

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Kings International College**

Camberley

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 132268

Headteacher: Mr A Davies

Lead inspector: Mrs Susan Chamberlain

Dates of inspection: 3<sup>rd</sup> - 6<sup>th</sup> November 2003

Inspection number: 259217

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE COLLEGE**

Type of college:	Comprehensive
College category:	Foundation
Age range of students:	11 – 18
Gender of students:	Mixed
Number on roll;	832
College address:	Watchetts Drive Camberley Surrey GU15 2PQ
Telephone number:	01276 683539
Fax number:	01276 709503
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Valerie Bragg
Date of previous inspection:	Has not been inspected before.

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COLLEGE**

Kings International College for Business and the Arts is a member of the 3E's foundation and was opened in September 2001. It serves the community of Camberley, an area with a mix of housing and economic circumstances. It is an average sized college with a small sixth form. The proportion of students with special educational needs, including those with statements, is broadly in line with the national average. The proportion with statements is below the national average. Most students have White British heritage, the few others are mainly Asian. The percentage of students for whom English is an additional language is 1.4, which is below the national average. More students (71) have left the college in the last year than have joined (33). When students enter the college their achievements are below average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
7661	Susan Chamberlain	Lead inspector	
11437	Anthony Anderson	Lay inspector	
2200	Jim Stirrup	Team inspector	English, drama
31100	Geoff Hunter	Team inspector	Mathematics
229895	Jackie Sparkes	Team inspector	Science
19613	Susan Thomas-Pounce	Team inspector	Music / IT
	Vincent Gormally	Team inspector	Art
31963	Malcolm Padmore	Team inspector	Design and Technology
23324	Sylvia Greenwood	Team inspector	Geography
12825	Niall Carr	Team inspector	History
4749	Martin Ash	Team inspector	Modern Foreign Languages
7926	James Bowden	Team inspector	Physical Education
12179	Laurence Moscrop	Team inspector	Religious Education, business

The inspection contractor was:

Penta International  
 Upperton House  
 The Avenue  
 Eastbourne  
 BN21 3YB

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a rapidly improving, good college. Examination results and students' achievement are rising. New leadership is an emerging strength. A strong and enriching programme of extra activities and a wealth of exposure to the arts and business combined with a history of staffing difficulties, which are partially solved, results in a college that provides satisfactory value for money.

#### The college's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- GCSE and statutory test results have risen very significantly.
- A clear direction for the college incorporates superior business and arts opportunities which are enhanced by very good links with other schools, colleges and the community and helped by high levels of support from the 3E's Federation. Very good enrichment activities, including dance and art also contribute well to the students' experience and inspire their good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The college lacks a full-time co-ordinator for special educational needs; there are no individual educational plans with targets; the college policy is incomplete; the roles of learning support assistants are not properly defined; there is no assessment of students on the list.
- The college offers well-informed support, advice and guidance for students and as a consequence students have trusting relationships with adults in the college; however, support for new teachers, although of a good quality, is insufficient to cater for the needs of the many who have recently taken up posts.
- The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is insufficient.
- Schemes of work, tracking and assessment procedures are not formalised in the college documentation.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Performance compared with:		All schools			similar schools
		2001	2002	2003	2003
Year 11	GCSE/GNVQ examinations		D	C	C
Year 13	A/AS level and VCE examinations		E	C	

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

The achievement of students, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, is satisfactory in Years 7 to 11 and is good in the sixth form. Standards are average at all levels and when compared with similar colleges. Girls perform better than boys but the gap is narrowing. Students, from other than white British ethnic groups perform in line with their capabilities in mathematics and science, although those of Indian heritage do markedly better in mathematics than in science. Students who attend well do far better than those who do not.

**Students' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.** Both the attitudes and behaviour of students in the college are good but there were a few examples of unsatisfactory behaviour. Attendance is good and relates closely to students improving achievement.

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the college is good and teaching and learning are satisfactory but significantly better in Years 10 and 11. Learning matches teaching. Overall assessment is satisfactory but it is underdeveloped in some departments. The curriculum is satisfactory in both

Years 7 to 9 and in Years 10 and 11. Provision for enrichment is very good. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory. The provision for students care, welfare and health and safety is good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good.** The governance of the college is good and the governing body is quick to intervene when problems arise. The new principal has made a very good start and is an emerging strength. He is building well on the good work done by the previous interim principal who activated some good improvement in her short time in the college. His vision is clear and innovative; senior managers are effective and provide good management.

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

Parents' views of the college are **good** and with the community they are **very good**. However understandably, some parents show concern over the past staffing difficulties that have affected their children. Students like the college and enjoy the number of enrichment activities. They, too, do not like frequent changes in staff.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- The provision for students with special educational needs.
- The levels of support available to the many new teachers.
- The use of information and communication technology across the curriculum.
- Formalisation of schemes of work, tracking and assessment procedures.

# SIXTH FORM SECTION OF THE SUMMARY REPORT

## THE SIXTH FORM AT KINGS INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE

The sixth form is smaller than other sixth forms. It has a breadth of subjects which it offers at International Baccalaureate (IB) standard and higher levels and a significant vocational component which either supports or replaces the IB. Leadership of the college has made a decision to offer a wide range of subjects in order to become and remain competitive with other local colleges.

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective sixth form. Leadership and management are good overall, and standards are rising and approximately in line with expectations. Students enjoy the sixth form and take their sixth form work seriously. Given the additional funding available for the IB, it is cost effective and provides good value for money.

#### The main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teaching is good.
- Standards are well above average in history and art and design.
- The support advice and guidance offered to students is very strong.
- Links with community, schools and colleges are very good and are enhanced by the college's membership of the 3Es Federation.
- A clear direction supports the IB qualification and the business and arts focus of the college.
- Although many group sizes are too small and do not offer students the competitive and discursive opportunities that larger groups would enjoy, students are offered an extensive and valuable choice of courses.
- Statutory requirements are not fully met in religious education.



## QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES OF THE CURRICULUM

Judgements about the provision in the subjects and courses inspected in the sixth form are shown below. They are based mainly on the quality of teaching and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects in the sixth form were inspected.

Curriculum area	Evaluation
English	<b>Good.</b> Some imaginative teaching and learning styles enable students to make good progress in the subject.
Spanish	<b>Good.</b> Attainment is average, but students are achieving well and making good progress. The quality of teaching is very good. Students are confident when they speak Spanish.
Mathematics	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Although relatively few students are studying higher mathematics in the sixth form they appreciate the good teaching they receive both for the International Baccalaureate and for those repeating GCSE.
Biology	<b>Good.</b> Teaching is good. Students are motivated and learn well.
Chemistry	<b>Good.</b> Teaching is good. The very small group size offers individual attention to students but restricts the amount of competition from peers.
Information and communication technology	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Teaching is good, as is leadership and management. The resourceful, experienced and highly competent co-ordinator is slowly but surely improving the legacy of poor teaching that depressed the progress of the students prior to this appointment in September.
History	<b>Very good.</b> Students become independent learners as a result of very good teaching and standards of attainment are well above average.
Psychology	<b>Satisfactory.</b> Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Achievement and attainment are average. Students are well motivated and find their course structured and varied.
Art and design	<b>Good.</b> Students' work shows strong drawing skills and development of creative self discipline and maturity.
Theatre Studies	<b>Good.</b> Students are given the chance to develop their knowledge of influential theatrical practitioners and develop a knowledge of drama from other cultures and countries.
Business Education	<b>Good.</b> The significant strength of the provision is the quality of teaching. This enables the students to relate their learning to real business situations. The students who took IB last year achieved their predicted grades.
Theory of Knowledge	<b>Good.</b> The teaching and learning are good. Students demonstrate the ability and reason. They achieve above average.

*The curriculum areas are broadly common across all post-16 education and training. They do not necessarily correspond with subjects and courses taught by the college. Inspectors make judgements in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. Excellent and very good are equivalent to the judgement 'outstanding' in further education and sixth form college reports; poor and very poor are equivalent to 'very weak'.*

## ADVICE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

The provision of students' welfare, guidance and health and safety is very strong with particular strengths in counselling.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SIXTH FORM**

Leadership and management of the sixth form are good, overall. Leadership is very good. It provides a clear direction and indicates a well conceived vision for the future. Management is good. Systems and procedures are clearly identifiable and implemented. A complicated set of course choices including the IB and vocational subjects is managed well.

## **STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM**

### **Very satisfied**

The students like the following about the sixth form

- They enjoy their courses and appreciate the advice they are given on course and career choice
- They feel they can approach staff about concerns and feel they are treated with respect.
- They like the sixth form accommodation.
- Teaching is good and challenges them well; it is enhanced by many enrichment activities.

The students feel the following could be improved:

- The IT resources for the sixth form
- IB students feel that some aspects of the course are not well resourced.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses**

The standards achieved, including those of students with learning difficulties and those of students whose first language is not English, are in line with national expectations and students' achievements are satisfactory by the end of Years 9 and 11 and good in the sixth form.

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

- Results in statutory tests at the end of Year 9 have risen dramatically.
- GCSE results have improved significantly for 5A\* - C grades.
- The best results are gained by those who attend regularly.
- Staffing problems have negatively affected standards but are less recently.
- The IB results for 2003 indicate its success.
- Students' achievement in the sixth form is good.
- All students with special educational needs are entered for GCSE examinations, but there is no analysis of their performance.

#### **Commentary**

1. When compared with 2002 results, those in 2003 indicate considerable improvement. In 2003, results in statutory tests were close to national standards in English, mathematics and science. Girls outperformed boys in English, mathematics and science, but boys are doing better than their entry levels would suggest. In 2003, boys were close to average in English and science and below in mathematics.

2. In Years 7 to 9, standards in the work seen are average in all subjects except for music where they are below average. Recruitment of staff has been very difficult in music and, although the subject is now staffed, there has been insufficient time for careful planning and organisation to be realised. Students' achievement is satisfactory, overall; it is good in English, science, art, geography, modern foreign languages and physical education in Years 7 to 9 and average in other subjects.

#### **Key Stage 3**

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

Standards in:	College results	National results
English	33.0 (29.7)	33.4 (33.3)
Mathematics	35.1 (33.2)	35.4 (34.7)
Science	31.9 (31.0)	33.6 (33.3)

*There were 126 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

3. In 2003, GCSE results indicate substantial improvement for 5 A\* to C grades, rising to 51 per cent, in line with the national average, compared with 39.8 per cent in 2002. The proportion of students gaining 1 A\* to G grade, at 95 per cent, is below average for all colleges, and similar to 2002.

4. In Years 10 and 11, standards are average in all subjects except for English, modern foreign languages, physical education and drama where they are below. At this stage, standards in English

are inhibited by a significant number of disaffected and passive boys gaining well below average results at GCSE. Attainment in modern foreign languages has been affected negatively by staffing difficulties. However, with a more stable team, standards are rising. Drama standards are below average because a significant number of students fail to concentrate and lack the necessary self discipline required. Overall, students' achievement is satisfactory. It is best in science, art, modern foreign languages and religious education in Years 10 and 11 and unsatisfactory in Year 11 in physical education, where many students, in one lesson, exhibited surprisingly negative attitudes which hinder their progress. In other subjects, students' achievement is satisfactory.

5. Students who attend well gain the best results. The college has analysed this carefully and figures indicate that the average score per student rises by 11 points if students attend for over 90 per cent of the time. Figures also indicate that poor attendance negatively affects the results of boys more than it does girls. Girls' results, in 2003, are considerably higher than those of boys.

## Key Stage 4

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

	College results	National results
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	51.0 (39.8)	52.6 (51.2)
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	84.0 (84.1)	88.6 (88.9)
Percentage of students gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	95.0 (94.0)	94.6 (94.6)
Average point score per student (best eight subjects)	39.1 (34.8)	34.7 (34.6)

*There were 173 students in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

6. In Years 7 to 9, in 2003, students from other than white British ethnic groups perform in line with their capabilities in mathematics and science, although those of Indian heritage do markedly better in mathematics than science. Again when these students attend well they perform best.

7. The achievement of students with special educational needs across all years and most subjects is satisfactory. There is no data on the performance of students across subjects. As a result of this, the college is not fully able to evaluate its effectiveness of provision for students with special educational needs.

8. The college has been affected by a turbulent staffing situation since its opening in September, 2001. However, the situation has stabilised recently and standards have consequently started to rise at a very fast rate.

## Sixth Form

9. Overall standards are in line with expectations and students' achievement is good. Students manage the IB courses very well. The breadth of subjects ensures that they are busy throughout the week and consequently close on their potential. Results in 2003 were good and enabled students to follow their desired career path, universities accepting the qualification, having appreciated the rounded person created by the breadth of study to which these students were exposed. Vocational subjects are well attempted and students make good progress in these.

10. Students achieve very well in history and well in English, biology, chemistry, art and modern foreign languages. Their achievement is average in the other subjects inspected. They attain standards above average in biology and chemistry. In history, students' attainment is well above average. They write well and research in depth. In other subjects inspected, standards are average.

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

11. Students' attitudes and behaviour are good and their personal development is very good. Students' attendance is good and their punctuality is satisfactory.

### **The main strengths and weaknesses are :-**

- Most students exhibit good attitudes and behaviour in the classroom and in the cyber café and around the college.
- Students' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- The student attendance levels are good and punctuality is satisfactory.
- There is some evidence of occasional unsatisfactory behaviour, particularly at the upper end of Year 11.

### **Commentary**

12. Most students behave well in lessons and around the college campus. In an assembly, most students listen carefully to the very good advice about the safe use of fireworks. High expectations of behaviour were very well demonstrated at the start of a Year 7 performing arts lesson in which the teacher very firmly laid down the rules for participation in lessons of this kind.

13. Members of the college council gain a great deal from the responsibilities they take on and the self esteem evolving from such a distinction. There is also a wide range of opportunities for students to enhance their personal development through frequent visits into the local and wider communities. The two 50 minute enrichment periods available to all students each week also supports their personal development. This very good provision offers students many opportunities to take on leadership roles, be creative and collaborate in team and project activities such as dramatic productions and more unusual sporting activities.

