

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SAWTRY COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

Sawtry, Huntingdon

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique reference number: 110897

Principal: Mr J Stewart

Lead inspector: Mrs G Kayembe

Dates of inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> March 2004

Inspection number: 259225

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE COLLEGE

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Foundation
Age range of students:	11 to 18 years
Gender of students:	Mixed
Number on roll:	1282
College address:	Fen Lane Sawtry Huntingdon Cambridgeshire
Postcode:	PE28 5TQ
Telephone number:	01487 830701
Fax number:	01487 831679
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr P Leaton
Date of previous inspection:	29 <sup>th</sup> September 1997

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COLLEGE

This is a larger than average secondary school serving local rural and urban communities around Huntingdon and Peterborough. The college is oversubscribed. Students come from a wide range of backgrounds but, overall, social and economic backgrounds are similar to national norms and this is reflected in the broadly average proportion eligible for a free school meal. Whilst the great majority of the intake is of white British heritage, about four to five per cent are from minority ethnic groups. Many of these students are representative of other white ethnic groups or are of mixed heritage. About two per cent are representative of Asian and Black ethnic groups. All students are fluent in English, and none is a beginner. The proportion of students who have identified special educational needs is below average, though the proportion with statements is average. The majority of identified special educational needs relate to specific learning needs and emotional and behavioural difficulties. A few students are physically disabled or have visual impairment. Attainment on entry to the college is above average, though better lower down the college than higher up. Attainment on entry for current Year 7 students, for example, is significantly better than national averages in English, mathematics and science. For those currently in the sixth form, attainment on entry was closer to national averages.

Distinctive features about the college include:

- Specialist technology college status since 1994.
- Community college – there are shared leisure and library facilities, for example with the public.
- Leading edge status – granted by the DfES (Department for Education and Skills).

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2901	Mrs G Kayembe	Lead inspector	English as an additional language
9779	Ms S Smith	Lay inspector	
32169	Mr G O'Hagan	Team inspector	Mathematics
19499	Ms B Baughan	Team inspector	English
18076	Mr H Dodd	Team inspector	Information and communication technology
12356	Mr R Dickason	Team inspector	Science Biology in the sixth form
30281	Mrs D O'Dell	Team inspector	Art and design Special educational needs
8552	Mr W Hart	Team inspector	Design and technology
10392	Mrs D Ratcliff	Team inspector	Geography
25744	Mr T Osgerby	Team inspector	History
14790	Mr R Schlich	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
23323	Dr J Harvey	Team inspector	Music
31821	Mr B McCann	Team inspector	Physical education
20719	Mrs A Fraser	Team inspector	Religious education Citizenship
20324	Prof V Morris	Team inspector	Business studies
30941	Mr K Brammer	Team inspector	English in the sixth form Media studies
12825	Dr N Carr	Team inspector	Psychology in the sixth form

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a good college.** The good quality of education provided enables students to achieve well and develop their personal qualities well. Leadership by the principal and other staff with responsibilities is good because it places due emphasis on aiming for high standards and continuous improvement. Management is satisfactory. **Overall, the college provides very good value for money** because expenditure is very low.

The college's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are high by Year 11, and this is reflected in the very good performance at GCSE.
- Teaching is good in most subjects and makes an effective contribution to students' learning.
- Good leadership creates a strong corporate spirit. It has established a good ethos which helps to promote students' positive attitudes.
- Governors work well in partnership with the college and monitor performance well. However, a number of statutory requirements are not met.
- Though provision in most subjects is good, and very good in some, there are variations in standards and achievement across subjects in Years 7 to 9 and in the sixth form.
- Though management is satisfactory overall, and there are some key strengths, there are also some weaknesses which need to be addressed, including improving links with parents.

The college has improved well since the last inspection in relation to teaching and learning and standards of work, particularly in mathematics and science and in relation to performance at GCSE and A-level. Boys' performance in tests and examinations has improved well. Behaviour outside classrooms is now good and development planning is rigorous. Though there are improvements in the provision for students with special educational needs (SEN), and these students now achieve well; further work needs to be done in this area. The quality of individual education plans has improved since the last inspection. Provision by the SEN department is strong. However, subject heads and the co-ordinator for SEN do not structure their joint involvement effectively. Issues remain to be resolved in relation to curricular provision for the humanities and music. The legal requirement for a daily act of collective worship continues to be breached.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Performance compared with:		all schools			similar schools
		2001	2002	2003	2003
Year 11	GCSE examinations	A	A	A	A
Year 13	A/AS-level examinations	B	A	B	

*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 similarly at the end of Year 9.*

**Achievement is good throughout the college** but more consistently so in Years 10 and 11. In Years 7 to 9, there is some variation between subjects in how well students achieve. For example, achievement is very good in mathematics and physical education, but is unsatisfactory in music and satisfactory in English, modern foreign languages, history, geography and religious education. It is good in the remaining subjects. **Standards, by Year 9, are above average.** They are above average in English and science and well above in mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). In religious education, standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. **By Year 11, standards are well above average** and, in most subjects, attainment is above average and achievement is good. In English and ICT, standards are well above average by Year 11 whilst, in mathematics and science, they are above. **Attainment in the sixth form is above average and achievement is good.** The small number of students from minority

ethnic groups achieve well across the college, and show broadly the same range of attainment as others. The college considerably narrowed the gap between boys and girls; however, the most recent public examination results indicate girls did much better at GCSE than boys.

**Students' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good**, though opportunities for spiritual development are limited. Attitudes, behaviour and punctuality are good. Attendance is satisfactory. Students get on well with their teachers and with one another. Those from minority ethnic groups mix well with their peers.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the college is good. Teaching and learning are good.** Teachers' subject knowledge is strong, particularly in the sixth form. Lessons are well planned, though match of work to individual students' needs is underdeveloped. Curricular provision is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9, but curricular organisation in English, humanities and music has an adverse impact on achievement. The range of courses available in Years 10 and 11 and the sixth form is good, but choice for lower attainers is limited. Enrichment and extra-curricular activities are good. Students are well looked after, though a formal health and safety risk assessment is not in place. Students receive good advice and guidance based on monitoring of their academic progress. Partnership with parents is a weakness but links with the community are very good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership is good and management is satisfactory.** Senior staff are clear about the college's strengths and weaknesses, but relationships with parents need further development, monitoring and evaluation are inconsistent and not rigorous enough in all areas, issues in curricular provision have not been eradicated, though the planned arrangements for humanities look promising. There is good focus on monitoring and using data to set challenging targets and promote high standards. Arrangements for teacher appraisal are good. Governance is satisfactory and the work of the governing body is good with the exception of ensuring that statutory requirements are met.

## **PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' VIEWS**

Parents are very positive about aspects of the college's provision, such as the progress their children are making, the arrangements for their children to settle in when they start at the college and high expectations of staff. However, a significant minority express concerns about homework and information about their children's progress. Many do not feel that the college seeks or values their views. Inspection findings broadly reflect parental views. Students are happy at the college and are positive about most aspects of college life and the educational provision.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Close the gap in attainment and achievement between different subjects and, in particular, raise the achievement of students in English in Years 7 to 9, and between subjects in the sixth form.
- Improve the links with parents.

and to meet statutory requirements:

- Meet requirements for religious education in Years 10 and 11, sex education in the sixth form, a daily act of collective worship for all students and use of ICT in science and English.
- Include required information in the college prospectus and annual governors' report to parents, exclusion letters and students' annual reports to parents.
- Ensure that requirements are met with respect to maintaining hard copies of attendance records and the production of a formal risk assessment.

## SIXTH FORM SUMMARY

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a good sixth form and it is cost-effective.** A-level examination results were above average in 2003, though performance was lower than in 2002 when results were well above average, mainly due to the very good performance of girls. There was significant variation between subjects in 2003 and achievement was satisfactory overall. The head of sixth form provides good leadership and has worked effectively with sixth-form tutors and teachers to improve the standards of work in individual subjects. As a result, inspection evidence indicates that variations between subjects are not as marked as in the 2003 results, though there is still scope for the college to improve on this further. Current attainment is above average and students achieve well in most subjects due to good teaching and learning.

The main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Teaching is good overall and results in good learning.
- Standards are improving well and there is less variation between subjects than seen in the 2003 A-level results, though work needs to be continued to reduce the variation further.
- There is a vibrant ethos in the sixth form and attitudes and behaviour are good.
- Though students are well motivated and willing to work hard, they do not always have sufficiently well-developed skills in independent learning to support their studies.
- There is wide choice of courses, but lower ability students do not always opt for the right ones, and the college could do more to ensure that advice and guidance to students are effectively focused on getting them onto the right courses.
- The college does not meet the requirements for a daily act of collective worship.

### 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, languages and communication	<b>Good in English literature.</b> Teaching and learning are good, and are often very good. Students in Year 13 achieve well and reach above average standards. Though few students take a modern foreign language, A-level results are good and lessons sampled were well taught so that students achieved well.
Mathematics	<b>Very good.</b> Achievement is good, often very good, and standards are above average in Years 12 and 13. This is higher than for the most recent A-level results in 2003. Teaching and learning are good, often very good. Leadership and management are excellent.
Science	<b>Unsatisfactory in biology</b> where standards are low in Year 12, though close to average by Year 13. Students underachieve because there are insufficient opportunities for them to learn independently. A-level results in physics and chemistry fluctuate and indicate some underachievement in these areas also.
Information and communication technology	<b>Good.</b> Students achieve well. Teachers are enthusiastic and knowledgeable. However, there is insufficient choice of courses for the range of abilities.



Curriculum area	Evaluation
Humanities	<b>Satisfactory</b> in <b>psychology</b> . A-level results were below average in 2002 and remained low in 2003. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Students do not demonstrate sufficient levels of independence or initiative in learning. Sampled lessons in history and sociology were very well taught. Numbers taking history, though currently small, are growing. No students took A-level geography, though lessons for AS-level students were sampled. Lessons seen in general studies were good. Results are high and show good achievement. As all students take this course, the results make a good contribution to the overall A-level scores.
Engineering, technology and manufacturing	<b>Good</b> in <b>product design</b> . Teaching and learning are good and students achieve well, reaching above average standards.
Visual and performing arts	<b>Satisfactory</b> in <b>media studies</b> . Standards are above average but achievement is satisfactory as some lower and middle attaining students underachieve. Work sampled in art and design shows that standards are above average and students achieve very well.
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	No courses in this area were inspected in depth. The physical education lesson sampled was well taught. As a result, students made good progress. Teaching in a leisure and tourism lesson seen was also good. Results of external examinations in both areas tend to be good.
Business	<b>Very good</b> . Standards of work are well above average and students achievement is very good due to very good teaching and learning.

