be done across the school to address progress by evaluating improvement on a pupil-by-pupil basis and by developing techniques to help staff differentiate their teaching.
11. A considerable proportion of pupils who have a restricted number of examinations to take are doing independent learning in which they were often observed not to be working, and targets set for completion of work were not strict enough or consistently monitored; consequently their achievement is too low.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Overall, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are unsatisfactory. Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory. The social component of pupils' personal development is satisfactory but their spiritual, moral and cultural development is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are often friendly and polite.
- Pupils respond well to good teaching, humour and respect, but otherwise do not concentrate on their work.
- A significant proportion of pupils report bullying and oppressive behaviour in the school.

Commentary

12. Many pupils enjoy school and show an interest in their work. They have confidence in their teachers and understand that they are required to try their best. They feel they are trusted and have responsibility for their own learning. Pupils recognise and appreciate good teaching. The majority relate well to many staff and feel able to approach them for help. They are generally open and polite towards adults.
13. However, too often too many pupils are not fully engaged by their work in lessons. It is common that some do not ensure they arrive in time for the beginning of lessons, but dawdle or wander aimlessly around. The feeling that this is normal is encouraged by the complexity of the school day, which means that some pupils are moving around the school on break or lunch while others are in lessons. The school hoped that staggered lunch breaks would reduce conflict between year groups and some outside observers have reported this effect. Some pupils often make it difficult for teachers to manage them in the class, and calling out or speaking over others is much too common. Deteriorating attitudes and behaviour are often associated with the long periods spent on few subjects during a day. Behaviour in the library is sometimes not suitable for a place of study.
14. Pupils' personal development receives good support from work they do in some lessons such as religious studies, art and citizenship, and from their participation in extra-curricular activities

or their work as prefects. As a result, pupils' social development is satisfactory, but other aspects of their personal development are insufficiently well promoted. Assemblies and tutor periods often make little contribution to pupils' spiritual development and the school still fails to provide the statutory daily act of collective worship. Some pupils initiated a peer mentoring scheme and many participate in annual charity weeks, showing good care for others' interests. However, the standard of behaviour is unsatisfactory, and many pupils are unhappy with this because it disrupts their lessons. They witness frequent bullying that is not always handled effectively or fairly. The level of exclusions is about average and reflects the pupil population. Most pupils have friends and good relationships with peers of different ethnic origins, but many detect a racial element in some conflicts within the school. This is partly a consequence of the under-representation of their cultures in the school, which gives pupils the impression that they are undervalued and not respected.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
Mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Other

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
450	32	4
1	1	0
144	4	0
6	1	0

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

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.6	School data	8.0
National data	7.8	National data	1.2

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

15. Last year, the rate of absence was above the national average and the rate of unauthorised absence was well above the average. There is no endemic unpunctuality, but pupils sometimes drift in to lessons after the teacher is ready to start. Registers are taken in most lessons and attendance is marked again during tutor period at the end of the afternoon session. The school has experienced problems with its electronic registration system, so many teachers use paper registers. Because of the complexity of the school day and the fact that much alternative curriculum occurs away from the school site, the school does not always know that pupils are where they should be. The attendance data collected are considered regularly by pastoral team leaders but are not amenable to some sort of analysis which could be useful in identifying patterns of absence other than of individuals.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Overall, the school provides an unsatisfactory quality of education for its pupils. Teaching is poor, because expectations are too low, there are too many unqualified teachers given insufficient guidance, and any good practice is not being demonstrated to colleagues. The curriculum is satisfactory in content, but its planning and execution in Years 10 and 11 are unsatisfactory. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory. Pupils receive an unsatisfactory level of care, guidance and support. Work with parents is unsatisfactory. Links with partner schools are satisfactory, and very good with the wider community.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are poor and as a result many pupils underachieve, particularly in the core subjects of mathematics, science and ICT, throughout the school. Assessment is poor and not used to plan lessons which meet the needs of all pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A high percentage of unsatisfactory or poor teaching was observed.
- Graduate trainees and unqualified teachers are not being given enough support.
- Assessment is inconsistent and therefore ineffective.
- Teaching is good in English, art and citizenship.
- Many teachers have low expectations.

Commentary

16. During the inspection, 31 per cent of lessons observed were unsatisfactory or poor. A higher proportion of these was in Years 10 and 11, where evidence from pupils' workbooks showed very poor learning for some, such as those in Year 11 on the GNVQ leisure and tourism course; they had received no effective tuition throughout the course. In music GCSE, the amount of work seen told a similar story.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 87 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	9 (10.35%)	22 (25.3%)	29 (33.3%)	18 (20.7%)	8 (9.2 %)	1 (1.15 %)

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

17. The turnover of staff in the past year has been high, and there is a large proportion of unqualified, overseas-trained teachers and graduate teacher trainees. Several are insecure, either in their own subject knowledge or in the subject they are given to teach. A European English specialist teaching humanities had no specialist knowledge, for example, and a history graduate trainee is in charge of music, including provision for GCSE. Many of the graduate teachers have very little understanding of how pupils of this age learn because they do not have the opportunity to observe the teaching of subject specialists. Consequently their expectations are lower than they should be in many cases. Several of them had only one day's induction and teach a full timetable from their second day, even in practical subjects, such as science, design and technology and physical education. As a result, they are not sufficiently alert to risks, such as pupils misusing a Stanley knife in one design and technology lesson.
18. Subject managers do not help their inexperienced colleagues enough by, for example, arranging for them to observe themselves or other experienced teachers, or by planning their lessons with them. Some cannot do this because they do not have subject expertise themselves. The head of performing arts, for example, is a mathematician, so cannot guide the inexperienced music and physical education staff in improving their subject expertise; graduate religious education trainees and linguists are not helped by the head of global faculty, who is trained to teach humanities.
19. Many pupils in Years 10 and 11 in particular find it difficult to learn because they have either had no qualified teacher or a succession of teachers for much of the course, spending time in independent learning, sometimes at school and sometimes at home. They are not under close scrutiny in the Independent Learning Centre. These pupils lack motivation and have very little work to show for their time in Years 10 and 11.

20. Not enough work is being done in core subject lessons. In a Year 10 mathematics lower set, for example, work was poorly presented, often not marked and pupils' misconceptions were not corrected. A similar picture occurs in science, where pupils are taught and learn facts and concepts incorrectly, such as the confusion of sodium with sulphur, when the teacher wrongly marked the formula S correct instead of Na for sodium. In ICT, GNVQ work was not checked, little actual teaching took place and some pupils had lost their coursework completed at home, because it had been deleted. Progress and achievement were, therefore, poor.
21. Poor behaviour occurs as a result of boredom through having lessons in one subject for a large part of the day. Pupils are not motivated, for example in a Year 8 all-boy ICT lesson, when the unqualified teacher's poor planning failed to set learning objectives. The boys behaved badly, calling out and playing computer games; learning and achievement were poor. A teacher's inability to plan adequately for a high contingent of pupils with special educational needs or whose mother tongue is not English in a Year 8 religious education lesson led to pupils' bad behaviour because they could not understand the content of the worksheet they were given. The teaching assistant spent more time controlling behaviour than giving help to the pupils, so their achievement in learning about Hinduism was poor.
22. The school has recently placed the deployment of large numbers of special educational needs assistants in the hands of the faculty heads, but liaison between teachers and assistants is extremely variable. In some subject areas, such as English, there is evidence of good practice. For example, pupils made good progress in learning as a result of effective target setting, appropriate adaptation of the materials and well managed teaching with skilful management of behaviour. Elsewhere, however, subject leaders' and teachers' understanding of special educational needs is less certain and too much is left to individual initiative. More needs to be done to strengthen the links between subject departments and special educational needs in the areas of differentiation and the development of appropriate schemes of work. There are also no clear procedures to help staff make the most of teaching assistants in areas such as assessment. Across the school, a significant minority of staff has difficulty in tailoring the work and learning materials to the needs of those pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties and this hinders their achievement. However, a very good lesson seen in English demonstrated that the school does have the necessary expertise.
23. Teachers of English as an additional language work hard to identify the language and learning needs of these pupils and support them effectively in mainstream lessons. They praise pupils' efforts and talk to them constructively about how their work relates to their overall learning needs. However, staff require more help in assessing which needs of pupils are specifically related to their use of the language. Most of the language targets set for these pupils, for example, 'use of full stops', do not relate to English as a foreign language, and those which do, such as 'check verb use' or 'vary sentence structure', are too general to be helpful. Also, although there are two specialist teachers in the school, they do not do this work full-time so the amount of support they can offer to pupils is limited.
24. In some subjects, namely English, drama, art, citizenship and GCSE religious education, teaching is good and sometimes very good. Very good teaching was seen in drama where Year 11 pupils achieved very well in a lesson on 'Runaways'. In citizenship, too, there was much good teaching so that, for example, pupils of low ability could understand some arguments for and against animal rights. The art department is run by graduate trainees who do particularly well with the GCSE pupils, who nearly all achieved A* - C grades in 2003.
25. Pupils learn better in English than in any other core subject. In a Year 10 English lesson for girls, for example, very good teaching was observed in the study of the war poems of Wilfred Owen. The girls were very well prepared for reading 'Dulce at decorum est', gained a good appreciation of the imagery used, such as 'gas creeping into his lungs', and were able to empathise with the soldier. The English department is well run and teaching is regularly monitored and evaluated; good practice is shared and pupils are regularly assessed. Data collected are used well to set targets for improvement.

26. There are problems, however, with the teaching of pupils whose first language is not English. Teachers and assistants do not have planning time together so have to improvise in lessons. Pupils still have difficulty with past tenses, for example, and this is not being addressed. Not enough teaching methods are in use to improve these pupils' literacy, particularly in Years 7 to 9, so that in Years 10 and 11, many are in the lower attainment band. The specialist staff are teaching in the mainstream and do not have enough time to concentrate on the needs of these pupils.
27. Assessment is poor. Teachers' marking, though up-to-date in the work samples presented, is not thorough enough in all subjects and does not give sufficient points for improvement. Inadequate records are kept of pupils' progress in all subjects for accurate predictions of expected grades to be made. Several of the unqualified staff are not familiar enough with GCSE grade and National Curriculum level descriptions to be able to assess work thoroughly. Tracking of pupils' progress from the attainment on entry is in its infancy, and whilst records are now being kept, they are not being used enough in all departments to set targets to improve standards, though this is satisfactorily carried out in English.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory in its planning, breadth, balance and relevance overall, but it is not satisfactory in its execution in Years 10 and 11, where many pupils spend time without focused teaching in independent learning and vocational courses. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities is offered. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for vocational courses in Years 10 and 11, which are timetabled but not taught, is very poor.
- The timetable does not help the consolidation of learning: pupils become bored with one subject in one day.
- There is little rigour in independent learning.
- Provision for citizenship and the alternative curriculum is good.