14. All students attend daily acts of collective worship which include very relevant references to such events as Remembrance Day on 11<sup>th</sup> November at which 2 minutes silence is observed. Students are encouraged to take part in moments of thoughtful contemplation. An element of spirituality is also apparent through curricular subjects such as music, art and drama; students respond well to these and their ability to reflect upon feelings and such qualities as beauty and flow is encouraged. Moral development of students is effectively promoted through regular PSHCE lessons and by the consistent application of the college's behaviour management policy. Students are clear about the differences between right and wrong and are encouraged to discuss issues where this distinction is less evident, for example abortion. Students have many opportunities to practice and develop their social skills both in the classroom and during brunch and lunch breaks in the well-designed Cyber Café. The wide range of external visits also provides students with many opportunities to meet the general public and to enhance their self-esteem and independence. Recent visits include trips to France and Spain where students are provided with many opportunities to study cultures a little different from their own. Subjects of the curriculum such as music, art and drama are used well to support students' appreciation of the wider multicultural world.

15. The overall attendance at the college is good when compared with similar schools and colleges. There is a little evidence of occasional student lateness. The incidence of unauthorised absence is a little higher than other similar schools and colleges. The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the college in ensuring that their children attend college regularly and on time. College procedures are stringent and include an expectation of high levels of attendance. They are successful in this goal.

16. In normal lessons the attitudes and behaviour of students with special educational needs are generally no different to that of other students. In history lessons attitudes are good. This is also the case in mathematics lessons, particularly when learning support assistants are present.

***Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002 93.6%***

Authorised absence	
College data:	4.9
National data:	7.8

Unauthorised absence	
College data :	1.4
National data:	1.2

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

## Exclusions

### ***Ethnic background of students***

### ***Exclusions in the last college year***

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of students on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	776	59	9
White – Irish	1		
White – any other White background	11		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2		
Mixed – White and Black African	1		
Asian or Asian British – Indian	4	2	1
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	20		
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	3		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1		
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1		
Black or Black British – African	1		
Black or Black British – any other Black background	3		
Chinese	2		
Any other ethnic group	5		
No ethnic group recorded	1		

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE COLLEGE

17. **The quality of education is good.** Students receive good support and guidance. They experience many interesting enrichment opportunities and benefit from very good links with other institutions and the community.

18. Teaching and Learning are satisfactory in Years 7 to 11 and good in the sixth form.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning in the sixth form are good.
- Nearly one fifth of lessons across the college are very good.
- Teachers use a wide range of strategies to aid learning.
- A number of new teachers, although having a stabilising affect, have not settled in yet and some lack planning and classroom management skills.
- Students with learning difficulties do not have individual education plans.
- The support for students whose first language is not English has not been formalised.

- Levels of support for new teachers, although of good quality, are not sufficient to cope with the number of teachers involved.

## Commentary

19. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. A very reasonable proportion (approximately a fifth) of lessons in Years 7 to 9 are very good but this is balanced by one tenth of lessons being unsatisfactory. Overall, teaching is better in Years 10 and 11 than Years 7 to 9. This is particularly noticeable in religious education, geography and information and communication technology. Learning closely matches teaching at all levels but, like teaching, is marginally less effective in Year 8.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 140 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (1 %)	26 (18 %)	58 (41 %)	48 (35 %)	6 (4 %)	1 (1 %)	0 (0 %)

20. Teachers use a wide range of strategies. Many use a three part lesson designing good starter activities and drawing together well the work learned. Students respond well to this. The seventy five minute lessons present a challenge and dividing them into more acceptable chunks increases interest levels. There is good use of pair and group work, which consolidates learning and builds students' confidence and self-esteem. Often pairs or groups are used effectively to perform sketches in front of the class as in dance, drama and modern foreign languages. Oral work is common and teachers target their questions to extend high attainers and support lower attaining students and those with learning difficulties. Students appreciate being included in all aspects of the lesson and such targeting enables this. In geography, active tasks, when students learn by sorting cards and artefacts, involve students in a clear understanding of population migration as they move around the classroom. Students indicate a preference for this type of lesson, preferring activity to sitting still for long periods. Teachers' expectations are particularly high in art in lower years and their insistence on high standards of behaviour is best in geography. The effectiveness of the use of resources is unsatisfactory in music as is the effectiveness of teaching methods in this subject. Teachers are careful not to raise their voices, but prefer to teach in a calm and professional manner, not speaking over any disturbance. Teachers use the college's Good Lesson Guide and find the structure very helpful.

21. In lessons where teaching is very good, learning is usually very good too. Students are motivated, experience a variety of tasks, improve their understanding by discussion, are productive at an above average level, as in art in Year 10, and achievement is high.

22. Where lessons are unsatisfactory, they often start late, objectives are not explained, instructions are unclear, the pace is inappropriate and time is used wrongly. Consequently, students respond by unsuitable behaviour, a lack of concentration and a general malaise for the subject. Purposeful activity is often lacking where the teacher cannot assert his/herself and cannot give whole class instruction. Unsatisfactory lessons often, but not entirely, have issues regarding planning, control and management.

23. In normal lessons, teachers know the general needs of those students with learning difficulties. This is because of the basic information they receive on the college's list of students with special educational needs. However, at present, there are no individual educational plans (IEPs) for students with special educational needs. Teachers are therefore not always able to plan their lessons effectively to meet the specific needs of these students. In geography, targeted questioning and group support are effective in ensuring students with special educational needs make adequate progress. Where observed, learning support assistants provide effective help and support in normal lessons to students with special educational needs.

24. There is some uncertainty in the college at present as to the exact nature and extent of the provision for students who have English as an additional language (EAL). Certain aspects of support are in place but there the lack of an overall policy which includes testing, target setting, monitoring and the recording of information. There is no one in the college who has been trained in the support of EAL students and who is currently providing that support.

25. Since its inauguration, the college has struggled considerably to recruit teachers. The high cost of housing in the area has not helped. However, at the time of the inspection, teachers were at their posts and a spirit of camaraderie was evident. Many new teachers joined the college, some as late as the Autumn half term. Because of the large numbers involved, levels of support are inadequate.

## **Sixth Form**

26. Teaching and learning in the sixth form are good overall and very good in nearly a third of lessons. No unsatisfactory lessons are recorded. Very good lessons are always well planned, the objectives are shared with students and teachers' expectations are high. Students learn through other people's experiences, as in poetry, they express their opinion in a confident and informal manner. Teachers' explanations are clear and students' responses are recorded, being enhanced by positive attitudes at this level. Well informed teaching allows relatively low ability students to review and improve their work. Teachers often have the experience and knowledge to offer information in flexible and convincing ways. Teaching is least effective in psychology. Even though these lessons have clear aims and identifiable outcomes, are well prepared and managed effectively, their overall success is affected by the students' response to the subject. They find the course does not match their expectations.

27. Students enjoy researching topics; they work independently facilitating their efforts by the use of information and communication technology. Students often organise their own resources. Teachers are effective at teaching the IB. They have worked hard to make the change from 'A' level. Vocational subjects are also taught well. Assessment in the sixth form follows that of the main college.

## **Assessment**

28. Overall assessment is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is a good whole college policy on marking, assessment, recording and reporting.
- Most departments have assessment systems which are well organised.
- The level of reporting is good.
- Some departments do not use assessment sufficiently to respond to individual needs. Consequently in these subjects some students do not understand how they can improve.

## **Commentary**

29. The system for assessment, recording and reporting students' attainment and progress is developing well. General advice is given to help departments organise their own systems. There is a whole college marking policy, which gives clear guidance to teachers, and they give advice to individual students. Work is given National Curriculum levels in Years 7 to 9 and GCSE grades in Years 10 and 11 at least four times per year, and these grades are held centrally in departments and by the college. There is detailed analysis of the data, and this is communicated to subject departments. Most departments have well organised systems but a few are just satisfactory.

30. All parents have a full report once per year with grades and targets. If there is a cause for concern, the tutor contacts parents. Reports give details of academic and other progress and set targets for the students, and the information is generally good and helpful to parents. However, the



academic targets set for students in some subjects are not sufficiently precise and consequently in some subjects students are not clear about how they can improve.

## The curriculum

31. The breadth and balance of curriculum provision are satisfactory across all year groups, including the sixth form. Provision for enrichment is very good and accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The International Baccalaureate provides an innovative dimension to the sixth form
- Enrichment of the curriculum through both timetabled and extra curricular activities is very good
- Good provision for personal, social and health education enables very good personal development but citizenship is not fully developed throughout the curriculum
- The long lessons are not suitable for some subjects, and some subjects do not benefit from the way lessons are split around brunch and lunch breaks for some year groups

### Commentary

32. The curriculum for the main college is broad and balanced but has limitations in music, because of staffing difficulties and citizenship is because there are no formal schemes of work.

33. In Years 9 to 7, dance and drama are taught in addition to the main curriculum. In Years 10 and 11 students have a wide range of GCSE courses plus some vocational subjects and the option to follow work-related courses in partnership with local colleges. Ninety percent of students achieve their preferred option choices at the end of Year 9. The curriculum is enriched by an innovative programme of activities within the college day as well as sports and drama after college, and a wide range of day visits and extended journeys overseas. A good course in personal, social and health education covers drugs, sex, race, bullying and alcohol, and includes careers advice at key junctures and a comprehensive work experience programme for Year 10 students.

34. Students in Years 7 to 9 and those in Years 10 and 11 who follow the full GCSE course have access to at least two hours of quality sporting provision per week. Students in Year 9 and those in Years 10 and 11 who do not follow the full GCSE course also have access to two hours of quality sporting provision in their lesson time supplemented by planned opportunities to take part in extra-curricular activities.

35. Overall, curricular provision for students with special educational needs is **satisfactory**. The college's ethos of inclusion and support for students with special educational needs has a positive impact on the social development and learning experience of these students as well as that of all other students in the college. At present there is no full time special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) in post, provision being co-ordinated by an assistant principal for the time being. Learning support assistants are enthusiastic and committed to working with students with special educational needs and their deployment ensures the curricular needs of students are met.

36. The college day is arranged in four 70 and 75 minute periods, providing a very long teaching period which is not always suitable for some subjects, especially for the younger students. In addition a period of 50 minutes daily is provided for a carousel of enrichment activities, assemblies and personal and social education. Two daily periods are broken into for some groups on some days for staggered 25 minute brunch and lunch breaks. This break does not always balance the lesson well and on occasions causes time to be wasted while students move and re-settle to their work; this negatively affects standards.

37. The college has suffered from a prolonged period of difficulty with recruiting sufficient teachers of an appropriate quality since it opened in 2001. Over fifty teachers have arrived new to the college over this time of whom 20 have left to find better paid posts or promotion elsewhere.

This has had a substantial impact on the students' learning and is recognised by the college and by the parents as a severe weakness. From September of this year there has been a full complement of staff. There are still some areas of the curriculum which are covered by non specialist teaching. This is the case in religious education where three lessons in ten are taught by teachers whose main areas of expertise are elsewhere. There is an unsatisfactory match of teachers to the curriculum in ICT also. Elsewhere, however, the position is at least satisfactory and in some subjects, such as art, it is good. Overall, therefore, the position is much improved and is now satisfactory.

38. Resources are adequate overall but there are a number of deficiencies in music and ICT. The learning resources area is good and is well used. The main strength of the satisfactory accommodation is the access to sporting and physical education activities including a very large sports hall and a separate swimming pool. No areas of the curriculum are inaccessible because of a problem with the accommodation.

39. The college is situated to the south east of Camberley on a very large campus. It is composed of a number of separate single and multi-storey buildings up to a maximum of 3 levels. Whilst parts of the site are not in the best of decorative order, the overall accommodation is adequate for effective delivery of the college's curriculum. The sporting and PE facilities are particularly good with extensive outdoor space available for a wide range of sporting activities. The Cyber Café is a very effectively used provision for both staff and students who have access to it for two 25 minute periods each day.

## **Sixth Form**

40. The sixth form offers an innovative alternative to the traditional GCE A level choice in the form of the International Baccalaureate (IB) in a range of subjects, and some Advanced Vocational courses, plus a Community Sports Leader Award. The IB curriculum attracts many students with overseas backgrounds but it does not always provide a smooth progression for students in the college at the end of Year 11, some of whom choose to attend other institutions as a result. A deficiency in ICT resources hampers the study of some students.

## **Care, guidance and support**

41. The procedures for child protection, welfare and health & safety are **good** and the procedures for supporting and guiding students' through monitoring are **very good**. The procedures for seeking and acting on students' views are **satisfactory**.

### **The main strengths and weaknesses are**

- Child Protection procedures are very effective.
- College teaching and support staff know their students very well.
- Medical records are well maintained and regular fire drills are undertaken and recorded.
- The college provides a very high level of support and guidance as students' progress through the college with the additional assistance of a wide range of external professionals.

## **Commentary**

42. Child protection systems and procedures are good and the reporting person is known to all staff in the college. Relevant staff training in child protection matters has also taken place. The college teaching and support staff, very well supported by a range of external agencies, provides a high degree of welfare support to individual students as evidenced through discussions with an external behaviour specialist and a student councillor. The college closely monitors students' academic performance and personal development both formally and informally and steps are taken to identify any individual problems with a range of effective strategies.

43. In the classroom and around the college, teachers and support staff clearly know their students very well and they are quick to observe any personal difficulties exhibited by students and to

take appropriate and remedial action. The college operates a good first aid system for minor accidents and appropriate records are maintained. Regular fire drills are carried out and the college also maintains a record log. A further log is maintained of students' medical records including food allergies, which are copied to relevant staff around the college.