*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

Students receive good support, guidance and advice to support their academic development. Systems for identifying underperformance or a drop in attendance levels are effectively used to keep students on track with their work. Very good support is given to students to help them prepare for higher education; however, the timing of preparation for the world of work or training needs to be reviewed. Guidance onto post-16 courses is more varied, mostly because there is not a wide enough range of courses for lower attainers. Many students spoken to felt that they had made their own decisions independently of advice and a significant minority responding to the questionnaire indicated that they did not receive helpful advice on what to study.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SIXTH FORM

**Leadership and management of the sixth form are good.** There is a clear vision for development and improvement and a well co-ordinated tutor system to support monitoring of students' work. Monitoring of performance is effective and examination results are carefully analysed. There is good equality of opportunity and a continued drive to improve standards. Governors have a good overview of sixth-form provision and are involved in key decisions on future development. The overall good strategic overview and direction from both senior staff and governors have ensured a steady growth in numbers and increased the viability of the sixth-form provision.

## STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM

Students' views about the college are positive. They are happy to be here and feel that they are taught well and that teachers are readily accessible and helpful. The vast majority are happy with their choice of courses. However, in their responses to the questionnaire, a significant minority felt that there were insufficient careers advice and extra-curricular activities and that the college did not seek or respond to their views. Inspection evidence did not substantiate these views, though there is a case for providing careers advice earlier for those not going to university.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS**

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

Overall, standards are above average by the end of Year 9 and Year 13, and well above average by the end of Year 11. Achievement is good throughout the college, but tends to be more variable in Years 7 to 9 and Years 12 and 13. Students with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well.

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

- Performance in GCSE examinations has been well above average for the last few years and is continuing to improve at a faster rate than the trend nationally.
- Standards in music are low and, in Years 7 to 9, students are underachieving.
- Achievement and attainment are not as good as they could be in history, geography, modern foreign languages and English in Years 7 to 9. However, students reach well above average standards in English by Year 11 and good standards in the combined humanities GCSE course.
- Students with special educational needs achieve well.
- Students from minority ethnic backgrounds attain standards that are in line with those of other students.

#### **Commentary**

1. Results of National Curriculum tests in 2003 were above average in English and science and well above average in mathematics. In both English and mathematics, students performed better at the higher levels (Level 6 or above) than at the expected level (Level 5 or above). In science, results at Level 5 or above and Level 6 or above were above average. Results were not so favourable when compared to similar schools, based on prior attainment. However, the inspection evidence indicates that the college is not typical of its similar school category. Hence, students are achieving better than this data suggests, though there is scope for better performance in National Curriculum tests in English.
2. Trends in English have been uneven but, in science and mathematics, results have been improving steadily over the last few years. There is little difference between the performance of boys and girls in mathematics and science. In English, the gap in performance between boys and girls is narrowing, and is narrower than the gap nationally.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	34.1 (33.8)	33.4 (33.3)
mathematics	37.7 (37.1)	35.4 (34.7)
science	35.2 (36.0)	33.6 (33.3)

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

3. Results at GCSE level are very good and have been consistently well above average for the past few years, indicating a good improving trend. The proportion of students gaining five or more GCSE grades at A\*-C, including English and mathematics, was above average in 2003. Results compare very well with those of similar schools. Trends over the last few years indicate boys' results have been improving faster than those of girls. However, though the gap between boys and girls was narrowing and had in the previous two years been less than the

gap nationally, results in 2003 showed that girls performed significantly better than boys and more so than was the case nationally.

- GCSE results in English and science were well above average in 2003, and were above average in mathematics. Results were also significantly better than national averages in design and technology, English literature (which students take in Year 10), German, history, combined humanities and statistics.

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	73.0 (67.0)	52.0 (50.0)
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	94.0 (95.0)	91.0 (91.0)
Percentage of students gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	98.0 (99.0)	96.0 (96.0)
Average point score per student (best eight subjects)	39.9 (34.7)	38.6 (34.7)

*There were 194 students in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

- GCSE results in French were broadly in line with national norms but were not as good as students' other subjects.
- Inspection evidence largely reflects the results of national tests and examinations. By Year 9, students attain well above average standards in mathematics and above average standards in English and science. Achievement is very good across Years 7 to 9 in mathematics and good in science. However, in English, it is only satisfactory, and many students in Years 7 and 8 are not achieving as well as they should be, given their high standards on entry. Current curricular organisation, a result of an unfilled teaching vacancy, has led to re-allocation of staff within English. Consequently, most students are being taught by two or more teachers in Years 7 to 9 and this is having an adverse impact on their achievement. However, some weaknesses in teaching also contribute to lower achievement in English than in science and mathematics. In other subjects, standards range from below average by Year 9 in music to well above in ICT. Low teaching time for music and weaknesses in curricular organisation in Years 7 to 9 mean that students underachieve. Attainment is above average in design and technology, art and design and physical education. In the remaining subjects, standards are broadly average, but could be better in geography, history, religious education and modern foreign languages. Achievement across Years 7 to 9 in these areas is satisfactory. The combined humanities course does not allow in-depth coverage of geography, history and religious education, and is hence a barrier to better than satisfactory achievement. In modern foreign languages, issues of teaching have an adverse impact on standards and achievement and, though standards are average and achievement is satisfactory, students could be doing a lot better. In contrast, students achieve very well in physical education and well in design and technology, art and design and ICT as a result of effective teaching and good curricular provision.
- Standards of work in English, by Year 11, are well above average and achievement is very good. In both mathematics and science, achievement is good, often very good in lessons, and attainment is above average. In most other subjects, standards are above national averages by Year 11 and achievement is good; very good in the case of art and design. Standards of work in music and modern foreign languages are average and achievement is satisfactory.
- Standards in the combined humanities GCSE course are above average and achievement is good. The small proportion of GCSE students in history and geography are making good progress and achieving well. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on achievement in religious education in Years 10 and 11 as there was too little written work to identify how well students were doing. The amount of teaching time for religious education is significantly below that recommended.

9. Students with SEN achieve well. Their GCSE results have improved steadily since 2001 and, in 2003, 61 per cent of such students gained at least five GCSEs at grades A\*-C. Individual education plans are securely in place. They identify specific needs, and targets in numeracy and literacy are both achievable and measurable. Good records are maintained and regular tests clearly define individual progress. Inspection evidence indicates that where work is matched to differing needs, for example differentiated, students with SEN achieve well. In science, a highly motivated group worked independently, conducting an experiment and reflecting with interest on their appropriate conclusions. In subjects where achievement is least effective, teachers do not pitch the lesson at a level where students can succeed in order to move on. In such lessons, students with SEN do not learn effectively or achieve enough progress.
10. Students from minority ethnic groups achieve well and their standards of work reflect the range of attainment found in the college. This was evident from observations during the inspection and also from data analysis carried out by the college. The latter indicates that the small proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds reach similar standards in national tests and examinations as others.

### Sixth Form

11. Performance at A-level has been good in relation to the overall point scores. However, the proportion of students gaining A-E or A-B grades has been below the national averages over the past couple of years. In 2003, the variation in performance between subjects was wide. Some of this was due to the poor attendance of some students, and the college made considerable efforts to support these students and keep them in the college. Nonetheless, the college is aware of the need to promote greater evenness in performance from subject to subject at A-level, and has been working towards this aim.

#### **Standards in GCE A/AS-level and VCE examinations at the end of Year 13 in 2003**

	School results	National results
Percentage of entries gaining A-E grades	87.1 (84.2)	91.5 (90.3)
Percentage of entries gaining A-B grades	23.7 (22.9)	36.1 (35.5)
Average point score per student	265.1 (282.7)	253.1 (254.5)

*There were 67 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

12. Inspection evidence indicates good improvement in attainment, and more promising predictions of what current students are likely to gain at A-level than was the case at this time last year. These predictions are substantiated well by interim unit test results. Standards of work, from the subjects inspected in depth, are above average, and achievement is good in English literature, mathematics and design and technology. Achievement is also good in ICT, though standards are lower, and lower attaining students find the course difficult – in the 2003 AS-level examinations, they tended to fail. In business studies, standards are well above average and achievement is very good. Unsatisfactory provision in biology means that students are underachieving and many lack initiative or independent learning skills. Some middle and lower attaining students also underachieve in media studies, though overall achievement is satisfactory and attainment is above average. In psychology, standards are below average but achievement is satisfactory as teaching and learning are satisfactory. However, students' lack of initiative and independence in learning in psychology prevents them from reaching higher standards or achieving better.

## Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

**Attendance is satisfactory** but has fallen since the time of the last inspection. **Punctuality is usually good. Attitudes to learning and behaviour are good** overall and support learning effectively. **Students' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are well developed.**

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students like the college and have positive attitudes to learning.
- Provision for personal development is good and helps to create a positive ethos in the college, as well as enabling students to develop into mature, sensitive and thoughtful young people.
- Behaviour both in lessons and around the college is good.
- Inconsistent class management sometimes slows learning and raises feelings of injustice.
- Arrangements to track and deal with trends in attendance levels and authorised absence are not effective, though monitoring of unauthorised absence is very thorough.