Commentary

28. In Years 7 to 9, all pupils follow a course which covers the National Curriculum subjects. From Year 7 all study either French or Spanish. Prior to this year they studied two languages. Provision for ICT now ensures that this is taught to all pupils, which is an improvement on the last inspection. In Years 10 and 11 all pupils study English, mathematics, science, ICT and citizenship. In addition, they choose option subjects which are grouped by areas to create a balanced choice, but some pupils do not have access to all the subjects on offer, particularly if they are in the lower band.
29. As an alternative to the GCSE, vocational courses are offered, for example in leisure and tourism, but provision is very poor. The subject is timetabled but there are almost no formal lessons. The poor results in the 2003 examination indicate that this is a continuing issue.
30. The school has been innovative in its approach to the timetable, but the new structures and systems are not adequately managed or monitored to ensure that the practice matches the original aims. Each year group spends a whole day in a single area of learning. Areas are given the responsibility to create their own timetable. This gives them flexibility and enables them to set pupils by ability. This timetable pattern benefits practical subjects and allows some groups to operate with low numbers. However, the result is that pupils have lessons in the same subject for the whole day, which is particularly deleterious in mathematics and languages where they cannot practise their skills daily. Pupils report that they are bored, which is one of the reasons behaviour is so bad.

31. The inspection identified a number of issues which raise concern about the monitoring of the impact of the new timetable. Because each year group has a different break time some groups work all morning without a break: this is a long period to sustain concentrated learning. The staggered breaks also limit the opportunities for staff communication and there is too little time to offer clubs and activities. With all the lessons for one subject being on the same day there are a number of double lessons. In some subjects these are inappropriate for lower ability pupils and those with special educational needs, who find it difficult to concentrate for that length of time. Timetable and staffing changes lead to a lack of continuity. It is difficult to monitor pupils because printed timetables and class lists are often out of date.
32. The school has planned to use the flexibility of the curriculum to develop independent learning. Two elements of this approach are 'optional studies' and 'e-learning'. Optional studies are planned to create opportunities to catch up on work and to work on projects and course work. In practice, the use of optional studies is not monitored. In Year 11 a group of pupils spends the first two hours of the day in the learning resource centre, and of this group eight pupils also spend the last two hours on optional studies. For these pupils there are only two periods of teaching in the whole day. There is insufficient direction for their use of these sessions and there is only general supervision. There is extensive use of the learning resource centre throughout the day, but there is little rigour in the learning that is taking place. Some Year 11 pupils were identified as being there because they had been allowed to drop an option subject following a full year's study in Year 10. Pupils following the alternative curriculum, including hairdressing and motor vehicle engineering, have well planned courses to suit their needs effectively.
33. Provision for the 30 per cent of pupils who use English as an additional language is unsatisfactory. Most were born in the UK or have lived here for several years, and speak English well, but they do not read or write as competently as they speak. A small number of pupils have arrived in the UK recently. They need help in learning to understand, speak, read and write English. The standards reached by both of these groups, and their achievement within the mainstream curriculum, are lower than they could be, and contribute significantly to low standards and achievement across the school. There is inequality of opportunity for Bangladeshi pupils through the banding system, which restricts the subjects that pupils in the lower band can take. In the current Year 11, the majority of pupils in this band is of Asian origin.
34. For pupils with special educational needs, individual education plans (IEPs) are prepared mainly by form tutors and are variable in quality. Although the tutors know their pupils and want them to improve, there is often an excessive emphasis on literacy targets at the expense of, for example, behavioural or numeracy objectives. Current arrangements need to be reviewed to enable IEPs to be integrated into strong systems of target setting and monitoring covering all pupils. The formal and informal monitoring of IEPs and their targets is carried out conscientiously by most teachers but because many targets are somewhat hazy, teachers and assistants find it difficult to assess the small gains many such pupils make. The provision in Statements of Special Educational Needs is implemented satisfactorily. Overall, given the numbers of pupils with special educational needs, the school's curricular response is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9, although the lower band classes are often too large. It is better in Years 10 and 11 with the development of the work-related curriculum and the contribution of Connexions staff and the modification of timetables. As a result, there is less curricular dissatisfaction - and associated challenging behaviour - and better achievement among some of the Year 10 pupils. Some staff are also confident about teaching pupils with a range of learning, emotional, behavioural and social difficulties.
35. The school offers a satisfactory number of clubs and activities but the take-up is very low, even in the normally popular range of physical education. The curriculum is enriched by special event activities which take place during the school day.
36. The school has benefited from building programmes resulting from its changing status and several areas are now presented well, for example the entrance, library and a new dance

studio for performing arts. There is a good programme of maintenance and refurbishment, the early effects of which can be appreciated in some corridors. The refurbishment of pupils' toilets - which are unsatisfactory at present - is included in future plans. Most lessons are taught in suitable rooms, but some are overcrowded and some are less than ideal for the subject taught in them, for example, some science is taught in rooms which prevent the effective inclusion of all pupils in the class, and some music is taught in a room with poor acoustics. Teaching resources are mostly at least satisfactory, but those for history and geography are insufficiently varied to meet the needs of all pupils, and there is a severe lack of appropriate books in Urdu or other Asian languages to support pupils for whom English is an additional language. Non-western cultures are generally under-represented in books and displays and this makes an impact upon the self-esteem of pupils from these cultures.

37. The match of teachers to the needs of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. The school has experienced difficulties appointing suitably qualified and experienced teachers. As a result, there are many unqualified teachers, newly qualified teachers and teachers new to the school. In some subjects the deployment of staff exacerbates this situation. In religious education, for example, many non-specialists teach the subject, and a teacher qualified to teach English as an additional language spends much of his time teaching mainstream English. The heads of the faculties of design and technology and performing arts are non-specialists. The quality of staffing is very good in art and good in English. There is a good team of administrative staff giving good support in most areas, notably in the school office and supporting the science department, and a large team of learning support assistants.

Care, guidance and support

The provision of support, advice and guidance based on monitoring is unsatisfactory, despite some good features. The steps taken to ensure the pupils' health and welfare are unsatisfactory. The involvement of pupils through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Procedures for inducting new pupils are good.
- Mentoring provides good opportunities for parents and pupils to discuss pupils' personal progress with staff.
- Academic guidance lacks an adequate foundation of assessment data.
- There are good relationships between most staff and pupils.
- Pupils' views about bullying and harassment are not fully recognised by the school.

Commentary

38. Although unsatisfactory overall, the school's pastoral system has good features in that form tutors and pastoral team leaders know their pupils well from the start. All incoming pupils' primary schools are visited and arrangements for the transfer of relevant information are good, which enables the school to organise form groupings appropriately. Pupils are prepared well for their new school and most settle quickly. This settling-in is monitored and parents have an opportunity to discuss it during the first term. Pupils generally make friends well and form good relationships with their teachers which enable most of them to ask for help about their work, but not always when they are bullied.
39. Termly mentoring sessions are organised for pupils to discuss their progress with tutors and sometimes with pastoral team leaders. Parents are invited at critical stages such as when choices must be made, but may attend at any time. These consultations provide good opportunities for clarification of what is written in reports, but as they are mostly not with the pupils' subject teachers, advice tends to focus on pupils' attitudes. The interim and end of year reports indicate pupils' levels in different subjects but lack detail about strengths and areas for development. The tutors are therefore able to give useful general guidance, but lack sufficient detailed knowledge to advise pupils how to improve in every area.

40. Pupils receive satisfactory information about careers and post-school options through the citizenship programme, Connexions and events such as the careers fair. Some are guided to the school's alternative or work-related curriculum at mentoring consultations but the advice is not suitable for all pupils, so although some pupils make good progress, others lose interest and absent themselves.
41. A good programme of health and safety checks to ensure pupils' care, welfare and health and safety has recently been devised, but has not been implemented. There is lack of supervision in practical lessons and the canteen, for example. Child protection is well considered and benefits from good relationships with relevant agencies. The school must ensure that all staff are effectively briefed on all these matters.
42. For pupils with special educational needs, identification, assessment, monitoring and accompanying review and target setting arrangements are unsatisfactory. The pupils benefit from some school systems but arrangements for assessment are neither sufficiently robust nor linked effectively to the school's systems. As a result, pupils with behavioural needs, for example, are subject to a variable provision.
43. Many pupils spoken to, as well as parents, said that not all teachers were fair in their dealings with pupils. Those who do not speak English at home do not receive sufficient specific help in improving their literacy, particularly in Years 7 to 9, so many find comprehension of examination and test questions too difficult.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

As a significant proportion of parents is dissatisfied with features of the school; its partnership with parents is therefore unsatisfactory. However, there are useful relationships with some other schools and very beneficial partnerships are maintained with the wider community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A significant minority of parents express concerns about aspects of the school.
- Too few parents play an active part in supporting the school.
- Community resources support pupils' learning and personal development very well.
- There are weaknesses in the reporting of pupils' progress to parents.
- There is a good range of opportunities for parents to communicate with the school.

Commentary

44. Fewer than one in ten of the pre-inspection questionnaires distributed were received back from parents and about half this number of parents attended the pre-inspection meeting. The views of many more parents were sought during the inspection. Some of these views of the school were positive, such as about the induction of new pupils and the school's expectation that pupils will try their hardest. However, many concerns were expressed about a range of issues including the standard of behaviour, the provision of work for pupils to do at school and at home, and the relationships between the school and parents. Inspection findings support parents' positive views but also include evidence which supports many of their concerns. Findings about pupils' behaviour and work are reported above.
45. Parents receive reports about their children every term and have the opportunity to discuss these with form tutors. Some parents appreciate that they can make approaches by e-mail or by writing in planners, and that they have weekly opportunities to attend 'drop-in' sessions, but many do not take advantage of these possibilities. The reports on pupils' progress include relevant information and target levels but still lack the subject-specific guidance on what pupils should do to improve that was noted in the last inspection report. While some parts of reports are good, many sections of most reports are impersonal and some even use the wrong gender

for describing the pupil. Parents who attend these sessions find them useful and those who do not are nevertheless required to acknowledge the agreed targets.