44. Lessons such as PSHCE are used well to provide students with the opportunity to talk about themselves and to express ideas and suggestions as to how they perceive a range of issues. Students' personal development is further enhanced through the provision of individual targets (both academic and personal) to which students are expected to apply themselves. A wide range of behaviour management strategies are in place and they are regularly reviewed and/or adapted to ensure that systems and procedures match each individual student's requirements. The college acknowledges students' achievements through the praise given to them in the classroom and, more formally, in regular sharing and presentation assemblies.

45. The very high level of child protection and welfare support available to students at the college, together with the very good procedures for promoting students personal development and well being allow students to feel safe and cared for and this enables them to concentrate on their learning

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

46. Parents' views of the college are satisfactory and the college's links with parents is good. The college's links with the local community and partner institutions are very good.

### **The main strengths and weaknesses**

- The majority of parents support the college.
- The teaching and support staff are felt to be good and caring.
- The college is proactive at reaching out to parents and in keeping them informed.
- The college utilises the community & other colleges very well to support the curriculum.
- A significant minority of parents are unhappy with some aspects of the recent education provided to their children.

### **Commentary**

47. The parents' meeting with the inspectors was relatively well attended and the parental questionnaire was returned by a reasonable percentage of parents. The majority of parents are supportive of the college and of its aims and objectives. Parents feel that their children like college and that they are making good progress. Parents also feel that the teachers and support staff are good and that the college is well led and managed. Although a significant minority of parents are unhappy with some elements of the college's work, the college's own detailed analysis of a recently undertaken questionnaire of their own, demonstrates that the main dissatisfaction is linked to the recent changes at the college and the large turnover of staff.

48. The information provided by the college through the prospectus, annual governor's report to parents and via the regular and well designed College News is of a very high standard. Annual academic reports to parents are also very well presented and are supplemented by 6 monthly reviews which include individual targets for improvement. There are well planned parents' evenings and open days each year during which parents have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress and these events are generally well attended by parents most of whom take an active interest in their child's progress. Parents say they are well informed about the progress made by their children.

49. The college also makes very good use of the local environment to enhance the curriculum and there is a good range of extra curricular clubs available, in addition to the very good enrichment programme to which every student has access for two periods each week. The college has very good links with local businesses. Business mentors are used well by the college to provide additional support for students on specific projects. One such project required the students to plan a new town from every conceivable angle. The college's significant links with local industry and

commerce were used to very good effect in order to successfully manage this exciting project and bring about high levels of achievement. Career planning is also very well managed by the college and all students are encouraged to organise their own work placement for two weeks whilst in Years 10 and 11. The college works closely with Trident to support career opportunities and some students in Post 14 attend college courses on a part time basis.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

50. Leadership and management are **good**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The new principal has a clear vision for the college and all members of the leadership team are equally regarded and exercise equal commitment to raising standards.
- The governing body draws on exceptional educational and business expertise.
- Some middle management is not strong.
- Targets for last year were set too low.
- Financial control is secure.
- A significant staffing problem has now improved.
- Support for new teachers, although normally good, is insufficient to cater for the large number involved.

### **Commentary**

51. Leadership is an emerging strength. The new principal has recognised the potential of the college and has a clear vision for it. He is keen to use the help of 3E's Federation for consultancy and training. The principal is innovative, strong and determined and has the respect of the governors, staff and students. He values the individual and encourages all to reach their potential. He is keen to implement the 3E's ethos and has already made an impact in this respect. Management is good. The college operates an equal management structure where a core team, some on short term contracts, has roles related to whole college issues, for example, all take an overview of curricular development. All members of the leadership group are committed to seeing projects through to the end. Each has opportunities to take decisions and with these evolves their greater self esteem and confidence. There are some concerns at middle management level where staffing has been a serious problem. Some co-ordinators or leaders of subjects have only been in the college for a very short time, for example in music. Many, however, are good managers and contribute well to the college's commitment to raising achievement. However, each member of the leadership team is responsible for a curricular area, for example special educational needs and this has proved useful. It has ensured that curricular provision has been maintained.

52. The governance of the college is good. The governing body has exceptional expertise amongst its members. It draws on the experiences of college development in other areas of the country, three governors being members of 3E's board of directors; there are those with local expertise, educational skills and business prowess. They are keen to intervene when problems arise. On occasions, since the start in 2001, the governors have intervened, prepared to act to do whatever it takes to remedy instability.

53. Confidence, understanding and trust exist between the principal, the leadership team and the governors. This provides a strong foundation from which to build the very caring ethos already evident in the college and detailed in the 3E's documentation.

54. Targets set last year were too low; they will be reset at the end of November. A significant aid to the college is its links with Federation and other colleges. From these it can gain valuable support, guidance and examples of best practice. On occasions staffing swaps are arranged to help in areas where recruitment has been difficult.

55. The college has a working deficit agreed with Surrey LEA. Although budget and financial procedures were not effective, as a result of the governors intervening, an external bursar was brought in to adjust matters. She still oversees procedures and processes and has ensured that the main criticisms of a recent auditors report have been enacted. Financial control is now secure.

56. A significant barrier to the college has been its staffing situation, which is now better. The high cost of housing in the area has been a factor. Inevitably this turbulence means that there is a substantial number of teachers who are new to the college and to the profession. In the interim the Overseas Trained Teacher programme has enabled the college to recruit some good quality staff, one of whom now holds a senior position. Increasingly close links with teacher training institutions in the "Sweltec" group are enabling better levels of recruitment of newly qualified teachers. It is therefore a key priority to continue to provide a good level of support for the teaching and non teaching staff if the college is to progress as it should.

57. The college pays due regard to the Code of Practice for special educational needs and statutory requirements are met. The college policy for special educational needs is being re-written to ensure it contains all the information it should. Leadership and management of special educational needs provision has been ably provided by an assistant principal since the recent resignation of the co-ordinator. Learning support assistants are deployed effectively to provide the required support for students with statements of special educational need.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	2511772
Total expenditure	2892673
Expenditure per student	

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	17184
Balance carried forward to the next	363717

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

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 3 and 4.

### ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

58. The provision for English is **satisfactory**

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good teaching in the subject.
- The effective interpretation of the Key Stage 3 Strategy.
- The good modular scheme of work for students in Years 7 to 9.
- The need to raise standards in writing, in particular that of boys in Years 10 and 11.
- The need to use current assessment procedures to provide students in Years 7 to 9 with sharp medium term targets for improvement.
- The need to increase students' access to ICT and word-processing skills.

#### Commentary

59. Overall attainment in English upon entry into Year 7 is below average. Students achieve well with the result that standards by the end of Year 9 are average. This is reflected in written work and the standards achieved by students in the national assessment tasks in 2003.

60. Most students, in particular girls, continue to achieve well in Years 10 and 11, though overall standards are below average, having been affected by inadequate staffing last year. This can be seen in the examination of students' written work and the GCSE Language and Literature examinations in 2003. Although most girls, and a number of higher attaining boys, achieved standards in line with the national average a few disaffected and passive boys achieved well below average results in their final examinations. Sometimes boys do not take their writing seriously enough. As this an important key skill, it has a direct and negative affect on standards.

61. Good support for statemented students and effective support by teachers for students with special educational needs enables these students to make the same progress as all other students, though attainment varies considerably. Gifted and talented students are identified and appropriately challenged.

62. Regular chances are given for students to talk about the activities they are involved in. Teachers use good questioning skills. They challenge student's initial responses and encourage them to think in greater depth and speak in more detail. As a result of this speaking and listening skills at fourteen and sixteen are average. Good opportunities are given for students to extend their oral skills within debating and public speaking competitions.

63. Most students are satisfactory readers at fourteen and sixteen. Students are given the chance to read a good range of novels, plays, poetry, media and factual materials in Years 7 to 9. The majority of students have good skills in the techniques of reading but are less secure when it comes to understanding what they have read.

64. Students in Years 10 and 11 are given the chance to read a challenging range of novels, poetry and plays as part of their GCSE studies. Critical and analytical skills are well taught, with the result that many students by extending and developing their reading skills, reach a good standard, though a number of average and lower attaining students still have problems in reading for subtext and appreciating the writers' use of language to convey character, setting, issues and tone.

65. Students develop satisfactory basic English skills in Years 7 to 9 and use them to satisfactory effect in a good range of writing activities which allow them to write in different styles, for

different purposes and with a specific audience in mind. Attainment at the end of Year 9 varies considerably however. Whilst many more able students can produce good extended pieces of writing with few or no mistakes, a significant number of students have problems in writing at any length, and still have problems in the basic skills of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Standards in writing at fourteen are average overall.

66. The range of writing activities carried out by students in Years 10 and 11 are somewhat dictated by the demands of the GCSE syllabus and the need to put together a good coursework file. Many students, in particular girls and more able boys, respond to this challenge, though the quality of students' completed work is very much influenced by the amount of time that students are prepared to invest outside of college. Many students re-draft their work and produce good quality written work. For example, studies of set texts reflect strong personal opinions, supported by evidence and relevant quotations. In contrast a number of students, in particular boys, draft their work only once, and their essays lack depth and detail. Overall, standards in written work at the end of Year 11 are below average. Although many students are prepared to word process their work at home, there is limited access to ICT and word-processing facilities at college.

67. Most students approach their English activities in a positive manner and work with interest and sustained concentration. This makes a positive impact on learning. There are however a number of students who take a passive approach to their own learning.

68. The overall quality of teaching is good, with some very good teaching being observed during the period of the inspection. Lessons are well planned, organised and managed. Teachers have high expectation of students and provide them with an interesting range of English activities. Where teaching is best they give students the chance to explore oral, reading and writing activities within a single lesson, with each activity developing and extending skills in the other. They give students the chance to take control of their own learning, through well-planned group's activities that challenge and inspire them to do well.

69. Leadership and management are good with the two key stage co-ordinators and the department as a whole being committed to raising standards in the subject. The department has put together an imaginative modular scheme of work, with the curriculum for students in Years 10 and 11 being used in an effective manner to deliver the GCSE syllabus. The college uses a good range of assessment procedures, with both teachers and students bring involved in the assessment of half-term units of work. All students are aware of their National Curriculum levels of attainment, though this information could be used to better effect to give students sharp, short-term targets for improvement.

70. Although the number and experience of teachers is adequate, there is evidence that the availability and knowledge of supply teachers in the past has impacted on students' attainment.

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

71. The provision for the development of literacy skills across the curriculum is satisfactory. English language and literacy skills are average in Years 9 and 11 and in the sixth form. The English department has responded to the introduction of the Key Stage 3 National Literacy Strategy in an effective manner, with evidence from lesson observations and students' written work that it is making a positive contribution to literacy skills. The college has held a full day INSET on the development of literacy skills across the curriculum. It is expected that all departments address this issue in department handbooks and teachers medium-term plans. Key words for individual subject can be seen in most classrooms, with teachers giving students the chance to extend their vocabulary and speaking skills in oral activities in English, maths, modern foreign languages and religious education.

72. Students are encouraged to contribute to the reading of texts in English, history and science with teachers providing a satisfactory range of writing frames to support writing activities. Sound note-taking skills can be seen in a number of subjects, with extended writing being observed in English, science, history and modern foreign languages

## Modern foreign languages

73. Provision in Modern Foreign Languages is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall quality of teaching is good; teachers work well as a team, producing good materials for learning.
- Leadership is good.
- Teachers take students on visits to France and Spain, so that students can use the languages.
- Standards in Years 10 and 11 are below average.
- Some teachers do not use the foreign language enough in the classroom.
- Students need to check their written work more carefully to avoid basic errors.

### Commentary

74. The department has suffered from severe staffing difficulties in recent years, and this has had a very negative impact on GCSE results in French and German and current standards in some years. Changes in teachers have disrupted learning for many students, but the current staff are working hard to improve standards and are experiencing some success. Students' achievement is good given the problems they have.

75. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 were slightly below national standards in French in 2002. In comparison with national standards, French GCSE results were very low in 2002 and 2003. They were also below most other subjects in the college. However, the teachers expect that GCSE results in 2004 will be better. Overall performance in the lessons seen showed students working at national standards in French in Year 9, but below in Year 11. Year 9 students were able to listen to a tape in French and understand the opinions people had about visits they had made. Year 11 students were able to read and understand information in French about various types of food.

76. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 were in line with national standards in German in 2002. In comparison with national standards, German GCSE results were well below in 2002 and very low in 2003. They were also below most other subjects in the college. However, it is expected that the 2004 GCSE results will be better. Overall performance showed students working at national standards in German in Year 9, but below in Year 11. Year 11 students were able to read information in German about food and say which items were healthy or unhealthy. They could also ask other students in German about their favourite foods and note their replies.

77. There were no students studying Spanish for GCSE in 2002 and 2003, and there are none for 2004. Overall, in the lessons seen, students were working at national standards. Year 7 students could listen to their partner talking in Spanish, and understand details about a family. Year 9 students were able to say where people had gone on holiday. Year 11 students were able to write down their most and least favourite college subjects in Spanish, giving reasons for their opinions.

78. In all languages, students are stronger in listening, speaking, and reading, and weaker in writing. Overall, there is a satisfactory amount of written exercises and sustained writing in the three languages: however, students make unnecessary errors in grammar and spelling. Students do not check their written work carefully enough: the errors students make in written work are preventing students from achieving higher standards. There are no significant variations between students of different ethnicity, background, nor ability. Students have regular reading sessions: these contribute to their general literacy and develop their skills and knowledge. Students spend most of their time using the foreign languages in listening, speaking, reading and writing: this contributes to their literacy skills, but these are at lower levels than they would be in English. Numeracy activities have been incorporated successfully into schemes of work, and are used by teachers. Students have limited access to computers, but enjoy using them, and produce good quality work.



79. The overall quality of teaching in French, German and Spanish is good. The quality of current teaching is improving standards; students are now achieving well.