### Commentary

13. The majority of students attend regularly. Punctuality at the beginning of the day is usually good. The school has worked very hard and successfully to reduce unauthorised absence. Although reasons for absence are always required, unexplained absence is only followed up where the school has concerns about an individual student. The downward trend in overall attendance levels for the last year was not identified and followed up. At present, there are no arrangements to regularly analyse attendance by groups or to identify trends. This limits opportunities to develop strategies to raise levels. Parents are not made sufficiently aware of expectations, or of the impact of unsatisfactory attendance on learning. Printed copies of electronic registers are not routinely kept and this is a breach of statutory requirements. In addition, registration systems provide an accurate record of those present but do not always suitably identify reasons for absence. Levels of attendance for the first half of the current year show a suitable improvement over the same period last year. There are awards for students' 100 per cent attendance and, more recently, awards for the best year-group attendance.
14. Students like the college and usually get on well with their teachers and each other. Most want to learn, and show responsible attitudes and good levels of interest in their work. Students interact and socialise confidently and happily with each other. The small proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds mix well with others and demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. Despite parents' concerns and the perception of some students, behaviour around the college has improved since the time of the last inspection and is good overall. Students say that their concerns about behaviour in lavatories have diminished following increased staff vigilance. In lessons, behaviour is good overall. Occasional disruption to learning occurs when a teacher's classroom management skills are less well developed. The inconsistent response leads to a perception of unfairness amongst some students. All incidents of reported bullying or harassment, including racial harassment, are dealt with promptly. Although the college has systems to follow up incidents at a later stage, a number of students feel that action taken is not always effective in the long term. Recorded incidents of exclusion are low and there are very few occasions where such action has had to be repeated.
15. The overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good but the spiritual dimension is limited, as it was at the last inspection, and opportunities to promote spiritual development are missed. This is particularly so in English and religious education. As assemblies fail to meet the requirement for a daily act of collective worship, the spiritual dimension is not sufficiently explored through them, though moral and social elements are effectively delivered. The provision for cultural development is very good with local, national, European and world links. The work during 'black history' month is particularly appreciated by students from minority ethnic groups. However, the college could do more to encourage

learning about the cultural diversity in modern-day British society. For example, there is scope for the college to establish more formal and structured contacts with the minority ethnic communities close by in Peterborough. Students' responses to provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. They are thoughtful and reflective and, through the opportunities provided for discussion and debate, show sensitivity to the views of others and empathy for people with difficult lives. Most students accept responsibility for their own actions and understand their role within society and, certainly, how they fit into the college community. They demonstrate good understanding and respect for other people's values and beliefs.

16. Students with SEN are included well and their attendance and behaviour are good. In the time where they withdraw to the SEN department for focused work, they make good progress and are highly motivated to succeed. Behaviour in lessons is generally good although, where work is pitched inappropriately, they are subdued and reluctant to become involved.

## Attendance

### Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	8.1
National data	7.2

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.2
National data	1.1

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 school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of students on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	1226	22	0
White – Irish	4	0	0
White – any other White background	15	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	11	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	4	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	3	0	0
Chinese	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	7	0	0

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

## Sixth Form

17. Attendance is satisfactory. Sixth-form students are well motivated and enjoy being in the sixth form. They have developed constructive and positive relationships with one another and with their teachers. The vast majority of students demonstrate sensible and mature attitudes to the college. They have a wide variety of interests and participate well in the extra-curricular activities available. Students show responsible approaches to work and play through their involvement with the sixth-form committee. They organise their own events, and Years 12 and 13 students engage in joint activities to cement relationships across the two years.
18. All sixth-form students participate in community activities where they help out with younger classes or take on responsible jobs in the local community. Overall, the personal development of students, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Students spoken to during the inspection were thoughtful and sensitive and able to show appreciation for the support they receive from college staff, especially support for academic work.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE COLLEGE**

**The overall quality of education provided is good.** Teaching and learning and curricular provision are good overall. Links with the community are very good and links with other institutions are well developed. However, links with parents are unsatisfactory.

### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning is **good**. Assessment is **good** overall. Procedures for assessing students' work are also good, though students are not always aware of the level at which they are working and how they could improve; this is especially the case in Years 7 to 9.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Almost four-fifths of lessons were good or better in Years 10 and 11.
- Teaching is inconsistent in modern foreign languages and English. Of the small amount of unsatisfactory teaching seen, almost all was in English and modern foreign languages in Years 7 to 9.
- In the sixth form, students in some subjects lack sufficient skills of independent learning and this hampers their progress.
- Though a high proportion of good, or better, teaching was seen overall, the proportion that was very good or better was not significantly different from national norms, and in the sixth form was lower.
- Arrangements for assessment are good, though there is scope to improve the use of assessment to support learning.

### **Commentary**

19. Good, or better, teaching makes a significant impact on students' learning, especially in Years 10 and 11. In most subjects, the overall quality of teaching and learning is good, though in a number of subjects, the teaching quality is better in Years 10 and 11 than in Years 7 to 9. This is particularly so in English and is due, at least in part, to staffing difficulties being faced by the department. Where teaching is less successful, students are not appropriately challenged or their behaviour is not well managed. In modern foreign languages, some of the issues around unsatisfactory teaching observed are also due to a current staffing shortage.
20. Most lessons are well planned and resourced. Good relationships are a key feature of lessons that are good or better. As a result, students are well motivated and effectively engaged. In the majority of lessons, students work hard and productively and, as a result, they make good gains in skills, knowledge and understanding. Though teachers provide relatively good support in lessons for most students, they rarely provide different (differentiated) tasks or activities to suit the range of attainment in the class. Homework is inconsistently provided, especially in

Years 7 to 9. In some subjects, such as mathematics, it is very good. However, in many other subjects, it is not provided regularly enough or in keeping with the college's homework expectations. This is an issue that parents expressed concern about. Students themselves also identify inconsistencies in the homework they are given.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 182 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
6 (3%)	42 (23%)	82 (45%)	46 (25%)	6 (3%)	0	0

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

21. Teaching and learning are generally good for students with SEN. Individual education plans are now in place and include appropriate literacy and numeracy targets. An efficient system ensures that a number of students are identified to withdraw for focused teaching and consolidate their progress step by step. Progress is carefully monitored and students achieve well. A strong and well-organised team of learning support assistants (LSAs) offers good support in the majority of lessons, enabling students to achieve their potential. In class, support is less effective when there is no time for LSAs to report back to teachers on how well the learning has gone in order to strengthen their planning for subsequent lessons. Teaching is sometimes not sufficiently effective where class teachers do not know enough about the special needs of students or plan adequately for them, and this is more often an issue when LSA support is not available.

**Assessment**

22. Assessment is good overall, but could be more systematically monitored to ensure consistency. The college has ample data and there is a strong focus on getting departments to input information and access it. However, there is insufficient monitoring to ensure that all departments understand and use the whole-college system well. Parents expressed concerns that marking and homework are not monitored thoroughly enough.

23. Assessment is very good in mathematics and good in science, ICT, art and design, history, physical education, music, religious education and business studies. Marking in these subjects is accurate and helps teachers identify where students need further guidance and support. Generally speaking, the college's systems are thorough and targets are set, but procedures are not consistently applied by teachers in all departments. As a result, students know what they have to do to improve their work in most, but not all, subjects. Assessment is unsatisfactory in modern foreign languages because marking is perfunctory and does not give guidance for improvement. Departmental data on students' attainment is not used by the department to analyse their progress as they move through the school.

24. Assessment of the work of students with SEN is good. Individual education plans are in place, and use of them has improved since the last inspection, but they are not yet consistently used in all departments. Students with SEN understand well what they need to do to improve their work.

**Sixth Form**

25. Teaching and learning are good overall and consistently good across most of the sixth form. However, the amount of very good or excellent teaching is lower than usually found at this key stage. Most of the very good or excellent teaching observed was in business studies, where the overall quality of teaching and learning is very good, and in computing, English literature and mathematics. Very good teaching was also seen in a number of the subjects sampled, such as



history and art and design. Teaching was satisfactory overall in media studies and psychology, but unsatisfactory in biology.

26. Teachers generally have strong subject knowledge and use it well to help develop students' depth of subject knowledge. However, in some subjects, for example biology and psychology, students do not have sufficiently well-developed skills of independent learning and are too dependent on their teachers. This has an adverse impact on their learning.
27. Where teaching and learning are good or better, planning is good and good attention is paid to the needs of students. Work is well structured and challenging so that it stretches students well. There is satisfactory use of ICT. In the best lessons, teaching is imaginative and captivates students' imagination.
28. Assessment is very good in mathematics, good in ICT, English and business studies and satisfactory in other subjects inspected. Work is marked helpfully, and students are involved in assessing their own work in most subjects.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum provided for students is **good** overall. It is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 and good in Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A wide range of courses is offered in Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form. In most cases, these are well developed and provide rich and varied experiences for students.
- Options for gifted and talented students are good but are limited for lower attaining students.
- A number of curriculum features, such as organisation, including the provision of a combined humanities course, timetabling and methods of grouping students, have an adverse impact on students' learning in some subjects, especially in Years 7 to 9.
- Statutory requirements are not met in religious education in Years 10 and 11, and the college does not provide a daily act of collective worship.
- The curriculum for citizenship is innovative and exciting.

## **Commentary**

29. The college provides a curriculum that meets the broad requirements of the National Curriculum in Years 7 to 9 and Years 10 and 11. However, statutory requirements for religious education are not met in Years 10 and 11, and the college does not provide a daily act of collective worship throughout the college. This is due to the lack of space and also staff who are willing to lead such an act. There is good resource provision for ICT and, overall, satisfactory use is made of computers in subjects across the curriculum, as well as good provision through specific ICT lessons. Though requirements as set out in the National Curriculum for ICT are well covered, requirements for the use of ICT as outlined in the National Curriculum for English and science are not fully covered. Some subjects find it difficult to access ICT resources. In most subjects, arrangements for grouping students for teaching purposes work effectively; however, in English and modern foreign languages, mixed-ability classes result in a wide range of prior attainment which is not sufficiently well catered for in lessons. There is insufficient monitoring of curricular provision overall to identify the impact of, for example, organisation, timetabling and grouping on students' learning.
30. The curriculum in Years 7 to 9 includes dance, and German for able linguists, over and above National Curriculum requirements. Some drama is taught through English, though this is fairly minimal. The National Key Stage 3 Strategy is being implemented, but is at early stages of development with respect to literacy and numeracy. Currently, timetabling arrangements mean that in English and humanities, students' learning is adversely affected by having more than one

teacher. The joint humanities course results in insufficient time for in-depth coverage of history, geography and religious education in Years 7 to 9, though requirements are met. The inclusion of music in the technology carousel leads not only to insufficient time to teach it to sufficient depth, but also to lack of continuity when some groups do not have music for a term or more. The issues of humanities and music were identified in the previous two inspections.