46. The school has surveyed parental opinion on a number of occasions but not all parents believe that the school takes good account of their views and many remain sceptical about the value for their children of some of the school's strategies, such as raising its profile by gaining various statuses and awards. It has proved difficult to recruit parent governors which fully represent the communities from which pupils come. There is a parents' association but only a few parents are involved in running it.
47. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to co-operate in reviews of progress and are encouraged to help with their children's learning.
48. Relationships with local primary schools - especially those made through performing arts - are good, but relationships with secondary schools are compromised by competition for pupils. Representatives of colleges are regularly at school to give advice to potential students, and a new Connexions officer has just been appointed. There are many and very beneficial links with the wider community. Pupils benefit from numerous visits and visitors, some of whom offer direct assistance in their areas of expertise. This is often during well planned citizenship lessons when, for example, drugs education is led by police. The wide range of activities on 'opportunities days' may include a visit to a significant site in London or a visiting theatrical experience in school.
49. Although the school has recently begun to offer GCSE Urdu, much more needs to be done to show pupils, parents and communities that their languages and cultures are a valuable resource which the school appreciates. The school's Learning Resource Centre has more than 6000 books, but only eight are in community languages and five of these are suitable only for younger primary school pupils, so they give a negative image of the languages spoken by the school's pupils. There are no resources available for word-processing in Urdu, Punjabi, Bengali or any other community language. The communities from which the school's intake is drawn have strong artistic and cultural traditions, but there is little overt evidence that these contribute to the work of the school as a performing arts college or to the ethos of the school as a diverse multilingual and multiethnic community.
50. There is a mismatch between the aspirations of the school for its pupils and the aspirations of the local communities, which it will not be easy to resolve. The school does not take a strong lead in setting up dialogue with pupils, parents and community groups, listening to their points of view and seeking balanced and timely solutions.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are poor. The headteacher's vision is not matched by what happens in the school. Leadership of other key staff is unsatisfactory. Governors do not fulfil their roles satisfactorily. Management is poor overall because it is not bringing about improvement in standards, nor considering best value obtainable from resources.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Poor management has not concentrated on improving teaching and learning.
- The headteacher's vision has brought forth many awards but not enough improvement in standards.
- Performing arts college funding is not effectively monitored by the governing body.
- Management of provision and funding for pupils with special educational needs and those who do not speak English at home is unsatisfactory.
- The English department is well led and managed.
- Many faculty heads' responsibilities are outside their expertise.
- Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are ineffective.

Commentary

51. Leadership of the school is poor. The headteacher, appointed five years ago, brought ambitious vision for the development of the school which has resulted in the acquisition of many external awards and its current status as a performing arts college. Three of the senior staff who helped to realise the initial parts of the vision left the school in the past year for promotion, and the school has found it hard to replace them and to acquire qualified teachers in an area of high housing costs. In its struggle to retain the vision for future development, such as the sports complex and 'virtual college', the school has lost sight of its primary function as an establishment for teaching and learning. The vision has also become misguided because the fundamental nature of the school's population has not been considered: the school does not comprise mature college students, but young pupils who need great support and attention from their teachers.
52. Of the current senior management team, none has a job description which reflects responsibility for the curriculum, teaching and learning, or standards achieved in the classroom. Actual responsibilities range from community projects, Sportszone, Learners' Charter, to Training School oversight, for example. There is complacency about standards; pupils enter the school well below average and although the school aims state that all should succeed, expectations of pupils' achievement are low. There is no whole school system to track pupils' progress and that which is done in faculties is insufficient to enable underachievement by particular groups of pupils to be identified, let alone be focused upon.
53. Strategic planning is weak. The targets are mainly to do with the community projects, developing 'state of the art' facilities, such as the 'Independent Learning Resource Centre' and 'Sportszone' project; success criteria for these are in place. The school has had some success with its 'thinking skills' programme, but one way subject staff and form tutors monitor and evaluate these is to reward wrong answers in order to establish a culture of involvement in lessons. There are no whole school targets to improve standards in Years 7 to 9 or in GCSE examinations. Responsibility for this has been delegated to the faculty heads; in the English and language faculty, this is well done, and standards are being maintained well, but this is not so in others, including mathematics, science and ICT, where achievement is below average.
54. Few faculty heads can lead by example as their deployment by the headteacher does not always reflect their own expertise. The head of English leads and manages English provision well but the head of mathematics, for example, is in charge of performing arts and cannot help inexperienced and unqualified teachers in music. GCSE pupils have had no qualified teaching as yet in Year 10 or Year 11 despite the fact that there are trained music teachers deployed on projects elsewhere. The head of global faculty cannot guide languages or religious education staff adequately. The present Year 11 GNVQ leisure and tourism pupils have had no consistent teaching throughout their course and have little or no work to show for their independent learning.
55. The school has nearly 300 pupils with an identified special educational need; this is well above the national average. The headteacher has the improvement of provision and the development

of inclusion as major priorities and the governors have produced a most generous management and staffing structure to reflect this. A number of systems and procedures are at an early stage and the school does not have a co-ordinator. Such work is carried out by the student development manager, currently on long term sickness. However, the headteacher has left a lack of strategic and organisational clarity around the many roles and accountabilities, particularly with regard to responsibilities for whole-school teaching quality and curricular improvement. Additionally, the success of subject and faculty leaders in enhancing the achievement of pupils with special educational needs is extremely variable and arrangements for addressing the problem are undeveloped. As a result, high quality teaching of pupils with special educational needs is hindered by issues of teamwork and deployment.

56. Leadership of English as an additional language (EAL) is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has provided training for mainstream teachers to help them to understand how they can take pupils forward, but the impact of this is limited by the high staff turnover and by the fact that time for joint planning between EAL and mainstream teachers is not available. As a result class teachers tend to focus on teaching subject-specific vocabulary, rather than on methods which would help all pupils (especially EAL pupils) to improve their literacy. In general, these pupils are attentive and want to learn. In a Year 11 lesson, for instance, on 'Of Mice and Men', taught in partnership by the co-ordinator and a mainstream English specialist, pupils showed that they had understood and thought carefully about the main issues and characters in the story. They are fully included in mainstream lessons and do as well as they can with the limited help available to them. The school does not at present provide any short-term focused induction for newly-arrived beginner learners of English.
57. The EAL co-ordinator is clear about what work he needs to do within the school. He knows that he and his colleague require further help to identify and meet the needs of those EAL users who are nearly fully competent. The positive start he has made is valued by class teachers and by the headteacher. However, specific funds are not fully used in support of these pupils, and at present the school's specialist teachers spend 40 per cent of their time on mainstream teaching (in English, French and citizenship) so the time they have available for EAL work is limited.
58. Management is poor. The school's evaluation of its work is not realistic. The quality of teaching, for example, was judged to be very good and achievement excellent in the pre-inspection documentation when this is far from the truth. This shows that the headteacher's judgement is not based on firm evidence from monitoring, for example. Indeed, there is little evidence of performance data being used to monitor, evaluate and improve standards. The school has not established its attainment on entry through cognitive tests, though it has just begun to test pupils in Year 7 and it does keep a track of the levels its pupils gain in the Year 6 National Curriculum tests as well as pupils' reading age. There is no whole school use of these data to identify underachievement as pupils move up the school.
59. A structure for performance management is in place, but it is failing to provide the appropriate support to bring about improvements in teaching and learning in most areas of the curriculum because there is a mismatch between the expertise of managers and the teaching staff for whom they have responsibility for guiding. There is little or no rigorous appraisal of teaching by the headteacher. Very limited opportunities are available for professional development through focused induction and effective training on the job for the many graduate trainees and overseas-trained staff.
60. There is some observation of lessons by line managers, but it is inconsistent from faculty to faculty. Good practice was found in science and English, and satisfactory support in design and technology and ICT. In other faculties, there is good informal support, but inadequate formal systems to ensure the appropriate monitoring and focused guidance and support that is required. Several trainees and overseas-trained staff are in charge of subject areas, some of which are not their degree subject. A history graduate trainee, for example, is in charge of music. Many members of staff voiced their discontent to inspectors about the gulf between

senior managers' vision and the reality of trying to put it into practice without adequate training and with the constant new initiatives being put into place.

61. Many staff expressed frustration about the timetable. Pupils in each year have a whole day in each faculty, and sometimes lessons can be more than two hours long, which is very difficult to sustain in mathematics and languages though beneficial to practical subjects. Parents, too, voiced their concern about the timetable and the mentoring days when their children come to school to discuss their reports with form tutors for ten minutes or so, and spend the rest of the day on homework or coursework, either at home or in school. Whilst this is innovative in that work is put on the school's website for pupils to take, the majority of parents would prefer to have consultations in the evenings, when they are free, and to see subject teachers also, who can give them targets for their children's improvement and discuss progress in individual subjects.
62. There is an induction programme for staff new to the school that aims to provide teachers and non-teaching staff with the information about important school systems which they need to work effectively within the organisation. Although teachers have an identified mentor to support them, many staff reported that they felt inadequately prepared for their full teaching timetable.
63. Governors are not fulfilling their responsibilities satisfactorily. There is a large number of governors, including parent representatives. They are generally supportive of the school but do not have sufficient knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses. Some governors do not attend meetings in their areas of responsibility and there is insufficient evidence of their monitoring of curriculum provision, particularly in Years 10 and 11, and the targets relating to the performing arts college status. The statutory daily act of collective worship is not carried out. The key issues from the previous inspection have not been adequately addressed and the governing body does not compare this school's standards rigorously with those of others in similar circumstances.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	2810681
Total expenditure	2722126
Expenditure per pupil	4162

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	108,000*
Balance carried forward to the next	64,700

* including performing arts grant

64. Financial management is poor. The school receives a well above average amount of money per pupil, but the outcomes in standards of work achieved are unsatisfactory and sometimes poor. The majority of the school's income goes on staffing; it has too many senior managers for a small school and some supernumerary staff appointed to performing arts posts. Most of these do little, if any, teaching, whilst other staff have large numbers in classes, such as mathematics top sets. Yet others are teaching out of their specialism to cover some subjects which senior managers are qualified in but do not teach. Whilst it is good practice to have support assistants trained to work in particular faculties, there are not enough to go around to cover all the special educational needs and support for English as an additional language.
65. The principles of best value are not effectively applied; the school does not compare its performance adequately with that of other schools; it does not consult staff, pupils or parents enough about changes. It challenges itself to do better regarding outside awards but not to improve standards of teaching, learning and achievement. The financial management of the performing arts grant was not satisfactorily explained, nor was an audit report forthcoming. Financial management of funds for special educational needs and for supporting pupils whose first language is not English does not give value for money. The large balance carried forward does not tally with the headteacher's statement that the budget would not be in surplus this year. The school gives poor value for money.