80. In French, German, and Spanish teachers are proficient in the foreign language, have good accents, and project their voices clearly. They use the foreign languages for parts of the lesson to develop students' listening skills. Most use a little English to check understanding or explain grammatical points, but sometimes they use English too much. They plan a well organised sequence of activities, which involve the students in their learning. Lesson objectives are shared with the students at the beginning of lessons, so that they understand what they are expected to achieve, and checked in plenary sessions at the end so they can assess how successful they have been. Teachers exploit overhead projectors and other resources effectively to increase learning. Standards of discipline are good, but a few students find it difficult to concentrate sufficiently. Time is used well, and teachers are good at encouraging oral work in pairs: this improves listening and speaking skills, and develops confidence in the students. Staff display students' work, maps, posters, and other authentic material, which increase the students' knowledge of the languages and countries concerned. However, more maps and display are needed in some classrooms. Students' work is assessed regularly, and results inform subsequent teaching. Useful homework, which consolidates learning, is set regularly. The teaching of those with learning difficulties is good, and meets the needs of these students as well. Learning support assistants provide valuable help to students and teachers in the classroom. Teachers manage classes well, and give students a variety of experiences in the classroom, including songs, role plays, videos and class surveys, which extend and consolidate their learning. Teachers ensure that all students make appropriate progress. They provide challenging tasks for the higher attainers, and give support to those with learning difficulties. Most students, including the higher attainers and those with learning difficulties, are currently making good progress in lessons throughout the college.

81. The vast majority of students behave well. They show interest in their work, sustain their concentration, and develop good study skills. Their response is usually good throughout the college. Many students show an obvious sense of enjoyment in lessons. They work well in pairs, and sometimes have opportunities to use their initiative in creating role plays and working independently. Their positive attitudes are enabling them to improve their performance and achieve well. However, a few students find it difficult to concentrate and achieve their potential.

82. The organisation of the curriculum meets statutory requirements. Those in charge of modern languages check on the progress of students in French, German, and Spanish. The department is well led and organised, has prioritised development plans, and works well as a team to produce resources for effective learning. Teachers take students on visits to France and Spain: this encourages social interaction and personal responsibility, and improves language competence. The text books and other materials used, together with visits abroad, help develop awareness of the diversity and richness of other cultures. The quality of teaching, the attitudes of most students, the visits abroad, and the leadership of those in charge of modern languages have a positive effect on standards. However, insufficient use of the foreign language by some teachers, lack of resources, and the errors students make in written work are preventing students from achieving higher standards.

## **MATHEMATICS**

83. Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Substantial staff turnover affected results adversely in 2002 and 2003. The situation is now much improved.
- The department is cohesive and well led.
- Good use of local education authority and private consultancy is fostering improvement.
- Non-specialist and less experienced teachers sometimes focus on tasks to be covered rather than the principles to be learned in lessons.

- Insufficient use is made of information and communication technology as a tool for teaching or for learning.

## Commentary

84. Students' results in 2003 were average in the Year 9 National Curriculum tests (SATs) and below average at GCSE in Year 11. SAT results were better than in 2002 when they were below average. Conversely GCSE were worse having been in line with national average in 2002. There is no clear pattern of girls performing better than boys or vice versa year on year. Results for both key stages were adversely affected by substantial turbulence in staffing. Only one of the complement of nine mathematics teachers was on the staff when the college opened in September 2001. Twenty one different teachers have taught mathematics at one time or another over the last two years. The position has become fundamentally more stable since last January although one of those appointed at the beginning of this term is currently absent on sick leave following an accident and another teacher resigned at half term after only two terms in post.

85. The current coordinators of mathematics were appointed in the spring term of 2002 and have worked hard to offset the problems caused by this turnover. In doing so very good use has been made of consultancy support from the local education authority (LEA) and from private contractors. The LEA has provided good advice, in service training and skilled guidance with planning for development. Privately the college makes use of a very good teacher who is currently covering for one of the absent staff and is also employed to provide individual mentoring to colleagues. Developing the skills of those who are new to teaching or to the English system of education is rightly seen as critical if the students are to progress in their mathematics as they should.

86. The students' work seen in their books and during lessons was average and showed sound achievement. In Year 9 some seven in ten students are approaching level five in national curriculum terms. Most can solve straightforward linear equations algebraically. Number skills are reasonably secure although even average attaining students sometimes make mistakes adding and subtracting fractions. In Years 10 and 11 about one student in three is at the equivalent of a grade C or better currently, with a number approaching half on line to reach this standard by examination time next summer. The higher attaining have a good grasp of circle theorems and overall arithmetical skills are secure including sensible use of calculators. Almost all of those seen are capable of gaining a GCSE grade.

87. Students with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers. Teachers are aware of which students need extra assistance and know their students well so that even when there is no extra support available they enable them to keep up. Most students with English as an additional language have fairly good English skills and are not hampered in terms of learning mathematics. Gifted and talented mathematicians make satisfactory progress. They benefit from setting arrangements, which keep them occupied in lessons, and are entered for the national mathematics challenge competitions, which they find interesting.

88. Teaching is satisfactory overall throughout Years 7 to 11. More experienced teachers show good subject knowledge and are able to bring the underlying principles and ideas out clearly so that the students see what they are learning and why. This is less the case with those who are newer to the profession and the English educational system and those who are not specialist mathematics teachers. Their lessons, including the three in which teaching was unsatisfactory, are often too much focused on working examples and focusing on getting "right" answers so that the real learning points at issue are not always fully understood or grasped.

89. In almost every lesson observed sound or better teaching gave rise to satisfactory gains in knowledge and understanding on the part of the students. There were few lessons, however, in which teaching was very good and none in which it was excellent. Lessons are thoroughly prepared

and mostly delivered at good pace so that the students' interest is maintained and they work productively throughout whether individually or in groups. Teachers mark the students' work carefully and fully so that students can see what they need to do to improve. Standards of presentation and of behaviour are good because the teachers insist that they are so. Relationships between teachers and students are good and contribute to the quality of learning.

90. Lessons are, therefore, for the most part effective and efficient. Some are enjoyable too, but many are rather didactic and uninspirational. In this respect the contribution made by the use of information and communication technology is considerably less than it should be. Too often, for example, sketches of shapes and graphs are drawn freehand on the board when using an overhead projector with prepared slides would be quicker, clearer and set a better standard of presentation. The students' work displays relatively little use of the internet for research or computer programmes for learning or developing themes and ideas. Some teaching like that seen in a top set Year 9 class on the interior angles of polygons and in that for a bottom set Year 7 class on balancing equations is very good. The challenge for the department is to raise the quality of other lessons to that of the best.

91. The leadership and management of mathematics are good. Good use is made of test and examination data to set individual targets for students. Teachers are observed teaching and these observations lead to targets for improvement which are effective in helping to raise standards. The subject coordinators are both very good teachers and provide very good role models. In spite of all the problems they have had to face the department as a whole remains buoyant, cohesive and keen to improve.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

92. Students demonstrate mathematical and numerical skills that are in line with the national norm across the range of subjects they study. There is no question of any being denied access to understanding through lack of number skill. In design technology classroom skills are sound. In art accurate measured perspective features in GCSE work and pattern work involves drawing and measuring matrices in earlier years. In science the work seen in books and in lessons confirms a secure level of mathematical competence when measuring and weighing. .

93. A sound contribution to the students' improving numerical understanding is made in some but not all areas across the curriculum. There is a draft college numeracy policy in production. Some, but by no means all, departments have and implement their own departmental policies and have identified opportunities for developing numerical skills. Across the board practice is variable. In science there is a policy in the departmental handbook and teachers show awareness of the changes in mathematics teaching. In history mathematics is used to help the students organise and communicate their findings with timelines, dates and graphs. In other subjects such as English, geography, citizenship and information and communication technology there is little or no evidence of any policy or contribution.

## **SCIENCE**

94. Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Results at the end of Years 9 and 11 are improving.
- Teaching and learning are good, leading to good achievement.
- The new GNVQ science course is motivating students.
- Good assessment procedures.
- Large equipment is becoming depleted.
- A lack of data-logging equipment limits the amount of ICT work done in Years 7 to 9.
- Provision of smartboard teaching is effective and not used enough.

## Commentary

95. The national examination results at the end of Year 9 in 2003 were broadly in line with national averages and girls performed better than boys. These results were an improvement on those for 2002 when boys outperformed the girls. The GNVQ science results in 2003 represented a good improvement on the GCSE results in 2002 and were in line with national averages.

96. Standards of work seen during the inspection are average in all years and in view of the staffing problems in science since the college opened, represent good achievement. The achievement of students with special educational needs is also good, largely due to the help that they receive from support staff. Students in Year 9 are able to discuss genetics topics, such as selective breeding with confidence and describe the reactions of metals with acids, whilst higher attaining Year 11 students demonstrated a high level of competence in practical work when carrying out plant propagation techniques. Lower attaining students in Year 11 have a good understanding of the process of fermentation and the effect of temperature on enzymes. The written work of students is variable. Those of higher ability take a pride in their work and presentation whilst lower ability students tend to take less care. Apart from a small element of disruptive boys in Years 10 and 11, most students are well behaved in lessons and remain on task during written and practical work. They handle apparatus with care and share ideas and co-operate with each other in a mature and sensible manner. They listen attentively and are keen to answer questions.

97. Teaching is good overall across the college and students learn well because of this. Lessons are well prepared and contain a variety of activities, which maintains the interest of students. Teachers have good knowledge of their subjects and are able to give clear explanations of concepts to help students learn. Number skills are successfully practised through investigative work and the drawing of graphs appropriate to the science curriculum. Good attention is paid to literacy, with emphasis on new terminology. The use of ICT is covered but is limited in Years 7 to 9 through a shortage of data-logging equipment. The department has three Smartboards, but as the GNVQ course for Years 10 and 11 is on-line these are insufficient to teach the curriculum adequately. Lessons are well prepared and teachers have sound subject knowledge, enabling them to give clear explanations to students to enhance their learning. Homework is set on a regular basis and is used to reinforce work covered in lessons. Students' work is marked on a regular basis and is annotated with useful comments on guidance for improvement. The schemes of work reflect the requirements of the National Curriculum and the examination board. Assessment and target setting are good and regular testing takes place.

98. The department is well led and managed by key stage co-ordinators with guidance from a member of the senior management team and staff are keen to improve examination results. The department has suffered from staffing problems in the last two years but these have been resolved and the new staff are beginning to work together as a team. Several new initiatives have already been put into place to try to raise achievement, such as splitting some Years 8 and 9 groups into single sex teaching groups and the introduction of GNVQ science for Years 10 and 11. This course is developing well and the content of the course helps to maintain the interest of the students. There are plans to introduce industrial visits and use outside speakers as part of the upper college course. Accommodation is satisfactory but some resources are becoming depleted as money has been spent on setting up the new GNVQ course and there is a general shortage of textbooks. There are some good displays of students' work around the department, which are informative and enhance learning. The department receives good technical support from three technicians, although it is insufficient in time allocation.

## Information and Communication Technology

99. The provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 9 are rising in line with national expectations and have the appropriate skills to access a variety of programs.
- Curriculum design is a strength and resources have improved.
- Students have good attitudes and behaviour and enjoy using computers.
- The appointment of a consultant teacher to manage subject is proving an asset.
- There is an insufficient use of assessment in the planning of challenging work.

## Commentary

100. The college has improved the number and quality of computers and management of the subject has been stabilised by the consultant senior teacher. Although there is a coherent plan for further development more remains to be done to accelerate progress and raise standards. Attainment in Years 9 and 11 is rising to in line with national expectations. In some areas students have made inconsistent and slow progress because information and communication technology is not applied with sufficient breadth and depth across the curriculum. Available data for 2003 reflects poor performance, however the college has made every effort to match courses more closely to student needs and predicted exam results posit improvement. Students in Year 9 commence the GNVQ in ICT and can use main software applications with confidence. Their achievement is satisfactory.

101. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Where unsatisfactory teaching occurs, teachers lack competence and confidence. In these lessons teachers' poor control of students and over direction of activities leaves little scope for experiment. Most teachers give appropriate individual support to students and where teaching is good teachers are skilled at asking the right sort of questions to develop students thinking.

102. For most students, their attitudes, behaviour and concentration is good. They work well together helping each other to work and showing consideration for each other when working together. They are able to discuss their work, are motivated and eager to use the equipment. There is a useful system to record achievement but this is not yet used sufficiently to guide teachers' planning and next steps in learning.

103. Leadership and management of the subject is a recognised priority for the college. The recently appointed consultant manager has a good understanding of what needs to be done to improve standards. Action has been taken to address the management of equipment and the college has a clear view of the subject's strengths and areas for development. There are detailed plans in place to take the subject forward. Providing inconsistencies in staffing and resources can be resolved the college will be able to fulfil all the requirements of the subject and ensure standards continue to rise. Progress to date has been commendable.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

104. The area in which teaching opportunities for growth are missed is the use of ICT across the curriculum. Students have limited access to computers in a range of subjects and this is a pressing need for the college to tackle. Although all students have regular access to ICT, through timetabled use of the computer suites, all students need more opportunities to develop their knowledge skills and understanding. As a result they have limited understanding of how ICT might be used to support their work in other subjects.

## HUMANITIES

### Geography

105. The provision in geography is **satisfactory**

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- GCSE results have been below average but are improving.
- Some teaching is very good and excellent but in some classes students are not encouraged to think for themselves.
- The full range of students is not provided for in all lessons.
- Good management and committed leadership have improved the department provision rapidly.
- Girls are consistently attaining better test and exam results than boys.

## **Commentary**

106. In 2002 GCSE results at all levels were well below above the national average, and were significantly below the results of other subjects in the college. However, results rose sharply in 2003 and work seen during the inspection suggests at least an average standard of attainment at present. This represents satisfactory achievement from the end of Year 9. Girls' results are consistently better than boys, the gap being wider than the national gap. High attaining Year 11 students are completing some very good fieldwork about the proposed development of Farnborough Airfield, and have a good understanding of how to collect, analyse and present data. The work of some lower attaining students is less well presented, but still shows interest and effort.