31. A wide range of courses in Years 10 and 11 provides ample choice for most students and gives good breadth to the curriculum. In most cases, course are well developed, providing a rich and varied diet for students as well as promoting good progression in skills, knowledge and understanding. Though able students are well catered for, there is limited provision for lower attainers. The GNVQ intermediate course in ICT, for example, is too difficult for many lower attainers. Religious education is taught through the humanities course but insufficient time is allocated to it, so requirements of the locally agreed syllabus are not met in Years 10 and 11. The organisation of humanities is not efficient, as those students who choose to study either geography, history or religious education as a separate subject continue to attend humanities lessons and therefore repeat topics. However, a recent curriculum review has resulted in plans for change from September 2004. These look promising in terms of addressing the issues identified and should ensure, when implemented, that religious education requirements are met. Curriculum organisation and timetabling result in relatively low time allocated to option subjects.
32. Individual education plans are recorded on the college network, enabling access for all teachers. There are interesting opportunities for students who do not attend modern foreign languages to practise conversational skills in French as well as having extra time to improve their basic skills. Students in Years 10 and 11 make good progress, and one student who transferred from a special school to the sixth form achieved very well, gaining a place at university. However, not all subjects have access to support networks, and strategies to meet SEN are not securely in all medium-term planning. Therefore, the process of departmental self-review does not address the question of how to meet SEN consistently across the whole curriculum.
33. Good arrangements are in place for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and citizenship. The citizenship curriculum is innovative and very well planned, though delivery is not quite as good. Careers, and sex and drugs education are well covered through the PSHE programme. Students' personal and social development is enhanced through good provision for enrichment and extra-curricular activities. Extra-curricular sports opportunities are very good, and cross-phase projects in mathematics, design and technology and science are outstanding. There are regular productions and musical events. Many students are learning to play an instrument. The taught curriculum is well supported by learning outside the school day through booster classes and coursework clubs. Work experience includes opportunities for placements for linguists in France and Germany.
34. Accommodation and resources for learning are satisfactory overall. Staffing difficulties recently encountered by the college have had some impact on provision. Currently, the lack of a head of English and a French specialist is making it difficult for these departments to provide effectively for students, particularly in Years 7 to 9. Staffing arrangements in humanities currently restrict the development of geography, history and religious education. In most other subjects, staffing is good. There are insufficient LSAs to support subjects across the curriculum. Though overall accommodation is satisfactory, it is rather limited for the size of the college population. Governors and senior college staff are active in seeking funds to enhance accommodation. The college makes good use of the library which is shared with the public.

## **Sixth Form**

35. Curricular provision is good and there is a wide range of courses on offer. Though currently only one vocational course is running: intermediate GNVQ in leisure and tourism, others are offered, but there is little take-up. However, there are students for whom alternative provision or

courses may be more appropriate. The college provision complements local provision reasonably well, though there are difficulties with transport.

36. All students take a course in general studies, and this provides good breadth to sixth-form study for many, though students often express negative views about having to do the course. The course allows for the teaching of key skills and there are opportunities for students to gain accreditation for key skills if they wish or need to. Religious education is taught through the general studies programme and satisfactorily meets requirements.
37. The tutorial programme provides well for students' personal and social development. However, sex education is not covered in the sixth-form curricular provision. There are good opportunities for enrichment and extra-curricular provision, though there is no formal time set aside for leisure or sports activities.

### Care, guidance and support

Procedures to ensure the care, welfare, health and safety of students are **satisfactory**. **Satisfactory** arrangements are made by the college to involve students in its work and future development. The provision of support and guidance based on monitoring is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Action regarding hazards, contractor liaison and appliance maintenance is effective, but risk assessment procedures are not fully developed.
- Systems for academic assessment, monitoring and guidance are good.
- There is inconsistent monitoring of standards across departments.
- The induction arrangements for students are good.
- There is good guidance for careers from Year 9.
- Standards of marking work are inconsistent in some subjects.

### Commentary

38. Staff are aware of their responsibility for high standards of supervision and care. Regular inspections of the premises identify hazards and these are dealt with promptly. Inspections are not, however, guided by an assessment of risk as required. There are suitable procedures for assessing risks of trips out of college. Arrangements to service equipment and appliances used are fully in place. Individual departments take responsibility for safety in their own subjects and no concerns were noted in lessons during the inspection. Governors ensure the work of contractors is guided by safety requirements. Arrangements to deal with first-aid emergencies are suitable. Child protection procedures follow local guidance. There is a suitably trained person with overall responsibility and staff know who this is. Teaching staff are regularly updated on procedures and are usually confident about what to do when confronted with a problem.
39. Students are able to express their views through the college council. They are aware of action taken about some of the points they have raised, for example the cleaning and better supervision of lavatories. Some feel they are not made aware of the college's response to all the issues they raise. A high proportion returning questionnaires did not feel that the college is interested in their views. Opinions of Year 7 about how they have settled into the college were obtained informally through direct questioning. Year 9 students value efforts made to find out their preferences before finalising option choices for Year 10.
40. The induction arrangements for students are good. Effective links with feeder primary schools are made well before students enter in Year 7. Visits by staff support students in the process of transfer. Before the September of entry, new students visit the college to meet their future teachers and to familiarise themselves with routines. Appropriate academic information is

collated and those students with special educational needs are identified and supported. There are good systems of guidance by heads of year, starting in Year 7 where, if possible, the teacher remains in post with that year group until Year 11, in order to secure continuity.

41. The systems of monitoring and guidance are good. The heads of year are effective in tracking individual students' progress. Assessment by departments is mostly thorough, and central records enable students to be tracked well and supported if required. Regular reports are made to parents. Systems are being developed to tackle underachievement, especially amongst boys. Heads of year spend much time in interviewing students, but the use of tutorial time is variable, with only some tutors using the time effectively to talk to students about their academic progress. Monitoring of standards across departments is satisfactory. In mathematics and art and design, monitoring of standards is very good, with much detail about student performance. There are good systems in ICT, design and technology, history, geography and physical education. It is less effective in science and in modern foreign languages.
42. There is good guidance on careers which students receive from Year 9 onwards, when they are advised about their option choices for GCSE. There are good links with Connexions for advice on careers, with talks and interviews to support students. Work experience is organised in Year 10 and is valuable for students, who report high levels of satisfaction with their placements. Staff visit or telephone all students during work experience.
43. The SEN department offers good guidance and support to students who attend for extra help. Procedures for acting as an advisory service to teachers about ways to provide for SEN and monitoring progress in all lessons are less well established.

### **Sixth Form**

44. Students receive good support, guidance and advice. Targets are set and there are regular reviews of work to ensure that students are on track and achieving appropriate standards. Systems for identifying underperformance or a drop in attendance levels are effectively used to keep students on course with their work. Very good support is given to students to help them prepare for higher education. However, preparation for the world of work or training comes after support for university applications and interviews has been provided, but needs to be provided at the same time as information and guidance are given to those preparing for university. Guidance onto post-16 courses is more varied and many students spoken to felt that they had made their own decisions independently of advice. Students are encouraged to choose a balanced package of subjects which combine those they need for future careers, or the next step in education, and those that interest them. For many, this approach works well. However, for some, the additional courses they choose out of interest or to provide a balanced overall diet are not the most suitable for them and can lead to failure. Whilst this is not a major issue, since the vast majority obtain sufficient qualifications to move on successfully to the next step in their careers, a wider choice of courses more suited to these students' needs could help to increase the level of success for them.

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

The effectiveness of the partnership between the college and parents is **unsatisfactory** overall. The quality of links with the community is **very good**. Links with other schools and colleges are **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Community links enrich learning and the personal development of students.
- Work with other schools supports induction and sharing and developing good practice.
- Communication with parents does not always meet their needs or statutory requirements.

- The college does not have a sufficiently comprehensive strategy for consulting with parents about their views or ensuring satisfaction.

## Commentary

45. Although the college has a suitable framework to ensure effective communication, it does not work sufficiently well for all parents. Annual progress reports do not meet statutory requirements in the reporting of music and humanities. There is no overview about personal development or form tutor's summary. Targets set are sometimes too general to be of real help. For these reasons, there is a high proportion of parents that is dissatisfied with information about how well their children are doing or how they can support them at home. There are examples of good reporting, for example in mathematics. Mid-year summary reports and consultations for parents of children in Years 7 and 8 are valued. They raise expectations for similar information that are not met in Years 9, 10 and 11. Parents are pleased with the speed of response to queries raised via e-mail messages, but less so about those communicated via the telephone or in writing. The combined prospectus and governors' annual report is well presented, although test results are almost one year out of date at time of publication and not updated when available. The statutory requirement to include information about progress on the action plan drawn up after the last inspection has been overlooked. The college is aware of the need to improve how well students keep their logbooks and the regularity and quality of homework set. Monitoring with this in mind has already started, with a view to addressing parents' concerns and enabling them to support their children at home more effectively. Statutory requirements for information to parents when children are excluded are not met. The college uses questionnaires to establish satisfaction levels and arrangements made for the induction of Year 7. Insufficient action is taken to address and respond to parents about reasons for concern.
46. The college has positive and productive links with the local community. It works with local businesses well to develop new and innovative learning experiences. The many trips and visits out of college enrich classroom learning and personal development well. A broad range of community activities take place on the site and provide a focus for local people of all ages. The community facilities based on site, such as the nursery, are used well for work experience opportunities.
47. The college has positive relationships with primary schools and effective arrangements for the transfer of information both pastoral and academic. Induction procedures are planned well to ensure students enrolling in Year 7 settle well with minimum interruption to learning. Arrangements to help students make decisions about education or training after Year 11 are effective. The college works well with other educational institutions in response to specific needs, sharing expertise and developing good practice.
48. Parents are fully involved in annual reviews and in supporting their children on the SEN register. They are pleased with the support offered by the SEN department and fully consulted when students are withdrawn from French lessons. LSAs make good use of the head of the local pupil referral unit to help with behaviour management and include students who have emotional, social and behavioural difficulties.