THE HEARING IMPAIRMENT UNIT

Provision for pupils with hearing impairment is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils at the school with hearing impairment receive a well-planned inclusive education through expert support provided by the unit.
- Pupils achieve well because of a holistic approach to their needs.
- Teaching is expert and carefully structured and pupils learn well.
- Good induction procedures and well planned arrangements for the next stage of their education helps pupils to settle into the school and succeed in their chosen courses when they leave.
- Relationships are very good and expectations of learning and behaviour are high.

Commentary

66. Pupils with hearing impairment achieve well, supported in the majority of lessons by well trained, experienced teachers and teaching assistants who liaise effectively with subject teachers to plan and structure their work. Pupils also have individual tuition and small group work which is carefully tailored to their specific individual learning needs. This enables them to succeed and sometimes surpass the key targets set for them.
67. Careful preparation and good induction procedures enable Year 7 pupils to settle well to school routines. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 with hearing impairment learn to become more independent and to manage their environment and their learning with self-assurance. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 continue to make good progress towards their targets because of the focused expert support. Pupils have good attitudes towards their learning, despite their difficulties. They want to succeed and try hard. Most work to the best of their ability and those of higher ability obtain good results in the national examinations in relation to their capability, sometimes exceeding their predicted grades. Because of the very good liaison of the unit with sixth form providers, all pupils carry on their education when they leave school. Most go on to college and, through good preparation for transition, show a clear understanding of their learning and future goals.
68. Teaching by experienced specialist teachers of the deaf and by well-trained support assistants is consistently good. These staff have very good relationships with pupils, which are formed through careful induction and mentoring procedures. Staff know their pupils' needs well through carefully planned and detailed assessment and they have expert knowledge to meet them. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and attainment and their planning is thorough. Individual and group work is carefully tailored to match work in the mainstream lessons.
69. Pupils' progress is carefully monitored, usually after detailed collaboration with individual subject teachers. Annual statutory reviews are in good order and fully comply with legal requirements. Individual education plans are detailed with specific and measurable targets and they are reviewed regularly. Relationships with parents are very good. Parents and their children value the support they are given and trust the staff in the unit. Pupils come from a wide surrounding area and are brought by taxi so it is not always possible for them to join in all after school activities. However, most parents and their children attend major events such as annual reviews of statements, mentoring interviews and school performances. Staff have close relationships with outside agencies so that pupils and their families have ongoing advice and specialist resources available to them.
70. Opportunities are used well to disseminate good classroom practice and to extend all teachers' and pupils' understanding of the needs of these pupils. As well as running regular courses for teachers and induction for new teachers, the unit works with hearing pupils in subjects such as

science to enable them to understand some of the difficulties that hearing impaired pupils have to overcome.

71. Last year both specialist teachers from the unit were needed to teach in the mainstream school for half of their teaching time, which had a negative impact on several elements of their work in the unit. Individual mentoring and levels of support in the classroom were limited and plans for future development curtailed. This situation has now been resolved and teachers are successfully restoring the intensive tutorial work previously undertaken and putting into place detailed monitoring systems of support given to all hearing impaired pupils. The unit has retained the very good relationships with staff, outside agencies, parents and pupils.
72. Accommodation is good. There is room for individual and small group teaching as well as an interview room and office which enables assessment and administrative work and for pupils and staff to work with outside agencies, such as speech therapy. Resources are generally good and the unit supports the main school in providing, for example, subtitling for a range of audiovisual resources. The unit is insulated for sound to make it more acoustically comfortable for hearing impaired pupils, as have many areas of the school wherever technically possible.
73. All teachers in the unit have worked very hard to sustain the good standards reported at the last inspection and develop them still further. Effective support for pupils with hearing impairment is in place and there are good monitoring systems. The unit provides good value for money.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 and 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching is leading to effective learning throughout the school.
- Achievement is good in Years 10 and 11.
- Although standards are improving they need to be raised further in Years 7 to 9.
- There is good leadership and management of a strong team of English teachers.
- Links between English and drama are insufficient.

Commentary

74. Standards in English in Years 7 to 9 are below average. Attainment in National Curriculum tests over recent years has been well below the national average but there was a clear improvement in 2003. Standards seen in lessons are higher and closer to national expectations, especially in Year 9. Pupils' achievement overall in Years 7 to 9 is satisfactory. Pupils of average and above average ability achieve well. The achievement of the relatively high proportion of lower ability pupils, those with special educational needs, and those at early stages of learning English is more gradual, but nevertheless remains satisfactory.
75. Standards in Years 10 and 11 are average. Results in GCSE English in 2003 dropped; in GCSE English literature they improved. Generally over the last three years results at GCSE have been close to national averages. This is confirmed by standards seen in lessons. However, only about two-thirds of the total number of pupils in Year 11 were entered last year for GCSE English examinations. The current work seen of Year 10 pupils is better. Based on prior attainment, achievement of all pupils in Years 10 and 11 is good. Against national comparisons, boys tend to perform better than girls, but there is some variation from year to year.
76. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, and often very good. Lessons are very well planned and structured so that pupils benefit from a variety of activities and teaching styles. In Years 7 to 9, pupils' attention is quickly focused through briskly paced starter activities. Teachers effectively demonstrate the important linguistic features and style that pupils are expected to use in their own writing or speaking. In a Year 7 lesson, for example, the teacher skilfully questioned pupils on the key features of an information brochure, while Year 8 pupils were helped to imitate the language and presentation of a news broadcast after viewing a video recording. Time is well organised and pupils are encouraged to plan, draft and edit their writing systematically. They are also given regular opportunities to research a topic using the Internet and to word process or desktop publish their work. Year 8 pupils, for example, had produced good quality holiday brochures with images and attractively set out text. Year 10 pupils studying war poetry had successfully researched aspects of the trenches in the First World War through the Imperial War Museum website.
77. Teachers work hard to meet differing needs and they encourage pupils to take an individual approach. A Year 11 pupil, for example, chose independently to compare women's role and marriage customs in "Pride and Prejudice" with Asian traditions in her own community. Lower ability pupils, those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language generally benefit from being in smaller groups and from support from teaching

assistants. However, on occasions when there is a high concentration of such in one class, teachers are not planning enough differing tasks and approaches to meet such a range of individual needs. Despite teachers' best efforts, poor attitudes to learning from a few Year 11 pupils slow their progress. These are a minority, however, and in most English lessons pupils are well motivated, well behaved and work well.

78. The leadership and management of English are good. Although there was a decline in standards after the previous inspection - mainly through changes in teaching staff and leadership - there is currently a strong team of specialist English teachers who are already making clear improvements. The head of faculty maintains and shares detailed records of pupils' progress. Pupils' work is helpfully marked and they are given very clear guidance on how to improve at the end of each half-term unit of work. The English curriculum provides a good range of experiences. Opportunities are also provided for pupils to take an alternative, nationally recognised course in communication in Years 10 and 11. Pupils with literacy difficulties are well supported. There are good opportunities to experience media appreciation and to use information and communication technology. The English faculty is also using some interesting means to meet the differing needs of boys and girls. Because of staff changes, it has not yet been possible to forge closer links with performing arts. Closer liaison and co-operation with drama teachers are needed and have been planned. Since its last inspection the school has become more aware of the needs of pupils who use English as an additional language, and has taken some positive steps towards meeting these needs. However, more has to be done to enable the work of the department to make a satisfactory contribution to raising standards and achievement across the curriculum.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

79. Pupils' language and literacy skills are average by the time they reach Year 11. Pupils make good progress in reading and improving the accuracy of their writing. This is mainly as a result of good teaching in the English faculty supported by some satisfactory literacy teaching in other subjects. Most subjects reinforce key vocabulary and terminology. In September 2003, the school tried to introduce a common marking policy to ensure all subjects correct errors in spelling, grammar and punctuation, but this was not seen to be operational in many subjects. In the past all teachers have received training in supporting literacy and in teaching bilingual pupils, but some newly appointed teachers are less certain about literacy development. Difficulty in literacy often hinders pupils' ability in examinations to understand and answer questions correctly, and in lessons, pupils' failure to understand worksheets leads to poor behaviour. At present the school is not making best use of its performing arts status to improve pupils' speaking skills.

Modern Foreign Languages

Provision for modern foreign languages is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning, and leadership and management are all unsatisfactory overall.
- GCSE results in Spanish in the last two years show good achievement.
- National Curriculum levels are not used enough to help pupils understand their attainment.
- The inadequate time allocation and the blocked timetable have a negative impact on standards.

Commentary

80. In the 2002 GCSE French examination, the percentage of pupils with grades A* - C was above the national average and all pupils entered gained a grade. In 2003 the number with higher grades fell to well below the national average of recent years. Achievement in both years was good. In the 2002 examination in Spanish the percentage of pupils with A* - C grades was

broadly in line with the national average. In 2003 there was a slight improvement at this level. Over half the year group, however, left school without any certification in a foreign language.