107. End of Year 9 teacher assessments in 2002 were above national expectations for Level 5 and over, but below in the higher levels, also with a wide gap between boys and girls. The standard of Year 9 work seen during the inspection is in line with expectations for the age group. This represents good achievement from below average standards. High-attaining students show mastery of the appropriate geographical skills and knowledge, but the work of lower-attaining students is hampered by their weak writing and presentation.

108. Students with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English are well provided for in many classes. They are supported by their peers in group and pair work situations and have structured worksheets to guide their writing. Where classroom support assistants are present, their work is well directed and they make a difference to students' progress. Higher attaining students are also well provided for through having to write descriptions and explanations of geographical processes in their own words. In many lessons, skilled targeted questioning by the teacher enables all students to respond at their own level, through either complex or straightforward answers. As a result, in most lessons all students can achieve at the same rate. However, in a minority of lessons the provision is not so well organised which leads to some students not being able to finish their work and other wasting time while their classmates catch up with them. This is an important area for development.

109. The standard of teaching and learning is good overall. It is good in Years 10 and 11 and satisfactory in Years 7 to 9. More experienced teachers take classes in Years 10 and 11 but it is in these Years that there are some negative attitudes that affect achievement at this stage. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. One lesson was excellent, using a series of practical activities to develop understanding of the concepts of indicators of economic development. As the activities unfolded and the teacher's questioning became more probing, even groups of boys who were trying to remain coolly non-intellectual were drawn into the lesson. In some of the less successful lessons the teaching was too directed, not giving students the opportunity to think for themselves. Management of students' behaviour was always good, even though their attitudes were not universally positive. Students' work is well assessed through thorough marking and through questioning and self-assessment in lessons. Although themes related to citizenship were present in many of the lessons, they were not made sufficiently explicit so that students did not know they were part of the citizenship curriculum. Use of ICT is planned for in the schemes of work, and used by many students in their own time, for example for word processing and research, but because access to facilities is unreliable it is not at present an integral part of the teaching.

110. The department is well managed by two co-ordinators who have made an impressive job of putting together the necessary documentation and procedures in a short space of time. Their leadership is satisfactory, with a need now to concentrate on raising standards of attainment and

ensuring consistency in the teaching. Their enthusiasm and commitment suggest that the department has a good capacity to thrive in the future.

## History

111. The provision in history is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve well in comparison with their previous attainment.
- The teaching of history is good.
- Students' good attitudes enhance their progress in lessons.
- Students attain good standards in their writing and research.
- There is good management and leadership of history.
- Access to ICT to support and extend students' learning is inadequate.

112. Standards of work seen in history during the inspection are average. These standards are achieved by good teaching and learning overall and students' positive attitudes.

113. Relative to their prior performance before Year 7, the achievement of students is at least satisfactory by Year 9. Students achieve well in Years 10 and 11.

114. In Years 10 and 11 students take the GCSE course of study. In 2003 there was a below average pass rate at A\* to C grades. The previous year results were above average. Standards of work seen are at least in line with national norms and the work of some students is above the standard expected. Girls are adept at research, examining a range of historical concepts and issues whereas boys gain ICT skills, when possible, by using a variety of databases. However, there are inadequate opportunities to use ICT in history. Girls, overall, out-perform boys in history.

115. Students, including those with learning difficulties and across all ability levels, achieve well in Years 7 to 9. Special worksheets, suitable for the lowest attainers, are used and, as a result, most achieve satisfactory standards. There is limited in-class learning support. Greater access to ICT would help in the research work demanded in all years.

116. Learning is generally good in Years 7 to 9 and most make good oral contributions in class. A few students in Years 10 to 11 lack confidence in articulating historical concepts and the nature of learning in history. There is no antipathy to history and behaviour is good. Learning in Years 10 to 11 is good. Students remain on task and work well collaboratively. The evidence from GCSE files indicates some inequality in writing skills. Girls, for example, are better at English composition than boys. Students do not have sufficient opportunities in college to use computers, particularly for research. Good relationships underpin learning and teachers use assessment effectively to monitor the progress of individual students.

117. In Years 7 to 9 teaching is good overall. The teachers have very good subject knowledge which the students respect. Lessons are well planned with clear objectives. The aims of a lesson are shared with students who respond with good levels of interest. In Years 10 and 11 teaching is good with pace and a variety of activity. A Year 9 class re-wrote the Treaty of Versailles. This was followed by a lively discussion. Teachers illustrate their lessons and the majority of students respond with their own ideas. There is appropriate emphasis on some aspects of literacy such as accurate spelling in all years. However, with some exceptions, students' own independent writing is not error free and it is not developed sufficiently.

118. History is well led and managed efficiently. The subject leader gives a clear educational direction for the subject. The progress of students is well monitored with appropriate targets set for improvement which are indicated by constructive comments both in writing and in discussion with students. Teaching and learning are effectively monitored with the results thoroughly discussed and reported. This affects standards positively.

## Religious education

119. Provision for religious education is **good**

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and often very good.
- Most of the lessons have strong content drawn from world religions.
- There is a very good range of examination courses on offer in Years 10 and 11.
- The students do well in the GCSE examinations.
- A significant amount of teaching is done by non-specialist teachers and this is having some effect on students learning.
- Work is not always well matched to students' needs.

### Commentary

120. Standards in the short course GCSE examination are broadly in line with national averages. In 2003, of the 42 students entered for the exam, 55 per cent of the students gained the higher grades of A\* to C. 100 per cent gained the grades A\* to G. In 2002, about 40 per cent of students gained the grades A\* to C and 96 per cent the grades A\* to G. The standard of work seen during the inspection in both the full course and short course GCSE is similarly average. The students have a sound knowledge of the religions that they study and they understand how the two religions have an effect on the lifestyles of their followers. The students' written work is well developed and they can give intelligent verbal responses to many of the issues brought up by their course such as prejudice and discrimination. The achievement of the students is good as the teachers make significant demands on them and they respond accordingly. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boy and girls.

121. At the end of Year 9, the standards of attainment are in line with those of indicated in the locally Agreed Syllabus whereas others are below it. In general, the majority of students have some knowledge and understanding of different aspects of Christianity and other world religions. The students are familiar with the main aspects of the life of religious leaders such as Jesus and the Sikh gurus. At times some important aspects of these leaders' lives are not well remembered and understood. The students can recognise and use some specialist religious language in a meaningful way and they can talk about many religious concepts such as symbols and holy books. Their written work is variable. Some is of a high quality both in terms of amount and depth whereas other is more limited in both aspects. The students are generally able to make good oral responses. Based on the levels in which they come into college, the achievement of the students overall is satisfactory though sometimes better than this. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls. Across all years the progress of students who have special educational needs and who have English as an additional language is satisfactory.

122. The teaching in the GCSE groups is good to very good in about equal proportion. All lessons are well prepared and the subject matter is put across with confidence. The objectives of the lesson are clear and so the learning is strong. The expectations in the lessons are high and the students do a lot of work in the time available. The lessons are taught with conviction and understanding and this keeps the students interested in the work. Consequently the students are well-behaved and they participate fully in the activities of the lesson. There is a significant increase in the number of students wanting to follow the full course GCSE. The teaching in Years 7 to 9 is more variable with some good and very good teaching as well some satisfactory teaching. Where the teaching is good or very good, the lessons are well prepared and a good range of activities are used to put across the learning. Expectations in these lessons are high both in terms of the amount done in the time available and the level at which they are pitched. There is strong subject expertise in these lessons and the teachers can confidently bring new subject learning to the students' attention. Where the lessons are satisfactory, the expertise of the teachers is less significant and so the new learning done by the students is not so strong. Some of the activities are of a low level and have limited



benefit and take up a lot of time. As a result the achievement of the students is not significant. At times, control of these classes is not as good as it could be. Across the teaching generally, different levels of structured work would enable the more able and the less able students to progress better according to their abilities. The teaching makes good contribution to literacy with the introduction and explanation of new words and phrases. The teaching also makes a good contribution to students spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, for example, in the study of moral issues in world religions. Overall the students have a very positive attitude to religious education and they enjoy their study. Homework is set and assessment procedures are in place. The teaching uses information technology in some of its work.

123. The department is very well led. The department has produced a very good range of documentation. The staffing is satisfactory. About 30 per cent of the teaching is done by non-specialist and this is having some effect on the students learning. The monitoring of teaching would be of some help to this. Statutory requirements are being met in Years 7 to 9, and in Years 10 and 11. The accommodation and resources are very good.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

124. The provision of design and technology is **satisfactory**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The recently appointed coordinator has a clear view of what needs to be done to improve standards.
- The department actively seeks advice and support from external sources showing good commitment to the raising of standards of attainment.
- The programme of monitoring and evaluation of teaching is good.
- Basic graphical skills need to be improved to aid the design process.
- Not enough students who follow the GCSE courses are entered into the examinations.
- The use of ICT at all levels is insufficient.

### **Commentary**

125. In the summer 2003 teacher assessments of Year 9 the number of students attaining Level 5 and above was below national averages. This reflects the picture in the classroom where the performance of the majority of students is below national expectations. Students are stronger at working with textiles and food than graphics. This is largely because of staffing problems that have recently been overcome with the appointment of two newly qualified teachers one of whom is making good progress in updating schemes of work for these areas. Nevertheless some of the basic practical skills are not well developed. For example students often use pen to sketch and draw their designs.

126. The 2003 GCSE examinations results were well below average. This was despite a low rate of less than sixty per cent of students being entered at the end of their courses. There are signs that overall standards are improving due to recent improvements in the staffing situation. Students who follow the graphical products course have to learn basic graphical skills that should have been acquired in earlier years and many lack confidence in their ability to sketch to design. Textiles and food technology students have a better grounding in basic skills and the presentation of their folders is generally of a reasonable standard.

127. Teaching is overall satisfactory. The best teaching features good planning that gives clear direction to teaching and learning. Lesson planning offers structure, variety and pace. Learning objectives are clearly stated at the start of the lesson and the progress students make is summarised at the end. In this teaching relationships are good and lead to well ordered and purposeful learning. This was so in a Year 9 textiles lesson where students of both sexes were engaged fully by the challenge, humour, good will and firmness deployed by a resourceful and motivational teacher. There is some unsatisfactory teaching when students are not made fully aware

of what they are expected to do and of how they are expected to behave. In these lessons teachers concentrate support on a few lower attaining individuals leaving others who have completed their tasks to idle away their time. These lessons are noisy and lack the structure and variety of activity that engages interest and promotes good learning.

128. The management of the subject has improved considerably since the appointment of a new coordinator a year ago. The department lacked useful schemes of work and assessment practice was never properly established in the new college. Both these issues are now being purposefully and effectively tackled though there is a need to ensure that new schemes of work are adequately resourced. External consultants have been employed and are giving high quality support and advice to extend teachers' knowledge of key areas. There is now a good programme of monitoring and evaluation of teaching that has been extended to include classroom observation of peers. This is helpful in the sharing of good practice in the department. Design and technology has an unusually high number of teachers new to the profession but there is a good programme of support and guidance for them. Analysis of folders of Years 10 and 11 students reveals little use of information and communication technology to aid in presentation or for research. There has been good recent improvement in the standards of design and technology.

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS**

### **Art and design**

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

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

- The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good.
- Students' achievement is good throughout the College.
- Excellent use is made of the art and tradition of other cultures.
- The quality of display enriches the College and underlines its aims.
- Provision for working with computers is sparse and progress in this area is restricted.

#### **Commentary**

130. In National Curriculum assessments at the end of Year 9, students collectively gained grades at the average level in the most recent year. These results show a marked improvement over the previous year and are confirmed in the quality of work seen during the inspection. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls at this stage but standards, overall, represent good achievement from levels of attainment on entry. A feature of students' work at this stage is the wide range of experience across creative activities. Students' work is enriched by the study of the art of other cultures in the development of their ideas.

131. GCSE results in 2002 were below average with no marked difference between boys and girls. Current work in Year 11, however, shows a significant advance and this is reinforced by the quality of work evident in Year 10. The best work seen displays a very good capacity for deriving ideas from major figures in art history, Cézanne and Van Gogh, for example. Project work is well written up and well presented. As at the earlier stage, current standards represent good achievement from previous levels of attainment. At both stages, good progress is made by students with special educational needs, due to the nature of the subject. Students with special talent also make good progress for the same reasons.

132. The quality of teaching in art and design is good and, in some instances, very good. There is a strong emphasis upon imaginative development and breadth of experience. The level of challenge is high and students are required to think seriously about the nature of art and its place in society. Much of the teaching is innovative requiring different ways of looking at things. This approach expresses in its own way, the special status and nature of the college as International Institute with a strong commitment to the arts as a whole. All the teaching is thoroughly prepared and carefully

monitored with detailed assessment. The use of computers is insufficient and is affecting progress because students have limited opportunities to produce electronic presentations of their art and design projects.

133. The management of the subject area is good, being shared by two teachers who are fully committed. Documentation is comprehensive and covers all college policies. The lack of a non-teaching studio assistant, however, places an additional burden upon already hardworking teachers. The work done in art and design plays an important role in raising standards in the arts area as a whole and the stimulating displays of artwork enrich the college.

## **DRAMA**

134. The provision for Drama is **satisfactory**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The sound and sometimes good teaching in the subject.
- The good schemes of work and imaginative drama activities provided for students.
- The good contribution the subject makes to students' social, moral and cultural development.
- The need to organise lessons in a more tightly structured manner.
- The need to help students to develop critical and analytical skills in order that they are more able to evaluate the quality of their own work.

### **Commentary**

135. It was only possible to observe a limited number of lessons of drama lesson during the period of the inspection. Students arrive in college with a limited knowledge of educational drama. They achieve satisfactorily, however, and develop a satisfactory knowledge of drama skills and techniques with the result that standards at the end of Year 9 are broadly in line with expectations for students of a similar age.

136. Most students continue to make satisfactory progress in their drama skills as they engage in their GCSE Drama course. A significant minority of students however lack concentration and self-discipline and do not find it easy to sustain a believable character over time, with the result that standards at the end of Year 11 are below average.