## Sixth Form

49. Appropriate systems are in place to contact parents of students in the sixth form if there is an issue with their children's performance or attendance. There are good examples of where parents and families have been well supported by the college in order to keep the student on task and focused on work.
50. Links with other schools and colleges are good. There are good links with institutions of higher education which help to support the preparation for higher education. Good links with the local community, including the community on site at the college, enable students to benefit both in terms of their personal development and also in relation to their learning.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership is **good** and the leadership provided by the principal successfully enables a corporate culture where there are common aims and clear purpose to be firmly established. Management is **satisfactory**. Governance is **satisfactory** overall. Governors' roles are well developed and they have a clear idea of the strengths and weaknesses in the college. However, a number of statutory requirements are not met.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership is good and provides a clear focus on raising attainment – this has had good impact on students' performance in Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form, though further work is necessary in the latter.
- Governors are actively involved in the work of the college and provide a very good sounding board for new initiatives and ideas.
- Monitoring and evaluation are inconsistent, and there is insufficient clarity on management of relationships with parents. Management of change can be too slow.
- Teacher appraisal is well in place and well managed.
- Financial planning and management are good, and educational priorities are identified well in the college improvement plan.

### Commentary

51. The college benefits from good leadership by the principal so that there is a clear direction for development and a strong focus on setting challenging targets in order to improve standards continuously. Many other managers also provide good leadership. Management is satisfactory overall. Though there is a good focus on raising attainment, and active use of target setting and monitoring to do so, there are some weaknesses. There is inconsistency across the college in the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the work of the college, though the annual teacher appraisal is well managed. There are insufficient opportunities for sharing of good practice, and this may account for the relatively low proportion of very good or excellent teaching observed. Overall, performance in public tests and examinations is given high priority in the discussions between middle managers and their senior line manager. Middle managers are held accountable for the results they achieve. However, discussions tend to be driven by the senior staff rather than by middle managers as recommended by national initiatives in leadership and management. Ample quantities of data are collected by subject, faculty and senior leaders and are rigorously evaluated and analysed by the senior staff. Some faculty or subject leaders use the data to great advantage but this is not consistent across the college. There is little evidence of formal, ongoing monitoring activities either at senior or middle management level, though some very good examples exist in the form of reports produced by the two key stage co-ordinators. These provide a useful audit trail of how improvement in a particular area is being driven, for example the recent initiative begun at the start of this academic year on monitoring and improving the quality of homework in Years 7 to 9. Meeting structures are well developed and meetings are used effectively to share information and communicate ideas.
52. Senior staff are hindered by the low income of the college. Many teach for a significant part of their time and this leaves too little time for management activities. A number of issues from the previous inspections have not been fully addressed as a result. The curricular provision does not enable high standards of achievement to be effectively promoted in history, geography, religious education and music, especially in Years 7 to 9. In English, current curricular arrangements are having an adverse impact on teaching and learning and issues of teaching require attention in both English and modern foreign languages.
53. Good attention is given to inclusion. Test and examination statistics are monitored well by gender, ethnicity, special educational need or date of birth. There has been a good focus since the last inspection on losing the gap between the attainment of boys and girls, and departments

are encouraged by the senior staff to ensure sufficient challenge for higher attainers. The principal shows a good level of concern for the small proportion of minority ethnic students and is anxious that they benefit equally from the educational opportunities provided at the college. Issues in provision for SEN students, identified in the last report, have been reasonably well tackled, though the college is aware of the need for further development.

54. The governing body fulfils most aspects of its role well. It understands the college's strengths and has identified appropriate areas for further improvement. It successfully holds the college to account for the quality of education it provides and the results it achieves. However, the college does not fully comply with a number of statutory requirements and, therefore, governance is judged satisfactory overall. Governors are aware of the non-compliance in the requirements for a daily act of collective worship and have tried various strategies for ensuring its implementation. However, lack of adequate space and sufficient numbers of staff willing to lead such an act have defeated their attempts. New proposals for delivery of history, geography and religious education from September 2004 are intended to address the issues of lack of time for religious education to deliver the required syllabus. Other statutory breaches are more technical and governors are unlikely to have identified these without recourse to professional advice. However, some might have emerged had parents raised these with governors at the annual governors' meeting for parents, especially those relating to information and communication.
55. There is good corporate leadership and management of the SEN department. The deputy principal and special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCo) are developing a system of focused teaching to meet SEN, and the majority of in-class support is well organised. Good communication with LSAs, who meet regularly, addresses current issues and there is a good review of current literature and advice about SEN. Governors are appropriately involved in overseeing SEN provision. Overall, communication between SEN specialists and subject teachers in lessons is less effective. For example, the SEN handbook has high expectations of teachers but the SEN manager is not proactive in reviewing whether expectations are realised. A structured review and evaluation process to identify and share both good practice and where improvement is needed is not securely in place. The successful inclusion of students with learning difficulties in all lessons is insufficiently monitored.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	3,839,470	Balance from previous year	18,398
Total expenditure	3,843,822	Balance carried forward to the next	-4,352
Expenditure per student	3,243		

56. Financial management is good and the college has a well-developed and focused improvement plan. Educational priorities are well identified and funds well directed to achieve these. The college provides very good value for money as its effectiveness is good and is achieved through very low expenditure.

## Sixth Form

57. Leadership and management of the sixth form are good. There is a clear vision for development and improvement and a well co-ordinated tutor system to support monitoring of students' work. There is effective monitoring of performance, and examination results are carefully analysed. There is good equality of opportunity and a continued drive to improve standards. Governors have a good overview of sixth-form provision and are involved in key decisions on future development. The overall good strategic overview and direction from both



senior staff and governors has ensured a steady growth in numbers and increased the viability of the sixth-form provision.

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

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

### **ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

#### **English**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Provision in Years 10 and 11 is very good, though there are some weaknesses in Years 7 to 9 which have an adverse impact on students' achievement.
- Attainment in GCSE at the end of Year 11 is well above the national average, as is the work of students currently in Years 10 and 11.
- Attainment in the tests at the end of Year 9 is above the national average, although it is well below the average for other schools whose students have similar levels of attainment on entry.
- The current organisation of teaching in Year 7 and parts of Years 8 and 9 is not supporting the achievement of students, either in their work or in their behaviour.
- The English department is not teaching the elements of ICT that it should.

#### **Commentary**

58. The standards attained by students are good. In the national tests at the end of Year 9, results are above the national average and have been for the last three years, although there has been considerable fluctuation from year to year. Results are less favourable when compared with those of students in other schools starting at a similar level in Year 7. This indicates slower progress over the first three years in the college, and achievement at this stage is only satisfactory. Work seen during the inspection confirms this judgement. A significant proportion of students currently in Years 7, 8 and 9 are not producing the standard they are capable of, either in their oral work in class or in their writing. The picture is different in Years 10 and 11, where written work and oral response are of good, often very good, quality. In both GCSE English and English literature, subjects taken by all students, results attained are well above national averages so that, when the five years from age 11 to 16 are taken into account, achievement is good for students at all levels, including those with special educational needs.
59. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, but there are sharp differences in both between classes in the upper and lower parts of the college. Teaching in three-quarters of the lessons observed in Years 10 and 11 was good or very good. Students respond well to the clear structure and businesslike pace that are features of the work at this stage. Their writing is well presented, accurate and correct in expression, and it shows good development in literary analysis and imaginative thought and interpretation. In Years 7, 8 and 9, teaching and learning are barely satisfactory and severely hampered by timetabling arrangements, whereby all classes in Year 7 have at least two teachers, and sometimes three or even four. The situation is a little better in Years 8 and 9, but even here the teaching of some classes is divided. Students are not coping well with inconsistencies in challenge and expectation in work and behaviour. The setting of homework is irregular, and marking and assessment are similarly variable. Students in the two fast-track classes in Years 8 and 9 are achieving well but in the mixed-ability classes, not enough care is taken to match work to the range of learning needs.
60. The post of head of English is vacant at present. The five teachers in charge of different stages and areas of the curriculum share responsibility for the day-to-day running of the department. They have relatively heavy teaching loads and there is little management time allocated to them. In these circumstances, leadership and management are unsatisfactory, although the teachers concerned work hard to support each other and the rest of the department. The

college management has made the provision in Years 10 and 11 a priority and this has had a detrimental effect on the work in the earlier years. The scheme of work for the first three years needs to be reviewed to ensure that all requirements of the National Curriculum are met, including structured teaching of ICT.

61. Response to issues raised in the last report has been satisfactory. Underachievement by the most able in Years 8 and 9 has been addressed through the fast-track setting, although the situation in the mixed-ability classes needs attention. There is now a higher proportion of teaching that is satisfactory or better, and there is a greater range and variety of teaching methods in place.

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

62. Standards of literacy are above average. Students entering the college each year bring with them a good range of skills and experience in reading and writing. The small number who have not reached the expected standard for their age receive effective extra help and support from the department dealing with special educational needs. Students at all stages are articulate in their speaking, with a good range of vocabulary and structures which also raise the quality of their writing. There is no central college policy for literacy, but there is a literacy co-ordinator who is developing appropriate strategies for raising awareness in all curriculum areas. All departments take responsibility for teaching the vocabulary and terminology needed for their subject. The college and community library is accessible to all and many students use it well, taking advantage of both the book stock and the computer facilities.

### **Modern foreign languages**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A teaching post has been unfilled since January. Students' learning has suffered as a result.
- The quality of teaching is variable and some is unsatisfactory.
- GCSE results in French in 2003 were significantly less good than in candidates' other subjects.
- Students work sensibly. Attitudes and behaviour in lessons are good.
- Students see languages as a difficult subject and most prefer to choose other options in Years 10 and 11.

### **Commentary**

63. All students learn French in Years 7 to 9. Written work is mostly of a good standard, though often spoilt by untidiness and poor presentation. Higher and middle attaining students show a good understanding of grammatical concepts. In Year 8, they begin to describe actions in the past and plans for the future and are using both tenses quite confidently by the end of Year 9. Lower attaining students move at a slower pace, but are familiar with the past tense by Year 9. Students are familiar with a good range of vocabulary. They enjoy listening to spoken French, but many find native speakers on tape hard to understand. Speaking skills are underdeveloped. Students do pair work willingly, but many are not happy without a written text. There is little genuine use of French as a means of communication. Standards are about average, and overall achievement is satisfactory. Some students in Year 7 with special educational needs are withdrawn from French lessons and taught within the special educational needs department. Teachers are aware of the special educational needs of other students and their achievement is in line with that of their peers.
64. One top set in Year 9 and two in Year 8 are also learning German. Students do well with only two lessons each week. Analysis of written work shows that students make rapid progress. They move swiftly on to quite testing work in Year 8, and are beginning to use a variety of

tenses by the end of the year. By the end of Year 9, the standard of their work is above average, and similar to that of higher attaining students in French. Speaking remains the weakest skill in German but the level is higher than in French. Achievement in German in these two years is good.