81. By the end of Year 9 standards are below national expectations in both French and Spanish. Pupils in Years 8 and 9 have only had a single period a week in their language before this year. In French, the loss of teacher has also had a negative impact on continuity and hence, standards. In both subjects, achievement is unsatisfactory and the time allocation is inadequate to make up lost ground. Some pupils show good listening and speaking skills in those lessons where teaching challenges these skills by sustained use of the foreign language. For many, though, these skills are unsatisfactory because the teachers use English to explain difficulties in the language. Overall standards of writing are below national levels. By the end of Year 11 standards remain below national expectations. In both languages there is only a single group in each year for each language. As a result there is a broad range of ability in each year and it is difficult for the teachers to focus their support. Although the written work of some higher ability pupils in Spanish shows features that match the requirements of good grades for the GCSE, achievement is unsatisfactory overall. In this group, pupils at other attainment levels show satisfactory achievement. In other groups in French and Spanish, there is coverage of the topics but the language used is too simple and there are continuing weaknesses in basic grammar.
82. There is some good teaching in both foreign languages but overall teaching and learning are unsatisfactory at all ages. In the best lessons, the teacher challenges the pupils by sustained use of the foreign language, by the pace and by the high expectation of behaviour. As a result pupils are interested, are eager to participate. They work quietly and their attitudes contribute to good learning. The best teaching gives good guidance on both the format and the language required for the GCSE. Much teaching does not challenge pupils in the foreign language, however, so that they become dependent on the teacher for all understanding. In some groups the attitudes of a few pupils hinder the learning of the other pupils. In much of the teaching there is a lack of variety of activities to encourage active participation. The foreign language assistants are well used to help both higher ability pupils and the less motivated pupils. Work is regularly assessed against National Curriculum levels but the meaning is not always explained to help pupils understand their attainments.
83. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The head of faculty provides good support, but the lack of specialist expertise limits the amount available to languages teachers to structure development. There is no sharing of good practice in the area. Since the last inspection there has been a total change in the languages offered and in the teachers in the subject area. Improvement is unsatisfactory, and standards are below those found at the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in National Curriculum tests are rising, but not fast enough.
- The teachers work hard, but are not given enough support.
- Leadership of the department is unsatisfactory.
- The timetable structure does not support achievement – most of the pupils lack key basic skills and need regular consolidation.

Commentary

84. Standards on entry to the school are well below average. At the end of both Years 9 and 11 they remain well below average. In the Year 9 National Curriculum tests in 2002, results were well below the national average, with less than half the candidates achieving the expected

Level 5. In 2003, there was a very slight increase in this figure. In the GCSE examinations in 2002, 25 per cent of the pupils gained a grade A*-C, which was well below national expectations. In 2003 this improved to 32 per cent.

85. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. In general, higher ability sets make better progress than others, partly because the more experienced teachers take these groups, and partly because these pupils are better able to maintain their concentration over the day. Positive features supporting achievement include the opportunity to work at length on activities that encourage independent learning, and some good use of ICT to support teaching and learning. Negative features include the poor standards of numeracy allied to lack of opportunities to work daily on mathematical skills, and the attitude of many average and below average pupils towards studying all their mathematics in one day. Presentation of work is often poor, with incomplete work and the use of imprecise processes.
86. Overall, the quality of the teaching and learning is unsatisfactory. Approximately four in every ten lessons seen were unsatisfactory; only two in ten were good. In the good lessons, planning was thorough and there was often a range of different activities to keep the pupils interested and enable them to achieve well. Pupils are challenged to investigate mathematical situations, laying a good foundation for learning and encouraging independent learning. Teachers have begun to use the Key Stage 3 Strategy, but this is not yet effective or applied consistently across the department. In particular, inadequate time is spent giving the pupils practice in mental arithmetic and key skills, and so they do not learn them readily. In unsatisfactory lessons, investigative activities are not reviewed clearly enough to ensure that the learning is extracted, and there are no methods to ensure that all pupils have understood the key concepts. Pupils acquire misconceptions, which are not picked up quickly enough. Too long is spent on some of these activities and teachers do not ensure that pupils use their time well. Often too little challenge is set in these lessons. Management of the behaviour of some pupils, particularly in the older year groups and some of the lower ability mainstream sets, is sometimes inadequate, and this affects the progress of the class as a whole.
87. The school has encountered considerable difficulties recruiting suitably qualified and experienced staff; however the department now has a full complement of teachers, who are capable of delivering the curriculum given appropriate support. However, this alone is inadequate because the head of department has been committed elsewhere, and no satisfactory alternative arrangement has been put in place. In addition, the deployment of teachers to classes follows no clear pattern – some classes have one teacher and others three during the course of the day. The arrangement of having all mathematics lessons on one day enables pupils to tackle longer tasks, but does not suit the teaching of numeracy, leading to a slow pace of work in many lessons and deteriorating behaviour as many of the pupils lose their concentration. The assessment of pupils' progress through regular tests is sound, but many of the teachers lack the detailed knowledge of the curriculum needed to give advice from assessment information on how to improve.
88. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. Standards by the end of Year 9 have fallen, and achievement in all years has deteriorated. There is better use of ICT for teaching and learning, but the quality of teaching has declined considerably. The issues in leadership have not been addressed.

Mathematics across the curriculum

89. Some pupils achieve satisfactory standards, relative to their general mathematical ability, particularly in the higher ability sets. However, many in all year groups are still unfamiliar with multiplication tables and other basic number knowledge, and this slows their progress in many areas of the mathematics curriculum. These pupils also tend to lack knowledge and confidence to work problems out in their heads. In many areas of the curriculum, there is little evidence of the use of numeracy to enhance the curriculum, or to provide further opportunities to improve the pupils' standards. The policy to support numeracy across the curriculum has yet to have an

impact in raising standards. However, some use of graphs was seen in English as part of research projects, and in science to collate information.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is unsatisfactory throughout the school.
- Recently appointed staff lack the teaching and examination experience to enable them to raise standards of achievement.
- Resources are good but there is insufficient practical work in Years 10 and 11.
- The good intentions of the enthusiastic staff and well-motivated pupils are frustrated by very long lessons and by a whole day spent in the faculty once a week.
- The poor behaviour of a minority of disinterested pupils is not managed well enough to prevent interruption to the work of other pupils.

Commentary

90. In Year 9 National Curriculum tests and in GCSE examinations, results are well below the national average, particularly for the higher National Curriculum levels and GCSE grades. In the 2003 Year 9 tests, results improved slightly on 2002 but remain well below average. In these tests, boys did better than girls. In the GCSE examination in 2003, girls' performance matched that of boys. In 2002 the number of pupils achieving grades A* - G was in line with the national average but the number achieving A* - C grades fell well short; in 2003 results in both grade bands deteriorated. Overall, pupils' attainment at GCSE was well below that predicted by their Year 9 results two years previously. Problems with literacy often affect the performance of pupils whose first language is not English; they may not understand the test questions or may not be able to answer accurately. By the time they reach GCSE, improved fluency in English often overcomes such difficulties.
91. Standards seen were well below average overall and achievement unsatisfactory. Standards of pupils of higher ability in Years 7 to 9 are about average. Standards in the lower band are often well below the expected standard, although oral responses show that many pupils are capable of higher standards than their written records show. The work of pupils in Years 10 and 11 is below the nationally expected standard, and in some lessons this was clearly due to pupils' non-involvement. Very little practical work was seen and such skills develop less well. In the written work of pupils in higher sets, there is often insufficient detail, and from responses seen in lessons, there is sometimes poor recall, indicating a failure to commit the facts to memory. In all five years, pupils with special educational needs matched their peers in oral work and only the lower quality of their written work identified them in class, unless they were being guided by a teaching assistant. They are totally integrated into their teaching groups and their progress usually matches that of their classmates.
92. The quality of teaching and learning is unsatisfactory, and the below average standards are mainly due to the lack of teaching and examination experience of new staff. Behaviour management, understanding the intentions of the examiners and lack of experience in translating the outline of the work to be covered into the detail of the lesson are three major problems – the last two being evident in pupils' notebooks, which are not scrutinised by teachers. The result is that many pupils learn the basic facts without understanding the science and are unable then to answer a question in sufficient detail to achieve the higher grades.
93. In general, pupils are interested in science and are particularly keen to learn anything that has an application to everyday life, discussing it with interest and presenting it clearly in their notebooks. Boys are more willing to contribute than girls but teachers work hard to keep both sexes equally involved. Many pupils, however, have short concentration spans and too long

spent on a single activity leads to boredom and inappropriate behaviour. This is most obvious when younger pupils are carrying out independent tasks on computers. If the pace of a lesson slackens or a particular activity goes on for too long, pupils lose interest and fail to concentrate. Higher ability pupils then merely become bored and those of lower ability begin to misbehave, which leads to underachievement in both cases. The presence of the teaching assistant is invaluable in helping to counter problems of inattention and poor behaviour and in helping individuals to maintain proper progress. For many pupils in the lower band, self-control is badly lacking and they interrupt by calling out, attempting to wander around the laboratory and trying to interfere with what others are doing. These activities inevitably waste time until the class has been settled once more.

94. The three-part lesson is firmly embedded in science and pupils know from the stated learning objectives exactly what they should master by the end. They are used to question and answer, both to establish what they already know at the start, and to find out what they have learned at the end. By Year 10 they are confidently using correct scientific vocabulary orally and in writing. Nearby computer rooms enable ICT to be used to enliven lessons and many pupils have good computer skills. All pupils have equal access to staff and to equipment and teachers make every effort to involve all pupils regardless of sex or background – often despite natural shyness. In two laboratories when large groups are present, there is a risk of those at the back of the room becoming detached from the lesson due to their distance from the teacher and difficulties of both hearing and seeing what is going on. The faculty is aware of this. Marking is regular and uses the faculty grading system consistently, but there is a lack of constructive comment on how a pupil might improve. Unfinished work is frequently not followed up.
95. Leadership of the science part of the faculty is unsatisfactory because the new head of faculty does not monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning, which is unsatisfactory. Pupils are underachieving. The responsibility for such a large faculty is a heavy one, but there is a clear view of how science should develop and a shared commitment to improving results. The adoption of the innovative Applied Science GCSE course is a commendable initiative, and appropriate to the pupils' needs.
96. Management of the department is unsatisfactory. Unqualified and newly-qualified staff are now properly supported, but they all have full teaching timetables, including examination classes and some very large groups. Many classes contain a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs or with behavioural problems, and the challenge of equipping new teachers with the skills to deal with the problems that arise daily is on-going. They are not equipped, for example, with a centralised computer-based record of attainment from Year 6 onwards to facilitate the monitoring of achievement through the school.
97. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. Although the use of ICT has increased, the e-learning seen during the mentoring day was erratic in quality and not an effective use of time unless pupils were very closely supervised.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment are well below national expectations.
- Teaching is unsatisfactory in too many lessons.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning in discrete ICT is weak.
- Management of cross-curricular ICT is weak.
- Technical support is good and helps sustain resources for lessons.