137. Students with special educational needs make the same progress as all other members of their class. Students in Year 8 could be observed making satisfactory progress in their knowledge of physical theatre, as they considered how mime and body movement could be used to convey feelings and emotions. Most students did well in this activity, though some students lacked concentration and self-discipline and did not fully focus on the skills to be used. Students in Year 9 could also be seen to be making satisfactory progress in their understanding of tension, its importance in drama and how it is created. The success of this lesson owed much to the teacher's good use of resources as the class considered an extract from a film in order to see how tension can be set up and then broken. This acted as a good stimulus for the students' own work.

138. Students in Years 10 and 11 are given the chance to extend their previously learned drama skills in more demanding devised drama activities. This was observed in a good lesson in Year 10 as students used their knowledge of the Theatre of the Absurd to good effect as they explored and presented a scene from 'The Chairs' by Eugene Ionesco.

139. Students in Years 11 could be seen making some progress in their drama skills as they began a new unit of work on the theme of 'Fame'. Whilst the students approached their work in a positive frame of mind, they relied too much on their knowledge of television reality programmes with the result that much of their work was lacking in originality and below average. Most students work well together when engaged in group activities. They are prepared to listen to each other's ideas and

opinions, explore a range of possible interpretations, and agree upon a final framework for their devised dramas

140. Whilst it is obvious that most students really enjoy their drama lessons and display positive attitudes to their work, a number of students lack self-discipline and fail to make the best use of their potential skills and talents.

141. Some students are insecure in their writing skills when assessing and evaluating their own and other's efforts. They tend to focus on what they did during improvisations, rather than exploring the skills and techniques they used and how they impacted on their final work.

142. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good and very good teaching observed during the period of the inspection. Students are provided with an imaginative range of drama activities. Although lessons are well planned, teachers need to structure lessons in such a way as to develop discrete drama skills within clearly defined guidelines and constraints until students learn to accept the responsibility for taking control of their own learning.

143. Leadership and management in the subject are good. In the comparatively short time she has been in post, the enthusiastic and knowledgeable drama co-ordinator has put into place good schemes of work and assessment procedures. These allow students to assess the success of the activities they have been involved in and to plan for improvement.

144. Opportunities are given for students to extend their knowledge of theatre by attending a number of local and national theatre productions. Students also present their practical work to both parents and friends; this contributes well to their social, moral and cultural development in terms of working in a team, sharing the limelight and appreciating the views and interpretations of others.

145. The subject has a good working relationship with all other performing arts subjects in college, with over sixty students currently being involved in intensive rehearsals for a production of the musical, 'Bugsy Malone'.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

146. Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The proportion of students attaining A\* to C grade passes at GCSE is improving considerably.
- Good teaching and learning, particularly in Years 7 to 9, results in good achievement.
- In Years 7 to 10 students' attitudes and behaviour are good.
- The achievement of some Year 11 GCSE students is unsatisfactory as a result of their negative attitudes.
- Teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 are not effectively moderated.
- The lack of consistent quality of marking of GCSE theory work.

### **Commentary**

147. Results in the GCSE examination were below the national average in 2002 but in 2003, they improved considerably and were broadly in line with the national average. The great majority of students performed better in physical education than in other subjects. The small number of girls entered for the course does not make it possible to realistically comment on gender differences.

148. In lessons seen in Year 9 standards are average for the majority. Achievement is good because standards on entry were below what was expected for students' ages. In badminton lessons, for example, most students are developing the range and techniques of their shots. The more capable are using shots accurately because of their effective use of footwork. In both basketball and hockey students are improving their individual skills but the quality of their teamwork

skills is less secure. Movement into space and movement off the ball, for example, are not always particularly effective. On the whole, though, good quality teaching and learning has led to good improvement for the great majority.

149. In lessons seen in Year 11 standards are below average even though the majority is following the GCSE full course. The negative attitudes of many means they are not responding to the challenge offered. In a boys' basketball lesson, for example, a quarter of the group were not prepared to actively participate and in a girls' swimming lesson more than half the group were not prepared to actively participate. In basketball, only a few are working at practical levels commensurate with A\* to C grade passes. The majority has secure individual skills but lack the concentration to transfer these successfully in full-sided games. In swimming, those observed are developing well the techniques required for backstroke and the more capable are developing the use of tumble turns. A scrutiny of a sample of their theory work also shows many are not working as well as they could. There are, for example, instances of unfinished work. The achievement of the majority of Year 11 students is, therefore, unsatisfactory.

150. The overall quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. In Years 7 to 11 it is good and results in good progress for students. Across all years teachers have a good command of the activities being taught and there is a consistent approach as regards standards of behaviour. The good quality teaching is typified by pace, purpose, progression and challenge. Learning objectives are shared with students thus they know what is expected of them. In Years 7 to 10 students' attitudes and behaviour are good, which enhances the quality of learning. In Year 11 the negative attitudes of many students detracts from the quality of learning hence they are not making the progress they are capable of. Teachers circulate well in lessons and their effective use of praise and constructive criticism makes students aware of their capabilities. On odd occasion, however, there are insufficient structured opportunities for students to be involved in peer evaluation and coaching – this would deepen their knowledge and understanding even further. Little use is made of ICT to support students' learning. The quality of marking of GCSE theory work is inconsistent and students are not always being told what they need to do to make further progress.

151. The co-ordinator of physical education has only recently been appointed; hence, it is not possible to comment on the quality of leadership. Management of the subject is developing well and the induction of two newly qualified teachers has been identified as a priority. Issues for improvement have been identified; teaching and learning are monitored, as is performance data. However, there is a lack of moderation of teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 to ensure their accuracy. Not all schemes of work support sufficiently well students' basic skills of literacy, numeracy and use of ICT. As a result of the very good range of accommodation a broad range of sports are taught throughout the year. Good extra-curricular provision throughout the year broadens students' learning experience and enables the more capable to represent the college in competitive fixtures. As a result, a number of students have achieved representative honours at district and county level in a range of sports. Boys' Years 10 and 11 football teams are division champions in at district level. There are further opportunities for students to participate in sport through the college's formal enrichment programme.

## **DANCE**

152. The provision in dance is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good quality teaching and learning, particularly in Years 10 and 11, results in very good achievement.
- Students' attitudes are very positive and this helps promote a very positive atmosphere in lessons.

### **Commentary**

153. In Years 7 to 9 mixed dance is taught as part of the performing arts provision and in Years 10 and 11 as a GCSE option. In 2003, the proportion of girls attaining A\* to C grade passes were good. This was the first group to be entered for the exam. Standards of work seen in Year 11 are below average and predicted grades suggest the proportion of girls attaining A\* to C grade passes will decline. This is as a result of their lack of prior experience of dance in Years 7 to 9 and the demands of the GCSE syllabus.

154. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 10 and 11 is very good and as a result girls achieve well in relation to their capabilities. Lessons are well structured and purposeful. In practical lessons, in particular, girls are fully involved in their learning. Only one lesson was observed in Year 7; the quality of teaching and learning was very good. The provision of dance adds good breadth to the college curriculum and enrichment programme.

## **Music**

155. The provision in music is **unsatisfactory**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Development of good relationship between teacher and students.
- Insufficient use of comprehensive scheme of work.
- Insufficient attention to the development of practical skills as an integral part of all activities.
- Insufficient opportunities exist for the effective use of Information Communication Technology.
- Quality and extent of learning resources are inadequate.
- Lack of specialist teaching rooms.

## **Commentary**

156. Standards are in line with the national average in Year 11 but not in Year 9, where attainment is below that expected nationally. Achievement for all students given the wide range of standards of attainment on entry is just satisfactory. Insufficient attention is paid to the development of practical skills and no compositional work was available during the inspection week. Lack of practice rooms limits the amount of practical work. Music has been through a difficult period and consequently standards have fallen. Recent GCSE results have been good, with 63 per cent of students entered in 2003 achieving A\* - C above the national average.

157. Most students are enthusiastic and enjoy their lessons. However there were long periods during the academic year 2002/3 when no music was taught. The subject is taught as part of the coherent Performing Arts curriculum and many performance activities have been maintained despite staff absence. Whilst the department benefits from being part of an overall approach to the arts, the college should consider whether the organisation of time available enables all students to make and sustain progress. Instrumental teachers visit the college and there are opportunities for students to take part in ensemble work. The college has recently introduced African Drumming and encourages senior students to work with younger students during enrichment time. Students in Years 7 to 9 are developing a musical vocabulary and need to gain an understanding of form and structure so that they are then able to use these as they develop practical skills.

158. The quality of teaching is just satisfactory. The teacher makes clear to students the learning objectives and lessons usually end with a productive plenary. At present too much is knowledge based. Not enough attention is given to the development of listening and compositional skill allowing students to value and develop natural musical abilities. There is a detailed scheme of work which identifies long term targets for the development of skills, but this is not being used so that all elements including composing, performing and appraising are successfully addressed.

159. The quality of teaching accommodation is unsatisfactory and in a shabby condition. Although there are plans for a music technology suite, at present there are no resources and no opportunities for students to make full use technology in music. The range of instruments is inadequate, many

being in a poor state of repair. The resources for learning in the subject are unsatisfactory, the main teaching room is a former science laboratory and there is little space for practical music making.

160. The newly appointed teacher has been in post for two weeks. Much hard work and careful planning needs to be undertaken to ensure a rise in standards.

## **BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES**

### **Leisure and Tourism**

161. One Year 10 lesson was sampled from the GNVQ Leisure and Tourism course in Years 10 and 11. The students learned well from a teacher who facilitated their learning by giving them structured assignments consisting of research they had to feed back to the rest of the group. As a result they were developing independence and most were able to think through the planning of suitable leisure outings for different groups of people.

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

162. The provision for personal, social, and health education is **good**.

163. A lot of work has been done to ensure that a range of topics are taught to students both in discrete lessons during each week and through the general subjects of the curriculum at other times. Visitors to the college also make good contributions to the provision. The topics covered include sex education, drugs education, bullying awareness, racism and alcohol abuse. Some of the topics include aspects of citizenship such as human rights, and rights and responsibilities. More general topics cover issues of trust and the environment. As well as preparing the students for individual responsibility some lessons have a broader social dimension and so cover issues like relationships, old age and death. The teaching seen during the inspection was broadly satisfactory to good in about equal proportion. Where the teaching was good, significant demands were made on the students and so their learning and achievement was significant. In the lessons where the teaching was satisfactory the work was less demanding and more could have been done in the time available. Overall, the standards attained by the students is broadly in line with what would be expected at this stage. The department is well led.

164. The provision in citizenship is **undetermined**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The student planners highlight citizenship and subject links.
- A draft Year 9 student self-assessment document has been produced.
- Citizenship has been planned for through cross-curricular provision and there is an action plan in place to support and improve the provision.
- There is no systematic monitoring or evaluation of the teaching or learning of citizenship nor is there monitoring nor evaluation of the delivery of citizenship in subjects to ensure it is actually occurring.
- There is no formal scheme of work for the subject.

### **Commentary**

165. Although some lessons in some subjects contain work that contributes to elements of citizenship, there is little evidence of any coherently planned citizenship activities across Years 7 to 11. It is therefore not possible to judge what standards are in these years. There are planned citizenship activities in the personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons. However, no lessons were seen during the inspection and no written evidence was available.

166. It is not possible to give a judgement on teaching and learning as no evidence was available during the inspection. Only one lesson plan referred to citizenship. Students have clear links

between subjects and citizenship identified in their planners. However, here is no systematic monitoring or evaluation of teaching and learning in place; hence the development of the subject is not being fully assessed.

167. Leadership has provided a vision for the provision of citizenship and outstanding issues have been identified. Initial planning was secure but, as yet, this has not been fully translated into any meaningful subject delivery. The quality of management is restricted because the citizenship co-ordinator also has the fulltime responsibility of leading a core subject department. As a result, the demands on the co-ordinator's time are many and the delivery of citizenship is adversely affected.



## SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM

### Sixth forms.

168. In the inspection, 11 subjects and courses were inspected and are reported on in detail. Work in other subjects and courses was sampled and contributed to the overall picture of teaching and learning in the college.

169. The table below shows entry and performance information for courses completed in [latest year for which national comparisons are available].

<b>Standards in the International Baccalaureate Diploma at the end of Year 13 in 2003</b>		
	College Results	National results
Percentages of students who achieved all they studied	25 (n/a)	87.1 (n/a)
<i>There were 20 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for previous year</i>		

## ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

### English

English and Spanish were inspected.

170. The provision for English in the sixth form is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good teaching in the subject.
- Students' positive attitudes towards work and their enthusiasm for the subject.
- The subjects' contribution to students' social, personal and cultural development.
- The need to raise standards in students' written work.

#### Commentary

171. Three English lessons were observed in the sixth form, two in Year 12 and one in Year 13. A scrutiny of students' written work was also carried out.

172. Students' attainment upon entry into the International Baccalaureate (IB) course in English is average overall, though some students have a relevant foreign accreditation, rather than an English one. Students achieve well over time and make good progress in the subject, with the result that standards are broadly in line with other institutions offering the course and the demands and expectations of the syllabus. This provides students with an acceptable entrance qualification to the higher education institution of their choice. Students were entered for the examination for the first time in 2003.

173. In the limited number of lessons observed students displayed satisfactory oral skills, with a number of more able students making mature and perceptive comments about the texts they are studying. Occasionally some students are somewhat passive during oral activities and defer to the opinions of more articulate students and their teachers. Speaking and listening skills at the end of Year 13 are average overall.

174. Most students in Years 12 and 13 are satisfactory readers. They develop and extend the critical and analytical skills developed in their GCSE studies and apply them to some challenging novels, poetry and plays.

175. Higher attaining students have a clear understanding of sub-text and are able to draw their own conclusions from the inferred rather than the explicit. At its best some students display good linguistic skills and appreciate how writers use language to convey a particular moral, social or political stance. Not all students however are secure in these skills, with the result that reading skills relevant to the sixth form study of English Literature are average overall.