65. GCSE results at grades A\*-C in 2003 were above national averages. Twenty-seven students, about 14 per cent of the year group, chose French as an option, with results significantly below those of other subjects. Twenty-eight chose German. Their results were well above national averages and in line with other subjects. Comparison with earlier years is difficult as nearly all students then took a language for GCSE. Results in 2002 were very much better in French than in German. Taking the languages together, grades at A\*-C in 2002 were less good than in most other subjects. The much smaller entry in 2003 did not produce as big a rise in the A\*-C percentage as would have been expected. Results for girls have been better than those for boys, though the gap has narrowed. Students reached the grades expected, but their achievement since they entered the college in Year 7 has not been as good as in most other subjects.
66. In Year 11, about 40 per cent of students have opted for a modern foreign language; 45 are studying French and 32 studying German. Figures for Year 10 are much lower, with 19 taking French and 33 taking German. The options system results in a wide ability range in all groups, and progress is limited by an allocation of only three lessons per week. Current standards are higher in German than in French. Writing skills are quite well developed in both languages. Students are familiar with a good range of language structures and higher and middle attainers use them confidently. Little formal comprehension work was seen during the inspection, but students have met a good range of vocabulary. Speaking skills are weak, particularly in French. Some students can use spoken language quite successfully, but many are lacking in confidence and can say little without the help of written stimulus. Overall, standards in Years 10 and 11 are in line with national averages or a little above. Students' achievement is satisfactory in French and good in German.
67. The quality of teaching is variable but satisfactory overall. Four lessons observed were good or very good, five were satisfactory and three were unsatisfactory. Students' attitudes are very positive and almost all make good use of the opportunities for learning offered. In the best lessons, students are kept well occupied with a variety of activities, objectives are clear and the pace of learning is good. Where teaching is unsatisfactory or no more than satisfactory, planning is less effective, with either too much or too little time given to different activities, and objectives are either too challenging or do not move students forward enough. Use of the foreign language by teachers is inconsistent and opportunities for students to use it are limited. Students' written work is regularly checked, but teachers give little advice as to how it could be improved.
68. Management of the department is satisfactory but leadership is unsatisfactory. The loss of a teacher before Christmas and other staffing problems in recent years have affected the quality of students' learning. The head of department has maintained her own high standards, setting an example of good teaching, ensuring that schemes of work, departmental policies and other documentation are up to date and in good order, and sharing and discussing ideas with other members of the department. Members of the department have helped to widen students' cultural horizons with visits and exchanges to France and Germany and the possibility of work experience. However, the department has not succeeded in achieving standards in modern foreign languages in line with those of other subjects. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory.

## MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The department has risen to a higher plane in the last year as a result of excellent leadership and management.
- Talented, dedicated teachers make a strong team and students enjoy mathematics.
- Excellent use of homework and assessment in Years 7 to 9 contributes to very good achievement.
- The small group of students most mathematically talented could achieve even more.

### Commentary

69. On entry to the college, students' mathematical knowledge and understanding are above average. By the end of Year 9, standards are well above average, as evidenced in the 2003 national tests. GCSE results were above average last year, but girls were well above while boys were a little above average. The standard of work in the college is similar, but better in Years 7, 8 and 10, confirming the improving trend now underway. Students have comparative strengths in all areas of mathematics but their notable facility and confidence in algebra and in mathematical investigations give middle sets an edge in national tests, while geometry is less advanced. Students' achievement is very good in Years 7 to 9, where boys and girls make similar progress. Their achievement is good in Years 10 and 11, with girls making better progress than boys.
70. Teaching is good in all years but it is better in Years 7 to 9 than in Years 10 and 11. Students' learning is even better and, in Years 7 to 9, is very good. A talented team of knowledgeable specialists engage students' enthusiasm for the subject. The short lessons are fast paced, with a clear structure and sharp focus, commonly featuring engaging warm-up starters, probing development and well-judged summaries to consolidate the learning. Students persevere when they encounter problems because high expectations, combined with sensitive, targeted support, help students to tackle demanding work with confidence, only excepting the most talented students who are not always fully stretched. However, recently introduced 'star clubs' for higher attainers in Years 7, 8 and 11 are beginning to remedy this. Higher order thinking and independent learning are promoted in Years 7 to 9 through a sequence of open-ended free investigative projects in which students also collaborate well. Steadfast insistence on correct terminology enhances students' conceptual skills, and computers help to make learning lively. However, there are relatively few other opportunities for students to extend their literacy or ICT skills, and the range of teaching methods and resources is more limited in Years 10 and 11, dampening the enthusiasm of some boys. Not all teachers focus sharply on the personal targets carefully determined for students with special educational needs, but specialist LSAs attached to the department provide skilled support to help them progress well. Homework is set regularly, and is very effective in extending classroom learning. Moreover, dedicated teachers provide a profusion of extra lessons and activities at lunchtimes and after college and help student teams to compete in 'maths challenge' events both locally and nationally.
71. The use of assessment is very good and accounts for students' learning being even better than teaching. Testing and grading are regular, accurate, reliable and detailed, so students' progress from primary school is tracked meticulously. Marking is thorough and, while comments are sometimes perfunctory, students are involved well through regular self-assessment. They have challenging end-of-year targets and track their own progress towards them, though the most talented students do not always know where to direct their energies to consummate effect. Assessment is even better in Years 7 to 9 where it is excellent. Performance is tracked finely with decimalised National Curriculum levels to quantify short-term progress, and students analyse marks awarded in their national test papers to identify their own strengths and

weaknesses. Written reports to parents represent a model of good practice; they are thorough and discerning and contain valuable advice.

72. Since the last inspection, there has been a good degree of improvement. In particular, the National Numeracy Strategy has been incorporated into newly differentiated schemes of work for Years 7 to 9. Lessons develop investigational skills, and assessment is better so that younger students are playing a much more active part in their own learning. Leadership is excellent; the vision is bold and ambitious with a relentless spotlight on ways to improve. Recent developments have been imaginative, innovative and successful, enjoying senior managers' fulsome support. Management is also excellent. Monitoring and evaluation are rigorous and exhaustive, harnessing an impressive array of performance indicators, including close lesson observation, scrutiny of planning and students' work, incisive analysis of performance data and searching corporate debate. Trainee and newly qualified teachers are well supported. A strong teamwork ethic runs through the department's organisation, and good display fashions an effective learning environment from humdrum accommodation. Teachers are well informed through a weekly departmental bulletin which frees time for regular team meetings to focus on teaching and learning issues.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

73. The levels of student competence in the use of mathematics in other subjects is good, mainly because numeracy skills are above average on entry to the college, and developed well in mathematics lessons. Students are expected to use their good mathematical knowledge and skills in most other subjects at a simple, routine level. More demanding instances occur in science, business studies and design and technology, where calculations are required. In geography, most students also develop their skills in constructing charts and, in ICT, they use spreadsheets for modelling.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in tests in Year 9 and in GCSE examinations have been well above average over the last three years.
- Many lessons are demanding and students achieve very well.
- Students with special educational needs are taught very well.
- Good relationships in lessons lead to well-motivated students who behave well.
- Teaching is not monitored and the National Key Stage 3 Strategy is not used consistently.
- Teaching of investigation varies and some students do not benefit from the opportunities for decision making that it should offer.
- ICT is not used often enough during lessons.

### **Commentary**

74. Results in national tests for Year 9 were above average in 2003 and, over the last three years, well above average. GCSE examination results in 2003 were well above the national average and above average when compared to the students' performance in the Year 9 tests. Overall, achievement between Years 7 and 11 was good and boys and girls did equally well.
75. Standards of work seen in the classroom are above average in all years. They are well above average in lessons about electric circuits and when students plan investigations in Year 9. In Years 10 and 11, numeracy skills are very good and students' work about forces or power is well above average. Written work about lightning is well above average and literacy skills are

good. The work of lower attaining students is below average but this represents good achievement on their part. Boys and girls do equally well.

76. Overall, students' achievements are good. When demanding questions are asked and the pace of the lessons is quick, students learn rapidly. When expectations of students' behaviour and their capacity to understand difficult ideas are high, achievement is very good; in some lessons in Year 11 it is excellent. It is satisfactory when planning does not ensure that all activities are suitable for the students or when teachers have to spend time ensuring that students behave well.
77. Teaching and learning are good. In the best lessons, planning is very good, activities are demanding and varied and students learn very well. In Year 11, some teaching is excellent because teachers' expectations are very high and students of all abilities work hard and behave well. Investigative skills are taught very well in some lessons but, in others, students do not learn to investigate or to work independently. Lesson planning is inconsistent in its use of the National Key Stage 3 Strategy and, although ICT is used well in some lessons, students do not use dataloggers often enough to satisfy the requirements of the National Curriculum. Students with special educational needs are taught very well and their achievements are very good.
78. The recently appointed head of the department provides good leadership; the needs of the department are well understood. Management is satisfactory, records of marks are very thorough and predictions of levels and grades are used to assess progress. Marking of homework is thorough in Years 7 and 8 but it is inconsistent at other times. New teaching plans for Years 7 to 9 have been introduced; these include use of investigation and of ICT. Development plans are brief and include new teaching plans for Years 10 and 11 but they are not specific about methods of improving teaching. Teaching is not monitored because time to do so is not provided; as a result, it varies in its effectiveness.
79. Improvement since the last inspection is good. GCSE results have improved and boys and girls do equally well. Teaching of the most able is demanding. However, ICT is still not used sufficiently, although very good progress has been made in providing on-line learning materials.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The achievement of students is good across the college.
- Teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their subject.
- Teaching is generally good and sometimes very good.
- The leadership and management of the department are good.
- In Years 10 and 11, lower attaining students fail to receive a qualification in ICT.
- ICT resources are very good and teachers use them effectively to aid students' learning.

### **Commentary**

80. The standard of students' work in ICT at the end of Year 9 is well above the national average, with over 80 per cent of students consistently reaching National Curriculum Level 5 or above. The work seen during the inspection, in lessons and from the scrutiny of students' work, confirms this judgement. This shows an improvement since the last inspection. Results in the GNVQ intermediate course are also well above average, with approximately 75 per cent of students consistently reaching a pass standard (equivalent to four GCSEs at grade C). However, the current arrangements do not adequately cater for the lower attaining students since, if they fail to achieve a pass, they do not receive any form of qualification in ICT. This is

the outcome for about a quarter of the students in Year 11 and is an unsatisfactory state of affairs.