Commentary

98. Standards of attainment on entry to the school are well below national expectation. Standards in the current Year 9 remain well below as too little progress is made towards acquiring the levels of knowledge and understanding and the practical skills required by the National Curriculum. These standards are reflected in the levels awarded by teachers. The school is presently putting into place schemes of work that closely follow the National Strategy for ICT.
99. In the GCSE examinations in 2003, pupils gained results that were well below the national averages of 2002. Currently in Year 11, standards are well below national averages. Higher ability pupils produce a sound range of business documentation for their coursework. They produce satisfactory solutions for problems such as creating a computerised system to make a home video store operate more efficiently. However the work most pupils produce is of a low standard and is often poorly organised. Folders contain little that has value for revision purposes. Most pupils' knowledge and understanding is poor, and the achievement of all pupils is unsatisfactory.
100. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall. Too many lessons are marred by poor control of pupils' behaviour; teachers spend too much time settling pupils down to work. In some lessons this is not achieved and pupils ignore instructions and spend much of the lesson playing Internet games. Though the school has a clear policy regarding Internet use, sanctions for misuse are not consistently applied. Many lessons do not follow a clear structure of introduction, main activity and closing session so do not engage or motivate the pupils well. Too often pupils do not listen to the teachers' explanations of teaching points and learning is poor. Some teachers demonstrate insufficient subject knowledge and the level of challenge in these lessons is poor. There is some use made of teachers' guides to promote more independent learning but they are often inappropriately used. Teachers allow pupils to present poorly organised folders that do not reflect learning and offer little for revision purposes. The satisfactory teaching in the subject occurs mainly with younger pupils and features good, detailed lesson planning, a firm approach to behaviour management and engaging demonstrations of teaching points using interactive whiteboards.
101. The leadership and management of ICT are unsatisfactory. The network manager who works three days in the school is the ICT co-ordinator and has worked hard to rewrite schemes of work that take into consideration the National ICT Strategy. These are being carefully introduced in Years 7 and 8. The monitoring and evaluation of ICT teachers is not her responsibility. There is no clear programme of classroom observation to monitor and evaluate standards in ICT and this is an unsatisfactory situation, particularly as staff in this area are either not well qualified or are inexperienced. Improvement is unsatisfactory because there has been little progress in ICT since the last inspection. Though resources have improved, and pupils now have the benefit of discrete time for ICT, and the school has a stable network, standards and achievement have not improved sufficiently.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

102. The provision of cross-curricular ICT is unsatisfactory, despite the school being well resourced. Some individual teachers use computers well to aid learning in their subject, but there is no clear management structure for the development of ICT, no scheme of work to direct efforts and no clear view of who does what, where and when.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Expectations of behaviour and work rate are low in some lessons.
- Assessment is not used effectively to inform pupils of their progress.
- Specialist teachers have good subject knowledge.

Commentary

103. Standards seen in a top band Year 9 lesson were average. In a lower band Year 8 lesson they were poor. Overall, standards are below average. Year 9 teacher assessments for last year indicating good progress overestimated levels of attainment.
104. GCSE results have been below average in the last two years with poor value added, demonstrating poor achievement, but discussions with pupils and the scrutiny of work show that standards are below average and achievement is unsatisfactory. Standards seen in Year 10 were, however, similar to those seen in many schools. The achievement of lower and average ability pupils is satisfactory because the teacher has high expectations and manages behaviour effectively. Higher ability pupils make less progress because they are given insufficient opportunities to further develop their knowledge and understanding, and many underachieve.
105. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall. In a Year 8 lesson, an unqualified teacher had low expectations and did not manage behaviour effectively. Some pupils were well motivated and worked well together, discussing the reasons for the location of sites. The majority completed little work and some paid no attention to the teacher and disrupted the learning of others. Pupils have no opportunities for fieldwork studies in Years 7 to 9. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 benefit from taking part in a field visit to a beach. In a Year 10 lesson the teacher had good subject knowledge. Teachers' and pupils' experience of different countries is used to good effect. Pupils use examples to distinguish between the re-use of scarce resources in less economically developed countries and the use of recycling in those that are more economically developed.
106. There is little variation in the written work produced by pupils with different abilities in Year 10 because much is teacher led or copied from books. Whilst this ensures that all have definitions of key terms, it provides little challenge for more able pupils. Class discussions show greater variation in attainment and a higher level of achievement than that seen in written work. Year 11 pupils were not observed during the inspection; their coursework includes satisfactory examples of independent learning. Books are regularly marked. They are generally well presented and praised for this. However, pupils are not provided with clear indications of their progress or how to improve. Records of attainment are kept but these are not used to guide teaching to meet the needs of each pupil.
107. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The head of department does not monitor teaching and learning or allocate time to support unqualified teachers. Assessment practice is not developed across the department, and lesson planning is generally unsatisfactory. Progress since the previous inspection is poor. Standards have declined and areas identified for development, including diagnostic assessment, have not been addressed.

History

Provision in history is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Behaviour management is weak.
- Expectations of both the quantity and quality of work are low.
- Work is insufficiently tailored to the needs of individuals or groups.
- Good support is provided for two teaching assistants working with a special needs group.

Commentary

108. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 were not observed and insufficient work was seen to arrive at a judgement. In Year 8, attainment was below average. This reflects low levels of literacy on entry in Year 7 and low expectations of behaviour. Attainment is below average and achievement unsatisfactory.
109. Standards of attainment seen in Year 10 were just satisfactory. More able students underachieve because they are not provided with appropriately demanding work. History was last offered as an option in 2000. GCSE results in 2002 were below average with low value added, demonstrating poor progress and achievement.
110. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall. In Year 8, the use of ICT to research pirates was unsatisfactory because the tasks were too open-ended. Pupils enjoy using the computers but their skills are limited and some are unable to distinguish between useful and irrelevant information. Some lack the concentration needed to work independently. The behaviour of a significant minority is poor; pupils complete little work and fail to respond to the teacher's instructions. Learning in a special needs group was satisfactory because the teaching assistants effectively used a range of methods, including flash cards and a lively question and answer session on the British Empire. In another Year 8 lesson the teacher's expectations of both the quality and quantity of work were low so that at the end most had only partly completed posters intended to show pride in the Empire.
111. In a Year 10 lesson, teaching and learning were unsatisfactory, partly due to the late return from break by the majority of pupils and also because the task did not re-engage a significant minority. However, most pupils were able to match the problems of and solutions to living in the American plains and able to explain why they had arrived at these decisions. Written work is satisfactory overall, but over-reliant on worksheets. Achievement is unsatisfactory because more able pupils have little opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding. Assessment is limited to acknowledging that work has been completed correctly. Pupils are not provided with clear indications of their progress or how to improve.
112. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The head of department has limited management skills and has had little support or training to develop these. Teaching and learning are not monitored. Schemes of work have been updated but do not address the needs of individual or groups of pupils. Good support is provided for the teaching assistants working with a special needs group. Improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was mainly good, has been poor.

Religious education

The provision for religious education is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Examination results in the GCSE full course are improving.
- The quality of teaching and learning in the GCSE groups is good.
- The quality of teaching by untrained and non-specialists teachers is poor, especially in Years 7 to 9.
- The management and leadership of the subject are poor.
- The approach to religious education in Years 10 and 11 is not co-ordinated with a clear syllabus and structure. Requirements of the locally agreed syllabus are not met.

Commentary

113. A small group of pupils entered the full GCSE in 2003 and obtained results in line with the national average. They made very good progress, achieving grades that were above those predicted. Current GCSE groups are on target for similar grades.
114. Standards of attainment in Years 7 to 9 vary greatly and are directly related to the quality of teaching. In those classes where the teaching is at least satisfactory standards are just below those laid out in the locally agreed syllabus. In others, they are well below average. Pupils have a broad understanding of the main beliefs and practices of the major religions that are found in our society. However, this knowledge lacks depth. Pupils are open and sensitive to the beliefs and values of others and discuss religious issues in a thoughtful manner, but achievement is unsatisfactory. In classes where the teaching is unsatisfactory or poor, standards are well below those set out in the agreed syllabus. Their knowledge of religious beliefs and practices is very weak. Pupils are unwilling to discuss issues in an open and sensitive manner; they make very little progress and do not achieve their full potential. This is particularly so with those who have special educational needs.
115. In the non-examination groups in Years 10 and 11, standards are well below those set out in the agreed syllabus, and achievement is unsatisfactory. Pupils have not produced any written evidence of work covered. It was not possible to see any lessons during the inspection but conversations with pupils indicate a very low level of knowledge and understanding of religions, except for the Muslim pupils who have a very strong understanding of their own religion.
116. There is a very wide variation in the quality of teaching and consequent learning but, overall, it is unsatisfactory. One experienced teacher who teaches the GCSE groups has a very good knowledge of the subject and uses a wide variety of teaching methods to provide lessons that have pace and challenge. These lessons take place in a stimulating classroom where relationships are well managed. Consequently the learning environment is positive and productive with pupils feeling confident to take part in discussion. Relevant homework is set and work is well marked with clear guidance on how to improve. Other experienced non-specialist teachers rely heavily on the guidance produced by this teacher and use their wide classroom experience to provide a satisfactory learning environment.
117. A significant number of less experienced and untrained teachers with little or no knowledge of the subject rely very heavily on the material produced by the specialist but without the experience to back this up. Consequently lessons lack pace and vigour with over-use of worksheets and very little opportunity for discussion. As a result, pupils are unmotivated, bored, and tend to resort to disruptive behaviour. Assessments are poorly completed with pupils being given grades that are far in excess of their levels of achievement. Very little learning takes place by pupils with special educational needs, who make little or no progress. There is a closed and inhibited atmosphere with pupils unwilling to share their views in a respectful and mature manner.
118. The leadership and management of the subject are poor. There is no teacher with direct responsibility for religious education. A dedicated and experienced teacher, who has other

responsibilities in the school, is in charge of examination work. She has also provided some cohesion and structure to the Year 7 to 9 syllabus, providing lesson plans for the less experienced teachers. There is no syllabus for the non-examination work in Years 10 and 11, with the subject being shared between two faculties. The requirements of the locally agreed syllabus are not being met. Without any clear leadership there are no positive plans for development and little effective monitoring. Assessment procedures are in place but grades given are far in excess of the level of work seen and bear little resemblance to the levels set out in the agreed syllabus.