176. Students can be seen to be making satisfactory and sometimes good progress in their writing skills in Years 12 and 13. Students make a satisfactory written response to the novels, plays and poems they study, with the most able of students producing a strong personal and well structured response to the questions asked of them. Average attaining students are less secure in their ability to focus on the ideas and issues in the question being asked of them and include information which gains them few marks in their final examinations. Standards in writing at the end of Year 13 are average overall.

177. The good progress made by students owes much to the positive attitudes to work and their enthusiasm for the subject.

178. The overall quality of teaching in the subject is good, with some very good teaching being observed during the period of the inspection. Lessons are well planned, organised and managed. Teachers have high expectations of students, with good working relationships between teachers and students contributing to learning.

179. Regular chances are given for students to take control of their own learning, to engage in personal research and to become independent learners. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and convey it to students in an imaginative way. This was observed in a Year 12 class as students developed good critical and analytical skills as they explored the visual images in a Pre-Raphaelite painting, before turning to the use of linguistic skills to explore a Romantic poem which conveyed the same ideas and feelings.

180. Leadership and management in the subject are good. Teachers interpret the IB English syllabus in an effective manner, with good assessment procedures and one to one support helping students to identify their strengths and areas for development.

181. With its emphasis on the opportunity to work both independently and in groups and the chance to read literature from different cultures and countries, as reflected in the philosophy of the International Baccalaureate, the subject makes a valuable contribution to students' social, moral and cultural development.

182. Provision in the sixth form in Spanish is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are average.
- The quality of teaching is very good: the teacher have high expectations.
- Students speak Spanish with confidence.
- Teaching resources are inadequate.
- Insufficient displays of Spanish key words and maps of Spanish speaking countries are displayed in sixth form teaching rooms.

### **Commentary**

183. Spanish is only offered at beginners' level at present, because current students had no opportunity to study it in Year 11. Students begin the language in Year 12, and take the International Baccalaureate examinations at the end of Year 13. There is one group in Year 12 and one group in Year 13. The first students in the college to take the course took their examinations in 2003. They achieved lower grades, and their results were lower than in most other subjects.

184. Attainment is average and students should attain middle grades in their examinations. Spanish accents and intonation ranged from satisfactory to very good. Students understood the general meaning of spoken and written Spanish, and picked out important details from what they heard and read. They were keen to answer the teacher's questions and performed role plays with their partners for the whole class, talking about holidays. They were also able to talk about holidays to the whole class, and answer questions put by other students.

185. The quality of teaching was very good: the teacher had high expectations and the students responded well to the challenges they were given. The lesson objective of giving them confidence in discussing holidays was achieved. The lesson was very well planned: the teacher revised key verbs and different types of holiday, using chorus work to practise pronunciation and intonation. She provided most of the information on the overhead projector, and they tried hard to guess unknown vocabulary. The teacher used mime and drawings to give them clues about meanings. They noted the vocabulary to use in the lesson and for future reference. The teacher prepared them well for writing about an imaginary holiday: they had to say how, where, when, and with whom they went, what they ate and drank, and which festival they attended. They did the writing well, presented their account to the class, and answered questions. They then worked in two groups, and performed role plays for the others. Next they read nine Spanish questions in their text book and matched them to 9 answers. Finally, the teacher checked what they had learned in the plenary session. The lesson was conducted in Spanish, which developed their listening skills. The teacher also corrected the intonation of some students, giving them a good model to imitate. The lesson went at a good pace, but the teacher gave the students enough time to complete the various tasks.

186. Students used the time well and were enthusiastic about the different activities. If they needed vocabulary, they asked for help. They had very good relationships with the teacher.

187. The department is well led and organised, however, resources are inadequate, particularly in terms of key words and displays. The sixth form teaching is shared between two teachers. The teachers have good knowledge of the course requirements and mark work according to the examination criteria. They share these with the students, so that they know how to improve.

## **MATHEMATICS**

188. Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Results in the International Baccalaureate in 2003 were disappointing. They were very badly affected by staffing problems that existed throughout 2001 and 2002.
- The students' views of the staff and teaching are very positive.
- The course leading to the International Baccalaureate enables students who might otherwise have ceased the study of mathematics to continue.
- The teaching and planning for the course potentially at risk because it is unduly dependent on the work of one individual.
- The number of students studying for the higher level examination is low.

### **Commentary**

189. The college offers courses leading to examination for the International Baccalaureate (IB) at standard and higher levels. Students who have failed to gain a grade C or better in GCSE in Year 11 are also given the opportunity to repeat. Lessons and samples of work were seen for year twelve and year thirteen from all courses. Representatives from each group of students were interviewed.

190. International Baccalaureate examination results in mathematics were below those achieved in other schools where these courses are offered in 2003. This was the first year in which the students took these examinations. The teachers for the first four terms of the course were not specialist mathematicians and had no experience of teaching IB.

191. When the current subject co-ordinator assumed responsibility for course teaching, organisation and management in January 2003 the students were behind schedule and had done no coursework. Some had become demotivated and were poor attenders. By the time that the students took the examination in May their new teacher had enabled them to complete the necessary coursework and cover the whole syllabus. Eventually two in three of those entered for the standard paper achieved the broad equivalent of an E grade pass at GCE advanced supplementary level. Two of the seven entered for the higher paper achieved grades high enough to count towards success for the IB award overall. These results are clearly much lower than they should be. Nevertheless they are as high as they are only because of the hard work and skill of the teacher currently running and teaching the course.

192. The number of students choosing to study mathematics at standard level is economically viable. Numbers for the higher level, currently at three in year twelve and two in Year 13, are low. Economically this is viable because the two courses are taught together. This situation is less than ideal, however, and is viable simply because of the extra work outside of normal curriculum time to which the teachers are committed.

193. The current standard of work seen in lessons and in the students' folders is broadly in line with expectations in both years. The course has major benefits for average attaining students in that it is accessible to those who have not quite reached a grade C at GCSE. Year 12 standard course students are working to improve algebraic skills and show good understanding of rounding and significant figures. By Year 13 the strongest on the course cope very well with the financial mathematics involved in calculating compound interest and all demonstrate secure numeracy and algebra. Students studying for higher level show a secure understanding of arithmetic series, exponentials and expansion of terms using the binomial theorem in year twelve. In Year 13 coursework and classwork both indicate that one communicates better mathematically and is working much harder than the other.

194. Those students who have chosen to retake GCSE are very well taught and making good progress towards improving their grades. About half of these, and possibly more, are on track for gaining a grade C or better by next summer's examinations.

195. Teaching overall is good, with that provided by more experienced teachers in the department very good. Most lessons are carefully prepared and well presented providing the right level of pace and challenge. The students' work is well marked and corrected by the teachers. Students are also encouraged to learn from marking it themselves. In class students answer questions and discuss their mathematics readily although some, particularly in the lower sixth, lack confidence. Most persevere when they find ideas difficult to grasp. Experienced teachers are very secure in their subject knowledge so that their lessons are both interesting and enjoyable as well as very informative. Those who are newer to advanced level work are still coming to terms with what is required so that their delivery can from time to time lack clarity.

196. Computers are an underused resource. A lesson seen on functions provides a case in point. Showing the effect of changing the constant term or coefficients of powers of  $x$  in a function can be very much better illustrated by using computer software or at least an overhead projector with prepared transparencies than simply drawing rough drawn sketches on a board.

197. The students think very highly indeed of their teachers. They say that they are friendly, helpful and very approachable so that they are enabled to improve their levels of understanding confident that they will not be made to feel inferior if there are areas which they find difficult or do not understand.

198. The mathematics department is well led and well managed. The students are well informed by regular testing arrangements of strong and weak areas in their work and of what needs to be done to secure improvement. Each of these is a factor contributing to improving standards. Up to the beginning of this term all of the teaching and organisation of the IB mathematics was the

responsibility of one teacher only. There are obvious risks inherent in operating in this way should that teacher become ill, incapacitated or leave for any reason. The college recognises this as a potential source of difficulty but has found it difficult until recently to do much to resolve the position as it will need to do if the course numbers are to be increased and the quality of the provision is to be enhanced further.

## **Mathematics across the curriculum**

199. Students show average numerical skills that are sufficient to ensure access to all subject areas where necessary. Those studying psychology, for example, can control and manipulate variables and apply null and alternative hypotheses in their research studies. There are no formal mechanisms linking the teaching of mathematics across the range of subjects offered but the students mentioned how useful it was for them that the teachers of physics and chemistry combined with those teaching mathematics to ensure that key concepts such as those associating Newton's laws of motion with dynamics were understood in time for them to apply them in a practical context.

## **SCIENCE**

Chemistry and biology were the foci of the inspection in science.

### **Chemistry**

200. Provision in chemistry is **good**.

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

- Teaching is good.
- Students are well motivated and their achievement is good.
- Large resources are becoming depleted.
- The syllabus content means that there is insufficient time for independent learning to take place.

### **Commentary**

201. The results in 2003 were satisfactory although there were only two candidates.

202. Standards of work seen during the inspection are good and these standards are achieved because of good teaching and the small group size means that students are able to share ideas and help each other. In relation to their standards at the start of the sixth form, the achievements of students are good and their positive attitudes mean that the quality of learning is good and they make good progress as they move through the sixth form. Students from the upper and lower sixth form are taught together due to the small numbers of their groups. According to the available data, they would appear to be in line with other institutions offering the International Baccalaureate qualification and the expectations of its syllabus.

203. Students make good progress in lessons and are achieving well in relation to their GCSE results. They have a good working knowledge of some complex molecules such as proteins and carbohydrates and understand the mechanisms of enzyme actions. They demonstrated a high level of competency in investigative skills during a practical lesson to determine types of chemical bonding in unknown compounds. Written work is well presented and they have a mature and sensible attitude towards their work.

204. Teaching in chemistry is good and the motivation of the students enables them to learn well. The very good subject knowledge of their teacher means that difficult concepts are clearly explained to aid their understanding. Lessons are well planned, have a brisk pace and include a variety of teaching and learning styles to maintain students' interest. There are very good working relationships during lessons so that students do not feel afraid to ask for help if they need it. Students are encouraged to share ideas and help each other. Expectations of the teacher are high and students

are questioned frequently during lessons to reinforce knowledge and understanding. 205.

Written work in students' folders consists of notes, structured questions, essays, past examination questions and experimental write-ups. Marking is thorough and appropriately annotated, giving clear guidance to students on areas for improvement, with plenty of praise and encouragement. Assessment takes place through regular testing and students are aware of their progress. Homework is set and marked on a regular basis and is used to reinforce work covered in lessons, often comprising past examination questions. The demands of the syllabus mean that there is not enough time for students to carry out much independent learning.

206. Students learn well and make good progress in lessons because of the good teaching and also because they are mature and highly motivated. They respond well in lessons and rise to challenges as shown during question and answer sessions and are keen to contribute to group discussions. They work co-operatively together in both theory and practical lessons and help each other and share ideas in a mature and sensible way.

207. The department is well managed and good standards have been maintained over the last two years. The teacher responsible for the teaching of chemistry is committed to the raising of achievement and has a clear focus on direction. Assessment and record keeping are good. Accommodation is satisfactory and so are resources, but they are becoming depleted and will need to be replaced soon. The department receives good technical support from three technicians.

## **Biology**

208. The provision in biology is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good.
- Students are well motivated.
- Relationships between staff and students are good.
- Large resources are becoming depleted.
- Upper and lower sixth form students are taught together.

### **Commentary**

209. The results in 2003 were satisfactory and from available data indicate an improvement on the A-level results of 2002.

210. Standards of work seen during the inspection are good and these standards are achieved because of good teaching. In relation to their standards at the start of the sixth form, the achievements of students are good and their positive attitudes mean that the quality of learning is good and good progress is made as they move through the sixth form. Students from Years 12 and 13 are taught together due to the small numbers of their groups. According to the available data, they would appear to be in line with other institutions offering the International Baccalaureate qualification and the expectations of its syllabus.

211. Students make good progress in lessons and are achieving well in relation to their GCSE results. They are able to answer questions about the structure and function of the heart and have a good basic knowledge of the circulatory system in mammals. Their written work indicates that they have a good understanding of the structure and function of the mammalian kidney. An investigation into the properties of the efficiency of manures in their production of methane shows that they are able to tackle difficult topics with a sense of maturity.

212. Teaching in biology is good overall, enabling students to learn well. Teachers show very good subject knowledge so that they are able to give clear explanations of facts which helps students to learn. Lessons are well planned, have a brisk pace and include a variety of teaching and learning

styles to maintain students' interest. Students are encouraged to share ideas and help each other. Teachers' expectations are high and they question students frequently during lessons to establish and reinforce knowledge and understanding. There are pleasant working relationships between teachers and students during lessons so that students feel able to ask questions if they need to. Written work in students' folders consists of notes, structured questions, essays, past examination questions and experimental write-ups. Marking is thorough and appropriately annotated, giving clear guidance to students on areas for improvement, with plenty of praise and encouragement. Assessment takes place through regular testing and parents of underachieving students are informed. Homework is set and marked on a regular basis and is used to reinforce work covered in lessons, often comprising past examination questions.

213. Students learn well and make good progress in lessons because of the good teaching and also because they are mature and highly motivated. They respond well in lessons and rise to challenges as shown during question and answer sessions and are keen to contribute to class discussions. They work co-operatively together in both theory and practical lessons and help each other and share ideas in a mature and sensible way.