81. The general level of attainment of students who enter the college in Year 7 is above the national average but, by the end of Year 9, students have reached a standard well above national expectations. This represents good achievement; a judgement reinforced by the consistently good progress made by students in the lessons observed during the inspection. Standards at the end of Year 11 are also well above the national average and this again is indicative of good achievement; a high standard being maintained.
82. Teaching is consistently good. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed and some very good lessons were observed in Years 7 to 9 and Years 10 and 11. Teaching is very good where learning objectives are explained to the students at the start of the lesson; explanations are clear and the lesson contains a good mix of theory and practical work. The very good resources in the department significantly enhance the learning process, with teachers maximising the advantages offered by this state-of-the-art technology. Good use was made of the interactive whiteboard in all of the lessons observed. In one lesson, for example, it was used at the end to allow student participation in a whole-class test quiz. This consolidated the learning, and students clearly enjoyed themselves. Lessons are always well planned and teachers show good subject knowledge, displaying a genuine and infectious enthusiasm for their subject. Weaknesses in lessons judged to be satisfactory were often due to an overly didactic approach by the teacher, with insufficient variety in teaching style and stimulus materials.
83. Students generally like ICT and are well motivated in lessons, especially when allowed to use the computers for well-planned practical work. The only students who appeared unmotivated were lower attaining students who were obliged to follow the demanding GNVQ intermediate full-award course. A less demanding course is needed for these students, such as the GNVQ foundation course or the GCSE applied ICT course.
84. The leadership and management of the department are both good. The recently appointed head of department has already had a significant impact on the department. Her enthusiasm is inspiring and she demonstrates a strong determination to improve standards. She sets an excellent example to others and is a very good classroom practitioner. She has a very clear vision for the future of ICT and has already written detailed, and realistic, development plans for the short, medium and long term.
85. A departmental handbook is in place but it is not yet complete. Schemes of work are in a developmental stage, being refined and improved as units are being taught. Good systems are in place for the assessment and monitoring of students' progress. Most students are aware of their academic targets in ICT and have a good knowledge of their current level of performance in terms of National Curriculum level or GNVQ standard. Work in ICT has good technical support, with two full-time ICT technicians who fulfil their duties very effectively.
86. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Standards have improved at both key stages and arrangements for the assessment of students' progress and use of data for target setting are now significantly better. The accommodation and resources for ICT are now very good, creating a comfortable and effective teaching and learning environment.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

87. Most students show a good level of competence in the way they use ICT to support their work in other subjects, for example in their desktop-publishing skills, use of spreadsheets to draw charts/graphs and their ability to research topics using the Internet. ICT resources are significantly better than in most schools; every teacher has a laptop computer and each subject department has fast Internet access and at least one LCD-projector for displaying large, computer-generated images to the students. Particularly good use of ICT to improve students'



learning occurs in geography, physical education, design and technology and media studies. The mathematics department makes full use of its own computer suite but, in English lessons, there is insufficient use of ICT. Similarly, in science, students are not given enough opportunities to use computers to take measurements and analyse data from experiments. Hence, though the broad requirements of the National Curriculum in ICT are met, the requirements for ICT outlined in the National Curriculum programmes for English and science are not fully met.

## HUMANITIES

All students take the combined humanities GCSE course in Years 10 and 11. GCSE results are good as they are significantly above national averages. In general, teaching and learning in lessons observed were good or better. Though students achieve well in the combined humanities course, the inspection focused individually on history, geography and religious education, where the national requirements are more demanding than the provision for each separate subject within the combined humanities course.

### Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in GCSE geography.
- Good teaching facilitates good learning, stimulates interest and raises achievement overall.
- The time for geography in Years 7 to 9, also an issue at the last inspection, limits the depth and breadth of the curriculum and the standards that students can reach.
- There is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning of geography, and insufficient monitoring of when geography modules are taught within humanities causes gaps in learning.

#### Commentary

88. By the end of Year 9, students reach average standards in geography. As they study geography within humanities, they receive just under half of the expected time over three years, constraining both the depth and breadth of the curriculum. Poor co-ordination of when modules are taught within humanities results in gaps in learning geography and compounds the narrow experience. However, given positive attitudes and behaviour and good teaching, learning and achievement in lessons are good. Written work reflects a satisfactory knowledge of place and understanding of the links between physical and human processes. Students with literacy difficulties struggle because they have only minimal learning support in lessons.
89. By the end of Year 11, the small number of students opting for geography reach above average standards in GCSE. These students have the benefit of small-group teaching and additional geographical input from the compulsory humanities course, but poor planning results in repetition of information. The depth of study in the GCSE geography course is good but is insufficient in humanities. Geography students bring together a range of skills, including ICT, and knowledge and understanding so as to produce good oral and written coursework. These, together with good-quality notes, particularly by girls, contribute to above average results at GCSE. Achievement in the GCSE geography course in Years 10 and 11 in lessons and work seen is good; it is satisfactory in the geography elements within the humanities course.
90. Teaching is good overall. Lessons are well planned, with a range of activities consolidating and extending learning. Resources are used effectively to stimulate interest, but the humanities computer room is underused. Good questioning makes students think and probes understanding well. Class management is good. Non-specialist teachers make a satisfactory contribution to geographical learning but there is insufficient collaborative planning to ensure

continuity for shared classes in Years 7 to 9. Teachers' high expectations within lessons are not applied to the quality of written work. Marking, as regards information about how to improve, is inconsistent.

91. Leadership on the discrete geography front is good, but less so within humanities where issues from the last inspection relating to the time and lack of breadth and depth of provision remain unresolved. Management is efficient, especially in the organising of resources, including ICT. Fieldwork is well organised and assessments test a range of skills. However, considering the number of shared classes and non-specialist teachers, there is insufficient monitoring of geography teaching and learning. There has, however, been some good improvement, particularly in teaching and resources since the last inspection.

## History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

- The curricular provision for history is insufficient.
  - Teaching and learning are good.
  - There is insufficient classroom support for students with special educational needs.
  - The attitudes of students are very good.
  - There is insufficient use of ICT.
  - There is a good scheme of assessment.
92. The standards in history are above average. History is taught as part of humanities across all year groups. In addition, there are two small, discrete GCSE subject groups in Years 10 and 11. Recent performance at the end of Years 9 and 11 has been above national averages. Most students have a good grasp of basic historical skills, such as chronology, and can handle sources well. Students in a Year 11 group showed this, when effectively discussing the changing treatment of offenders in the nineteenth century, using writings from the period. Work seen in books is disjointed and lacks depth, as history is taught as part of humanities. There are also variations in the experiences of different groups because of varied levels of expertise in history of humanities teachers. Students are sometimes passive in lessons, relying too much on the teaching.
93. The achievement of students is satisfactory. Students enter the college with above national averages and this is reflected in their performance at the end of Year 9. The programme of humanities teaching causes gaps in continuity of learning in the subject. History topics are also not always covered in depth, which limits the achievement of students. Whilst history GCSE results are improving, these students are only a small percentage of the year group.
94. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well planned and expectations of students are good. Classes are well managed and students respond with very good attitudes towards the subject. They are well motivated and mostly work hard. Teaching is used to good effect in challenging the students to think about historical and moral issues. A good example of this was seen in a Year 10 lesson, where students were greatly moved by sources on a lynching of black Americans in the 1950s and by video excerpts from the speeches of Martin Luther King. These resulted in a stimulating discussion about civil rights. Classroom relationships are good. Students with special educational needs are given tasks appropriate to their abilities and have good support from teachers, but there is insufficient classroom assistance for these students, as was noted at the previous inspection. Assessment is good, so that students' performance is effectively tracked and they know how well they are doing.
95. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Owing to history being part of the humanities faculty, the subject co-ordinator has limited opportunities for development. He has effectively revised the schemes of work and holds informal consultations with non-specialist staff. The planning for the envisaged future separation of the subject within humanities is effective.

However, the co-ordinator carries out no monitoring of the teaching of the subject and there is not really a history department as such.

96. The curricular provision is unsatisfactory. The subject has less than the recommended time allowance in Years 7 and 9. There is also insufficient time allowed in Years 10 and 11. The small number of students who take the discrete subject at GCSE limits future growth and recruitment for the sixth form.
97. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Teaching tasks now more closely suit students' attainment and there is a greater variety of method. However, the insufficient use of both ICT and extra-curricular activities was reported at the last inspection and still remains an issue.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **unsatisfactory** because statutory requirements are not met in Years 10 to 11.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is non-compliance with the Cambridgeshire Agreed Syllabus in Years 10 and 11.
- The time allocated in Years 7, 8 and 9 is well below the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
- The leadership provides a clear direction for the department.
- There is no specialist within the department.
- The teaching and learning are good.
- Assessment is integrated into units of work and tests both knowledge and understanding.
- There is a lack of opportunities for spiritual awareness built into the units of work.
- The use of ICT to enhance learning is underdeveloped.

## Commentary

98. Overall, students reach average standards by Year 9, despite the very short time allocated to the subject within the humanities curriculum. The time available in Years 10 and 11 is so far short of the locally agreed syllabus requirements that the syllabus is not covered and there is non-compliance. There is insufficient evidence on which to make judgements for Years 10 and 11.
99. Achievement by Year 9 is only satisfactory, due to the short time available. Students of all abilities make sound gains in knowledge and understanding of the subject. They learn to use specialist vocabulary and listen well and respectfully to the views of others. They succeed because the lesson objectives are shared with them, work is differentiated and there are opportunities to test ideas before they write, often using writing frames. Lessons are structured so that everyone can enjoy success. The extra help given to students with special educational needs enables them to meet their targets.
100. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well prepared and the objectives are shared with the class. Lessons have a good pace and a variety of activities involving students as active learners. Assessment is integrated into each unit and tests both knowledge and understanding and enables teachers to track students' standards and achievement. Opportunities to develop spiritual awareness are missed and the appointment of a specialist to the department could help to identify where spiritual awareness might be developed. ICT is underdeveloped and inconsistently used.