119. The lack of clear structure and the failure of the school to provide a coherent syllabus in Years 10 and 11 leads to the subject's unsatisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, social moral and cultural development. There has been a significant downward trend in the provision of religious education since the last inspection and consequently the improvement is poor.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

Provision in design technology is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of attainment are well below national averages in all years.
- The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory.
- In some lessons the behaviour of pupils is poor.
- The folders pupils keep to record their progress through their projects are often poorly organised.
- There are insufficient resources for the teaching of computer aided manufacture.
- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory, but the head of the science and technology faculty has a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses in design technology in the school and of ways in which it can be improved.
- There are good curriculum links being made between science and technology.

Commentary

120. Standards of attainment in 2003 at the end of Year 9 were well below the national average. Results in the 2003 GCSE examinations were well below predicted national averages; they have been at this level over the past few years.
121. Pupils enter the school with well below average skills. By the end of Year 9 they make insufficient progress in acquiring the knowledge and understanding and practical skills related to the subject and their standards of attainment remain well below national expectations. Their design work is poor and design folders are often incomplete. Pupils often make use of the Internet for research but do not often sift and refine information to make it more useful to their purposes or more accessible to the reader. They are taught to draw to design; Year 7 pupils in one class made sound progress in developing technical drawing skills such as orthographic projection. However across the years, pupils' use of sketching to design is poorly developed and they make little use of annotation to communicate design intentions.
122. Overall achievement is poor in all materials areas for pupils of all abilities. Most pupils in Year 11 are making insufficient progress against the course criteria for their materials areas. Though some higher ability pupils are producing the quality and volume of work that can be expected at this time in their course, the majority is not. Their research is simplistic and often consists of catalogue cuttings with few helpful annotations. Surveys are not well considered and questionnaires are poorly analysed.

123. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory. Design and technology has been subject to a series of staffing problems over an extended period of time. Some pupils show some reluctance to accepting new teachers and ways of working. This results in poor behaviour in too many lessons. Some basic teaching methods are not being well used. Teachers too often fail to engage pupils' interest at the start of lessons. A number of teachers do not challenge their pupils sufficiently, giving them tasks such as modelling designs, using straws or restricting the design element of cake making to the decorations on top. The national recommendations for the structure of lessons have not become part of teaching them. As a consequence they often have little structure, activities are not varied and teachers do not close with a summary of what has been achieved and what is coming up next. Some teaching in the graphic products course, however, shows good control and management of pupils. The teacher uses question and answer sessions well to challenge and extend as well as to share the process and enjoyment of learning. Here a variety of activities, including the playing of specialist video recordings, is used to enliven learning. High expectations of the behaviour of pupils pay off and lessons are ordered and purposeful.
124. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Recent appointments have brought more stability to the situation and the head of faculty has this year been allocated an appropriate amount of time to improve teaching and learning. Due to these factors, there are signs of improvement, especially in Years 7 to 9. However there are still some serious problems in Years 10 and 11.
125. There has been a considerable decline in the standards since the last inspection, when they were above average. At that time pupils were working with a wide range of tools and equipment. Now the range of materials has narrowed as there is no longer a course in textiles. Behaviour was good but it is now unsatisfactory in too many lessons. Teaching has also declined from good to unsatisfactory. Overall, therefore, improvement is poor.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design and music were inspected in full. **Dance** and **drama** were sampled, where the standard of work was seen to be above average. Nevertheless, performing arts college targets have not been met. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory and teachers are not given adequate support to enable them to meet targets. Designated funds have not been applied as intended. Only a few pupils participate in extra-curricular provision.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In GCSE results in 2003 the number of pupils gaining the highest grades was well above average for all schools.
- Very high quality of drawing, imaginative painting and sculpture produced by current GCSE pupils is inspired by careful research into the work of other artists.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to their study in art and design.
- Teachers and teaching assistants create a stimulating ethos for learning.
- Pupils have insufficient access to ICT as a creative tool in art and design.

Commentary

126. GCSE results in art and design in 2003 were outstanding, with 93 per cent of pupils being successful at grades A* - C and well above average numbers achieving at the highest grades. Current Year 11 pupils are in line to achieve well above average results in next year's examination if they maintain their current good rate of progress. Standards of drawing overall are high; pupils control scale effectively and can record solidity, texture and distance with

confidence. Colour handling skills are often high, particularly using oil pastel and other dry media. The most able pupils use paint confidently and imaginatively to create expressive compositions inspired by their study of other artists' work. However, many pupils are over-reliant upon the use of secondary sources as stimulus for their drawing and painting. A good feature of the work of the department is the quality of sculptural work produced by GCSE students, using plaster bandage and mixed media.

127. In Year 10, the achievement of all pupils is very good. They make rapid gains in their practical skills, helped by the timetable allocation which gives an opportunity for sustained work over a number of lessons without interruption. They are now using sketchbooks well to record their ideas, research and evaluation but the quantity of first hand observation work is limited and the sequence of their ideas is not always easy to follow.
128. Attainment on entry to Year 7 is generally below average but during the course of the year, an emphasis on the development of practical skills enables pupils to improve quickly, and achieve well overall. They are appropriately introduced to using sketchbooks for a variety of purposes including experimentation with media. In Year 8 pupils improve their skills in still life drawing and painting inspired by the work of artists such as Cezanne. They are able to create well composed pictures showing a skilful application of colour and composition. By Year 9 attainment is in line with the national expectation and higher ability pupils exceed this. In a project on Pop Art they have carried out research using the Internet successfully and have presented their work effectively with able pupils offering thoughtful, personal responses to the work that they have discovered. However, throughout Years 7 to 9 there are few opportunities for pupils to develop their creative skills using the computer and image manipulation software.
129. A small number of lessons was observed during the course of the inspection due to timetable changes. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. In Years 7 to 9 teaching is generally good but in some lessons it was just satisfactory. In Years 10 and 11 teaching is good. Despite inadequate leadership, staff are enthusiastic, work well together and foster a very positive atmosphere in the department which gives the pupils confidence to flourish.
130. Relationships between staff and pupils are good and this creates positive attitudes to art and enjoyment of lessons. In a Year 8 and 9 workshop on African art, mixed age groups of pupils co-operated well to design and make masks, inspired by examples of artefacts that they had seen. They shared ideas, allocated and completed tasks to a reasonable standard in a relatively quick time and took great pleasure in sharing the finished results. In Years 10 and 11, staff know pupils well and give them helpful comments on what they need to do to improve their GCSE performance. Their response to individuals and the whole class is invariably effective but the formal marking of work could be improved by a greater attention to information on pupils' strengths and how to improve.
131. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory overall. This is because the subject is led by the head of the faculty of performing arts who offers sound management support but lacks expertise in the subject. He cannot therefore provide advice and guidance on the schemes of work or assessment issues. A member of the senior management team gives useful support as a mentor to the teacher training on the Graduate Teacher Scheme.
132. Improvement in art and design since the last inspection is satisfactory. Standards have risen well but the leadership and management of the department are not as effective.

Music

Provision in music is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well below average.
- Teaching, learning and achievement are unsatisfactory.
- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory overall and poor in some areas.
- Numbers involved in instrumental activities and extra-curricular activities have declined.
- Resources for music technology have improved since the last inspection.

Commentary

133. Standards seen in Years 7 to 9 are well below the expected level. Practical instrumental skills are very limited in most cases. Pupils compose simple rhythm patterns but only a few can maintain their chosen patterns accurately and steadily in group performances. When Year 9 pupils use music technology for their compositions the ideas are short and repetitive and most work is limited in development and unclear in structure. Harmony is not well understood by most and some only use keyboard sound effects for their patterns. A few Year 9 pupils have a basic understanding of the musical elements and different styles. In lessons and over time, achievement is unsatisfactory and pupils do not develop musical skills and knowledge at an appropriate rate to their abilities.
134. At the end of Year 11 the results last year were in line with national averages but numbers were very small - half the national average group size and well below the numbers set in the arts college targets. Standards of work seen in the inspection were well below national average levels. Performance skills were poor for most pupils in Years 10 and 11. Not all Year 11 pupils had any composition work at all and knowledge and understanding of musical styles was limited. There was very little work available for scrutiny. Achievement is unsatisfactory.
135. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall. There has been a lack of continuity in teaching in the recent past and not all teachers have been qualified or subject specialists. Development of both practical musical skills and musical understanding is limited in lessons and this slows learning and achievement in the subject skills. Lesson planning has some satisfactory features and teachers are calm and patient, but a greater variety of tasks and better subject skills and classroom management skills are needed to sustain pupils' interest and concentration throughout the lessons. Pupils' needs are not met because they are not given tasks that regularly give them more time to develop practical musical skills. Some lessons are too didactic, reducing the time for practical work.
136. The quality of leadership and management in the subject is unsatisfactory overall and poor in some areas. The director of the performing arts faculty, who is a musician, has no responsibility for the curriculum and does not teach. The acting head of the faculty is a non-subject specialist who, while having no discrete subject skills in the arts, has organised satisfactorily the daily routine of the faculty. Although there are qualified music teachers on the staff, most music lessons are taught by a non-subject specialist who is following the graduate teaching programme. Much more specialist advice is needed to develop the curriculum modules and schemes of work. The department has not addressed the curriculum and assessment issues raised in the previous report. Examples of pupils' performing and composing work are still needed. Singing remains under-developed and so does the regular use of music technology in Years 7 to 9.
137. Numbers taking part in instrumental lessons and in the extra-curricular clubs have decreased since the previous inspection. Although the specialist arts programme has targeted money for instrumental lessons none of the pupils who chose music courses in Years 10 and 11 has instrumental tuition and, at the time of the inspection, only two pupils in the school were receiving lessons. A budget of £8,500 has been granted for these lessons and is not being fully used. The steel band no longer rehearses and there are no other instrumental groups. Pupils in Years 7 and 8 are invited to join the community choir but there are no other school choirs.