214. The department is well led and managed and good standards have been maintained over the last two years. The staff who are responsible for the teaching of biology have a clear focus on direction and are committed to the raising of achievement, meeting regularly to share expertise and ideas. Monitoring of staff takes place through performance management. Assessment and record keeping are good and staff are aware of the potential of their students. All staff are biology specialists enabling them to deliver lessons with confidence. Accommodation is satisfactory and so are resources, but they are becoming depleted and will need to be replaced soon. The department receives good technical support although it is insufficient in time allocation.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

216. The provision of Information Technology in the sixth form is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good
- Groups are small so there is good individual support of students
- An experienced and effective teacher has been brought in for an extended period to organise and deliver the teaching programmes in IT
- The federation of colleges facilitates the moderation of standards and the sharing of human and other resources between institutions
- Standards are below average in both IT courses in the sixth form
- Until recently numerous staff changes have caused instability

### **Commentary**

217. In the sixth form a number of IT related courses are offered to students and two are presently being run. The International Baccalaureate IT in a Global Society programme is being followed by students from Years 12 and 13. A small group of Years 12 and 13 students is just beginning to follow a distance learning GNVQ IT course. Provision has improved considerably since September.

218. The 2003 results in the AVCE IT course were below national averages. Current standards are below average across the sixth form both in ITGS (IB) and in the GNVQ Intermediate IT courses.

219. This area has been dogged by a number of staffing problems that have been overcome by the temporary appointment of an experienced and very capable teacher from another college in the federation. Though the long term future of staffing in this area needs to be resolved the present situation is leading to the improvement of standards of attainment. Students are revisiting and are now making good progress in the basic skills they need to apply software solutions to real life problems. The recent achievement of students is good in both courses.

220. Teaching is good. The teacher has a very good grasp of the subject and a clear view of what needs to be done to improve standards. She plans well and lessons have challenge and pace. Good use is made of resources such as an interactive whiteboard to communicate lesson objectives and to demonstrate teaching points. She has had to demonstrate sympathetic handling of a difficult situation and has developed in a short period of time good relationships with students. The teaching materials used stimulate interest and engage students well. Assessment is sound. The teacher knows what students are capable of and adapts the level of challenge appropriately.

221. There is now good leadership and management of the subject. The temporary coordinator has clear vision and has demonstrated skilful handling of a difficult situation. The problems of unstable staffing are being properly tackled and one specialist has been recently appointed. Recent improvement has been good.

## **HISTORY**

222. The provision in history is **very good**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- High standards of attainment result from very good teaching and organisation
- Students have become independent learners
- Excellent student attitudes promote very good achievement
- There is a need to ensure the viability of the course by attracting greater numbers of students

### **Commentary**

223. The provision in history caters for 6 students in Years 12 and 13 who study for the International Baccalaureate qualification in one combined class, which is successfully managed.

224. Standards overall are well above average. In 2003, the first year the qualification was taken, 3 of 6 students gained a grade 6. The results were above the average for other subjects in the college and were above expectations based on GCSE results. This represents very good achievement for these students. Work seen during the inspection indicates that these high standards are being maintained.

225. Students are extremely well motivated and enjoy their history studies, which leads to a good atmosphere for learning.

226. Teaching and learning were very good in the lesson and the work seen. The teacher has an excellent command of the subject matter and plans very well so that students have taken responsibility for their own progress and become truly independent learners. In the lesson seen they were taking it in turns to “hot seat” the role of Stalin and showed the ability to understand international politics from all points of view. When given their next assignment, to research information about Stalin’s purges in order to teach it to the rest of the class, they set about organising their work in a responsible and enthusiastic manner, consulting their teacher about resources and then developing a debate about the personality traits of dictators.

227. This course, which is new to the college is very well led and managed by a comparatively newly-appointed co-ordinator. With continued student enthusiasm and commitment from the co-ordinator, the department has the capacity to build on the current high standards.

## **ENGINEERING, TECHNOLOGY AND MANUFACTURING**

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA**

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



### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Students display a very good attitude to their work and achieve well.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme provides a very stimulating experience for students.
- Provision for work with computers is limited and restricts opportunity.

### **Commentary**

229. There are seven students in the current International Baccalaureate group. This is a group comprising three Year 13 students in their second year of the course together with four Year 12 students in their first year.

230. The course was first offered in 2002 replacing the existing AS and A2 level courses then running. Only one group of four students has thus far taken the examination and, of these, three passed. This course makes stringent demands upon students, being many faceted. The curriculum incorporates six academic areas around a core curriculum. In this way, students are exposed to two main traditions of learning; the humanities and the sciences. Students taking the course express a high level of interest and motivation. They respond in a mature manner to the intellectual and creative demands, though some find it difficult in the time allocated to fulfil the wider course requirements.

231. Ongoing work seen is of a high quality. A major strength is evident in drawing. Students are perceptive in their studies of 'draped life', showing skill in the assessment of a pose and in portraying it graphically. As there is no tradition of the experience of this course in the College, both students and teachers are in unfamiliar, but very interesting, territory. The teaching takes full account of this and every effort is made to meet the new challenge. In the current term, the project being studied is based upon human rights and a presentation by a speaker from Amnesty International was arranged as a stimulus to students. This was seen as an extension of prior learning in the expression of feelings. This presentation brought together students from the arts and the theory of knowledge strands of the Baccalaureate curriculum.

232. Designed as a comprehensive two-year curriculum that allows its graduates to fulfil requirements of various national education systems, Baccalaureate is ideally suited to the needs of students at the college. An interesting aspect of this development is the way in which the distinctive features of the Baccalaureate are having a detectable and beneficial influence upon the curriculum for art at the earlier stages.

233. The quality of teaching and organisation are very good and are reflected in the good achievement of students. Excellent student-teacher relationships promote a very good working atmosphere in the sixth form area.

### **Theatre studies**

234. Provision for Theatre Studies is **good**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The good teaching in the subject.
- The imaginative interpretation of the syllabus.
- Students' positive attitudes to work and their good working relationship with their teachers.
- The positive contribution to students' social, moral and cultural development.
- The need to improve the quality of written work, by encouraging students to take a more practical and evaluative approach to their writing project.

## Commentary

235. Students' attainment upon entry in to Theatre Studies is average, with most, but not all, students having achieved a satisfactory grade in GCSE Drama. Students go on to achieve satisfactorily in the subject, with the students entered for the course achieving average standards in relation to the expectations and demands of the International Baccalaureate (IB) syllabus used by the college. This allows them access to the higher education institute of their choice. Because of the limited number of students taking the course, students in Years 12 and 13 are taught together with the syllabus being delivered in a two-year cycle.

236. Students explore the philosophies and working methods of a number of leading theatre practitioners and plays from different countries and cultures and consider how they have influenced world drama.

237. This was observed in a good lesson as students were introduced to the ideas and practices of Antonin Artaud as they explored the Theatre of Cruelty and applied them to the re-working of a traditional folk tale. Although students take on board the theoretical aspects of this form of drama, they are less successful in their ability to lose their natural inhibitions when confronted by this demanding form of drama, to fully engage with the ideas and to incorporate them in their own improvisations.

238. Students work well together; they listen to and value both the teachers and their peers' suggestions and work with sustained concentration. Students' sound progress in the subject is enhanced by their positive attitudes to work and their real enthusiasm for the subject. The close working relationship between teachers and students makes a positive contribution to learning.

239. Teaching in the subject is good. Lessons are well planned, organised and managed. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and convey it to students in an imaginative and well-informed manner.

240. Leadership and management in the subject are good. Appropriate documentation is in place to support the delivery of the subject, with the IB syllabus being interpreted in an imaginative and challenging way. Students are given the chance to see a number of local and national productions to extend their knowledge of world theatre.

241. With its emphasis on the need to work closely together and the chance to explore a number of moral and universal truths with some demanding plays from different countries and cultures, the subject makes a valuable contribution to students' personal, social, moral and cultural development.

## HOSPITALITY, SPORTS, LEISURE AND TRAVEL

### BUSINESS

242. Provision for Business Studies in the Sixth form is **good**

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching is very good
- The department has excellent accommodation
- Improve the attendance of some of the students

## Commentary

243. Eight students were entered for the International Baccalaureate in Business studies in year 2003. Although the numbers are not statistically significant, in general terms, their standards are broadly in line with the levels indicated in the available data. One failed but all the others passed with 1 student achieving the higher grade of level 5. All students achieved their predicted grades. In the

case of the current 9 students, the standards of work seen during the inspection, in the lessons and in their books is variable, with some of it at the expected level but others below it. In the case of the latter, inconsistent attendance in some cases is a significant factor. The students show familiarity with some aspects of business marketing and they can relate this to every-day business scenarios. The students can talk about this in a meaningful way but sometimes have to be prompted to do so. On the basis of the level at which they start the course, the achievement of the students is good.

244. The teaching is very good. The teacher's knowledge of the subject is strong and a very good range of techniques are used to put across the subject matter. These include video clips, text-books and the smart board. The teaching is particularly strong in relating the learning to present day scenarios in business and economics generally. Homework is set and there is an on-going programme of assessment. The students do not always make the effort that would normally be expected, both in attendance and the doing of homework and other written work and this is having a significant impact on their learning. It is for this reason that their achievement is good not very good. The teacher works hard in getting them to produce of their best. The use of information technology is a strong aspect of the students' learning.

245. The department is very well led. The staffing is very good. The accommodation and resources are excellent with modern up-to-date suites in which the students can work.

## **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND GENERAL PROGRAMMES**

246. The common core of the AVCE courses is taught to one composite group, with the specialist areas of business, performing arts, ICT, leisure and recreation and travel and tourism being taught by subject specialists. One common core lesson was sampled where the group was studying marketing strategies, using Alton Towers as a case study. The good teaching and appropriate resources enabled the students to develop an understanding of the approaches of management to a decline in attendance figures. Students learned well but some were reluctant to take the initiative and accept responsibility for their own work. Standards were average, most students at merit level, a few at distinction level.

### **Psychology**

247. Provision for psychology is **satisfactory**.

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

- The teacher has very good knowledge of psychology.
- All lessons are planned and prepared thoroughly.
- Leadership and management are sound.
- There is little use of ICT for research, and access to computers is difficult.
- Students need to undertake more preparatory work for lessons as directed.

#### **Commentary**

248. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Achievement and attainment are average. Students are well motivated and find their course structured and varied.

249. There are no results in 2002 or 2003 upon which to comment in psychology. In 2003 the college has introduced the International Baccalaureate Psychology Diploma programme. It is a comprehensive two-year curriculum that has six academic areas surrounding a core. The number of students who have enrolled in studies in psychology from Year 11 to 12 is small. However, students' reluctance to participate in classes may result in overall grades not meeting expectations.

250. Standards of work in Year 12 psychology are average. In Year 12 there is a wide range of capability from average to above average. Most students are achieving well relative to college predictions. They recall previous work accurately and use psychological terminology well, when, for

example, they study social influences or the quantitative methods of investigation. Students in Year 12 are only a little way into their course yet they are already successfully taking their psychological knowledge and understanding to greater depths. They have a secure grasp, for example, of the ethical issues in psychology and the scientific nature of psychology, a consequence of the clear tuition they receive.

251. Teaching is satisfactory overall and students learn well. Lessons are carefully prepared and well presented providing the right level of pace and challenge. Students work hard in class but their independent learning skills need to be improved. ICT is used insufficiently for research purposes and as a tool for investigation. Extra reading beyond the classroom is encouraged. A few students do undertake further reading. The teacher is looking at strategies to further improve students' independent reading. Consolidation of new work and day to day assessment are good and students are being well prepared for examinations. Marking is clear and students receive one to one advice and counselling. The programme of work is well organised and enables students to make good progress.

252. Leadership and management of psychology are satisfactory. The lessons are planned and time set aside for evaluation and meetings. The teacher has high expectations of students. The teacher informs students of the strong and weak areas in their work and of what needs to be done to secure improvement. The major requirement to raise the quality of work is to improve the scientific resource base and learning materials.

### **International Baccalaureate - Theory of Knowledge (Core)**

253. Provision for Theory of Knowledge is **good**.

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

- Students demonstrate knowledge and ability to question and reason.
- The teacher encourages all students to read widely to extend their ideas.
- Students are well taught to respond imaginatively and intellectually to what they read.
- The planned teaching style promotes the purpose of the International Baccalaureate.
- There is insufficient use of ICT to process, present, share and exchange information.

#### **Commentary**

254. Standards of work in Theory of Knowledge are, overall, above average. Work standards show an improving trend in line with national expectations. Students are able to make inter-disciplinary connections. The majority of students can reflect on, and question, the basis of knowledge. They are able to make connections and links between the ways of knowing and the areas of knowledge. The achievement of students is good. In 2003, the Year 13 results were above average. The majority attained a good grade. A minority could have done better but attained a pass grade. There were no failures.

255. Teaching and learning are good. The teacher helps students to uncover the basic means through which we interpret the world. Students are guided carefully to think and discuss the major question of 'how do I know?' Students are learning to listen, understand and respond appropriately to others. They can explore ideas and hypothesise. The students develop their powers of thinking, argument and debate on a wide range of issues. More reading, to extend ideas to offer perspectives on society and community and their impact on the lives of individuals, would raise standards higher.

256. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The teacher is able to judge accurately students' understanding. Tasks set provide an appropriate level of challenge and time for completion. The inter-disciplinary Theory of Knowledge course is designed to develop a coherent approach to learning. Students have limited access to information and communication technology when producing coursework.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

## EXAMPLES OF OUTSTANDING PRACTICE

### Example of outstanding practice

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An outstanding lesson was in geography. The teacher had planned lesson exceptionally well to enable all groups to play a full part and achieve equally well. Students sorted cards with economic indicators and their definitions, then re-sort them for different factors (eg, economic/industrial/ social) At each stage the teacher questioned for explanations, targeting individuals, asking the high attainers to extend their responses, asking simpler questions of the lower attainers. Initially students' response was sluggish but after simple 'wake-up' exercise they co-operated and worked very purposefully, internalising the key vocabulary and developing new understanding. Even the reluctant boys, who would clearly rather remain 'cool' and non-intellectual, were drawn into the lesson and most learned well. As the lesson progressed the questioning became more probing and thinking skills were developed as well as subject knowledge. Final activities confirmed and re-enforced excellent learning.