138. Resources for music technology have increased since the previous inspection but not all were functioning properly during the inspection. The main music room needs some refurbishment to improve the acoustics and to provide electric trunking for keyboards. This constant noise from the adjoining canteen disturbs most music lessons. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory overall and poor in some areas.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The new graduate teachers in the department have good subject knowledge but insufficient professional support or monitoring.
- There are no established assessment systems.
- The newly written curriculum for all year groups is of good quality and provides a broad range of learning experiences for all pupils.
- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory.

Commentary

139. The department consists of four new teachers, three of whom are following the graduate teacher programme. Due to timetable changes organised by the school during the inspection week, no physical education lessons were observed in Years 7 to 9, although two impromptu sessions for pupils from Years 8 and 9 organised when an outside performing arts group failed to turn up for a scheduled workshop were satisfactory, and led to good achievement by the pupils involved. There are no records of standards attained at the end of Year 9, so no judgements can be made about attainment or achievement. By the end of Year 11, standards are below national expectations and achievement is unsatisfactory. In GCSE dance, they were above average in the lesson seen.

140. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The inexperienced teachers have good subject knowledge and what they teach is accurate, but they are limited in knowledge of teaching techniques and methods because they have received no professional support, nor has their work been monitored so they do not know how to improve. There is no existing system for assessment and the acting head of department is currently working to develop the recording of pupil data and a grading system that relates to the National Curriculum levels of attainment.

141. The quality of leadership and management is unsatisfactory. Teachers are not monitored rigorously or given guidance in the analysis and evaluation of their work, which could lead to higher standards. The new acting head of department has recently updated the units of work and rewritten the curriculum for all age groups. This is of good quality and reflects a broad range of learning experiences for pupils. These include orienteering and the Sport Education in Physical Education Programme, which gives pupils the opportunity to develop their leadership, planning and coaching skills. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory, and was not helped by the lack of provision in Years 10 and 11 last year because of staffing and accommodation problems.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

There was not enough evidence to make an overall provision judgement on any individual vocational subject. Nevertheless, a number of subjects from the alternative curriculum (NVQ) and a number of GNVQ courses were sampled, and aspects of management were investigated. The evidence showed that whilst the NVQ courses offered under the alternative curriculum are effective, the GNVQ courses have major shortcomings.

NVQ Courses

142. There are well over 200 places available on these courses; just over 100 have been taken up. Pupils are following a variety of courses leading to a range of validated certificates. A number of these were being run under the Open College Network. As yet there are no external examination results and pupils' progress has not been monitored. In the subjects sampled, pupils were seen to be achieving well according to their capability.
143. The motor vehicle engineering course is well run; pupils were making good progress under the expert tuition of a skilled instructor. A group of lower ability pupils were following the Princes Trust XL course. They are working on starting a school radio programme. A worker from the trust had established a good relationship with the pupils, and under his leadership, pupils are developing good ICT skills. Good teaching was seen by a qualified national vocational qualification (NVQ) assessor in a well equipped hairdressing centre, and this enabled pupils to make good progress in developing hairdressing skills. Pupils were enjoying taking part in a structured football coaching course taught by a local football club coach. Under the leadership of the student development office, a small group of pupils were making good progress in developing their social skills.
144. Twelve pupils are currently taking courses at local colleges. The school has not had any formal reports on their progress, relying on the college to contact them should any problems arise. Sixteen pupils are on permanent work placements. Some of these were related to the courses they were doing but there was no clear connection between the work placements and the curriculum they were following. Pupils who were studying child development, for example, were visiting a local school. Apart from some work on health and safety they had no real direction on how to relate what they were doing with the children to the work they were doing in the classroom and this reflects on teachers as well as providers. In particular the progress of the pupils with special educational needs is good.
145. The teaching seen was good. Well qualified instructors were skilfully using their expert knowledge to help pupils develop appropriate skills. The overall management of the course is good. Two support workers have established good communications with a number of organisations. They regularly visit pupils on work placements and follow up any issues well. Pupils' logbooks are carefully checked. Regular six-monthly assessment procedures are being established. They use the Open College Network well to provide support and guidance for a number of courses. Good training has taken place. The long term absence of the line manager has caused problems that have greatly increased their workload. They have no knowledge of the funding situation and are not aware of precisely how funds are used.

GNVQ Courses

146. There was a small number of timetabled supervised lessons that did not take place during the inspection visit. Inspection evidence indicates that these lessons are not used productively. For the rest of the time, pupils are allowed to work independently. During the inspection, several pupils who were on the GNVQ course were observed in the library doing no work at all. The school produced a very small amount of course work and arranged for inspectors to meet a group of Year 10 pupils who are taking the ICT course. The work was not marked and there is no record of any assessment grades or progress, nor was there any significant amount of work available to make a judgement on standards. Pupils complained that the school had not provided sufficient supervision for the course. Some had done no work at all. Pupils' reports did not contain any reference to GNVQ subjects. A number of pupils were interviewed during the mentoring day. Pupils in both Years 10 and 11 have made no significant progress and levels of achievement are poor.
147. On this evidence, the quality of teaching and learning is poor. Despite the fact that the school had said that it would provide teachers for the course these did not materialise and students were left with limited information. Task sheets had been given out and pupils told what they had to do to reach the various levels. During the visit a small group of pupils doing the Leisure

and Tourism course left school to visit a local leisure centre. They had some questions with them but these lacked any real depth or insight. A member of the school staff who had no knowledge of the subject accompanied them. These pupils said that they were doing the double award GCSE but information from the school is that this had been changed because they were unable to cope with the demands of the course. They were now doing an Open College Network course. The pupils had no knowledge of this change. The little work produced was not marked.

148. The quality of leadership and management is poor. Guidance given to pupils prior to choosing this course was incorrect. Staff have not been appointed and supervision of the pupils is poor. Pupils have been sent home because there was no teacher to supervise them. No checks are made other than morning registration and afternoon registration. Assessments have not been completed and pupils are unaware of their progress. A lack of clear structure and uncertainty about who is responsible for the courses has caused confusion.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The co-ordinator has a strong vision for the development of the subject and has designed a comprehensive, very well planned and resourced programme of activities.
- The development of 'Thinking Skills'.
- A curricular emphasis on collaborative activities and cooperative learning helps to promote pupils' moral and social development.
- The school council enables all pupils to participate in the democratic process; prefects make a good contribution to the life of the school.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to lessons.
- Teaching and learning are not monitored and evaluated effectively.
- The use of assessment is in the early stages of development.

Commentary

149. The school has successfully introduced citizenship into the curriculum, fully integrating previous aspects of personal, social, and health education. There is a good balance between whole events and activities designed to link into the wider community and with the programme taught in discrete lessons. An audit has been carried out to establish citizenship opportunities across the curriculum, which is in the process of analysis and evaluation.
150. In Years 10 and 11, standards are above average and pupils achieve well. In a Year 10 lesson, pupils worked well in small groups to identify key facts about diversity in Britain. Good teaching created a climate in which they related their own experiences with maturity and sensitivity. Pupils build and share their ideas about the topic and justify their opinions and reflections. All abilities achieve well and are independent learners because they are provided with a good range of resources and reference materials together with the confidence to articulate and share their ideas and conclusions.
151. In Years 7 to 9, pupils achieve well and often achieve above average standards. In a Year 7 lesson on choices, for example, they considered being influenced inappropriately by friends and how to deal with this. The teacher skilfully took them through the process of identifying ways in which to deal with this, using different modes of thinking. They worked enthusiastically in groups and communicated ideas sensibly and thoughtfully. All points were noted and shared via a notice board so that all pupils benefited from each other's ideas. Pupils with who do not speak English as their first language achieved well with the help of a teaching assistant.

152. The quality of teaching in citizenship is consistently good. Lessons are well planned and effectively resourced with good quality learning materials and a variety of teaching and learning methods. This ensures that pupils remain involved in their work, retain concentration and work well together. They are carefully introduced to the objectives for the lesson and as such are clear about the expectations of them. Teachers use language well so that the lesson content is accessible, there is a good balance between individual, group, oral and written work, and this retains pupils' interest and motivation. Pupils are encouraged to be reflective learners and, as such, record their evaluations in their citizenship folder. Teachers make positive comments in lessons but more formal assessment in folders is in the very early stages of development.
153. Leadership and management of citizenship are good. The co-ordinator has successfully established the curriculum and supports staff well through the very well organised and resourced schemes of work and appropriate training. The comprehensive provision of citizenship activities fully meets the needs of the National Curriculum and offers pupils good opportunities to work with a variety of external organisations and community groups. Pupils have been successful in the Duke of Edinburgh Award, were runners up in the National Finals for Crime Prevention Award and gained the Gold Award from the High Sheriff of Surrey. There are good links with the Connexions Careers Guidance Service and liaison with the police, armed forces, further and higher education colleges and partnership working with local primary schools on environmental and community projects as part of the SHINE Initiative. Year 11 pupils attached to Year 7 form groups mentor the younger pupils, and Year 10 dance pupils are working with a local day centre to give a series of dance performances to the residents. There is a directly elected school council which represents the pupils and a prefect body which gives pupils an opportunity to exercise leadership.
154. Improvement since the last inspection in citizenship is good. Personal, social and health education provision has been successfully integrated into the broader remit of citizenship.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	6
How inclusive the school is	6
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	6
Value for money provided by the school	6

Overall standards achieved	6
Pupils' achievement	5

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	5
Attendance	6
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	6
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	5
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	5
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	5
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	5
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	5
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4

The leadership and management of the school	6
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the headteacher	6
The leadership of other key staff	6
The effectiveness of management	6

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