101. The leadership is new and is providing a very clear direction for the subject. Management is good. Data is analysed carefully and action taken. The department works well as a team. There is insufficient time available to enable thorough monitoring of teaching and learning.
102. Progress since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. The time allocation in Years 7, 8 and 9 is still well below the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The GCSE humanities course in Years 10 and 11 does not cover the locally agreed syllabus and does not fulfil statutory requirements. There is still no specialist in the department to help course development.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

### **Design and technology**

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

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

- Teachers, through co-operation, skill and enthusiasm, are good role-models.
- Technology challenges encourage enterprise.
- Systems for more independent learning are not fully developed.

#### **Commentary**

103. In 2003, standards attained by students in tests at the end of Year 9 were average. Standards attained in the GCSE 2003 tests were above average overall. Standards in resistant materials were well below average. Current standards are above average by the end of Year 9 and by the end of Year 11. Overall, standards have improved since the last inspection. In Year 9, students explain well what does and does not work when products are evaluated. However, in their own work, they do not sufficiently consider alternative ways of doing things. Year 11 students confidently use the knowledge and skills they have previously learned. They make sufficient use of both number and language skills. However, they do not sufficiently use and modify their own plans. Achievement is good throughout the college. The reasons are: technology challenges; good, focused, practical tasks; very good use of computers, and good relationships that encourage thoughtful decision making. Last year, Year 10 produced garments and packaged food products to meet the quality and health and safety checks required in good citizenship. Learning assistants provide good support for those with specific learning difficulties. Students work outside timetabled lessons to continue their project work.
104. Teaching and learning in Years 7 to 9 are good. There are very good features. For example, the teacher's introduction to computer-aided designing enabled students in Year 7 to quickly develop their plans from paper into three-dimensional shapes. 'It is good; with this you can be an inventor', was a typical comment from a student. Students used words like 'extrude' and 'redefine' with confidence. The exchange of ideas between student and teacher was valuable also when Year 9 students learned to quickly use their sewing machines and experimented with the process of making bread. However, in a minority of lessons, especially at the beginning and the end, there was too little opportunity for individuals to shine and to show off what they knew.
105. Teaching and learning in Years 10 and 11 are consistently good. They are very good in textiles. For example, the teacher enabled students to rapidly improve by first using their own work as starting points for very good discussions and then provided appropriately challenging activities with computer-controlled machines and real-world products to match individual needs. In all lessons seen, the teachers effectively challenged and built students' confidence with good questioning, quality products made previously and good relationships. The teachers are, therefore, good role models. However, comments on marked work too often do not bring about the intended improvement.

106. Since the last inspection, improvement has been good. Standards are higher. Achievement is better. Leadership and management are good because of the common purpose and good co-operation between teachers.

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS**

### **Art and design**

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

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

- Standards are above average and achievement is very good.
- Management is efficient and there is good corporate leadership.
- Teaching and learning are consistently good and there is good inclusion of students with SEN in lessons.
- Resources are exceptional and display in the college is excellent.
- Students do not progress as well in figure drawing as in other aspects of art work.
- Sculpture and the use of digital imaging are underdeveloped.
- Large groups cramp the learning environment.

#### **Commentary**

107. Standards are above average by Year 9 and the achievement of students is good across Years 7 to 9. In Year 7, standards of design, realisation and painting are good. Students create stunning jungle paintings. They research the Internet competently, using the work of other artists to enhance their own style. During Years 7 to 9, progress is good. Well-annotated sketchbooks show gradual understanding of the purpose of evaluation. Although the translation of close observation into drawings and paintings is less successful, by Year 9, students use perspective well and create realistic images where appropriate.

108. Standards by Year 11 are above average and the achievement of students between Years 10 and 11 is very good. Over the past three years, GCSE results have been above average and high standards have been maintained since the last inspection. In 2003, GCSE grades between A\*-G increased by 23 per cent, comparing favourably with national averages. Boys achieved slightly better than girls. The numbers of students opting for an art GCSE course grows steadily year on year and observation of students' portfolios illustrates how well they mature. For example, good reference to the 'pop artists' underpins compositions based on the theme of being 'safely contained'. Work is interesting and thoughtful and students are visually articulate. Figure drawing is less well developed but sketchbooks illustrate a willingness to re-draw images in order to improve.

109. Overall, teaching and learning are consistently good and, in Years 10 and 11, they are very good. Teachers are experienced and value creativity. They encourage all students to engage with the subject in depth and make reasoned decisions. Very good planning structures what is taught and ensures continuity. Schemes of work make good reference to the variety of genres, and the use of historical and contemporary images form a core part of all lessons. Regular homework supplements lessons. Students are well motivated, working successfully, both together and independently. Those experiencing SEN are fully included. High expectations of behaviour ensure that very large groups achieve well, teachers establishing a good rapport with their students. Delightful hand-painted clay masks links work on portraiture with the ceremonies of other cultures. Routines are in place and all rooms offer a tidy, purposeful working environment.

110. The management of the art and design department is very good. Good corporate leadership with high aspirations supports an effective team. Careful assessment and data collection inform rigorous review and forward planning. Self-review procedures complement formal assessments and students discuss how they can improve. By Year 11, students confidently express their ideas and reasons for developing their own style. The department is exceptionally well resourced with books on fine art and design. Excellent use is made of historical and contemporary texts as examples and for research. Well-planned visits to many of London's resources and within the locality provide a good extension of the curriculum, and two senior students recounted their enjoyment of a recent visit to Paris and the Musée D'Orsay. Framed examples of students' paintings and prints create an exceptional display in corridors, showing how well their contribution to art and design is embedded in the daily life of the college.
111. Although the art and design department has maintained its high reputation since the last inspection, there is not enough time allocated for art and craft. Consequently, experience of the three-dimensional curriculum in depth and the development of work with digital images are constrained. Group size also militates against producing three-dimensional work on a larger scale and there are too few opportunities for groups to work with digital images. Accommodation is purpose built and well cared for, but over-large groups result in cramped conditions.

## Music

Provision in music is **unsatisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The timetable for students across Years 7 to 9 is fragmented and, in Years 8 and 9, students also have insufficient lesson time. As a result, standards of attainment are below expectation for students in Year 9, and the achievement, curriculum and cultural development of students across Years 7 to 9 are all unsatisfactory.
- The issue of insufficient curriculum time has not been tackled since the inspection before last.
- Teaching is good.
- Students' attitudes and behaviour are very good, and have improved significantly since the last inspection.
- Departmental leadership is good.

### Commentary

112. Standards at the end of Year 9 are below expectation for students of this age. More able students, who have individual instrumental lessons, reach expectation in performing, but listening and composing of students of all levels of ability are below expectation.
113. The numbers of students entered for GCSE are too small to compare with national figures. Standards in the current Year 11 barely reach expectation for their age. Performing is in line with students' ability. Listening is below expectation. Composing is of the required standard but students use a very limited range of styles and instruments and most pieces are short. Although there is some use of electronic sources, the breadth of possibilities for these is not fully exploited.
114. The achievement of students across Years 7 to 9 is unsatisfactory because students do not cover sufficient work in enough depth. This is because they do not have sufficient lesson time and also because of the modular nature of the curriculum 'carousel' with design and technology. Many students freely admit that they do not remember, between one module and the next, the work they have done or the skills they have acquired. Moreover, students do not cover the National Curriculum in sufficient depth, which also means the department cannot make a satisfactory contribution to students' cultural development, though it contributes well to

their spiritual, moral and social development. All these things hinder the achievement of lower and middle ability musicians more than the achievement of the more able. Achievement from Year 10 to Year 11 is satisfactory. Students make good progress, but few are making good the deficiencies of Years 7 to 9, and the least able musicians are most affected.

115. Teaching and learning are good. Teaching has some very good features. Activities and resources are chosen to build on students' prior knowledge and enable them to move forward at a good pace in lessons. Teachers achieve very good collaborative working between students which effectively facilitates learning. Teachers expect good behaviour and co-operation, and get it. Failures of concentration are swiftly noted and tackled. The least able musicians are well supported in class but planning and activities do not always stretch the most able musicians. Questioning is not always sufficiently probing to challenge students' understanding, or directed to those students who do not volunteer answers. Assessment is good; though occasionally over-optimistic for younger students, it is very consistent for GCSE groups. However, students are not yet involved in formal self-assessment against National Curriculum levels and many in Years 7 to 9 do not know what they need to do to improve.
116. Accommodation is spacious but constrained by poor soundproofing which hinders listening. Sometimes it is used for non-musical purposes, depriving students of access to resources, which constrains progress in composing and performing.
117. Leadership and management of the department are good, though teachers could use data more effectively, analysing by different student groupings to evaluate and remedy any possible underachievement. Since the last inspection, strong internal leadership has led to significant improvement in teaching, lesson content and students' attitudes to music. However, lack of lesson time means that standards and achievement have still not risen sufficiently; therefore, improvement overall cannot be other than unsatisfactory.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average.
- Students achieve well.
- Teaching is good and, in some lessons, it is very good.
- Leadership and management are good.
- Opportunities for students to show initiative in lessons are sometimes missed.
- At present, there are no accredited courses available for non-examination students.

### Commentary

118. Teacher assessment indicates that in 2003 the attainment of students by the end of Year 9 was above average. Standards in the present Year 9 are also above average. In the 2003 GCSE examination, 64 per cent of students gained A\*-C grades. This figure is above the national average. Standards in the present Year 11, where the number of students following the examination course is much higher than last year, are also above average overall. In dance, seven of the twelve students entered for GCSE obtained the higher grades. In core physical education in Year 11, overall standards are average. Individual students of all ages attain well above average standards in athletics, cross-country, cricket, football, netball, hockey and swimming.
119. Departmental assessment shows that standards on entry are below average. By the end of Year 9, most students have improved their level of skill considerably in a range of different activities. This represents very good achievement. In core physical education in Year 11, where

there is a reduction in curriculum time, achievement is satisfactory. Achievement is good for the majority of GCSE students. Several students with special educational needs are following the examination course. They are achieving well. The students taking GCSE dance in Year 10 are also achieving well and are reaching standards that are at least average for the course.

120. The quality of teaching and its impact on learning are good. In some lessons, teaching and learning are very good. Lessons are carefully planned and are conducted at a brisk pace. Relationships between teachers and students are very positive and encourage learning at all levels. As a result, most students work enthusiastically and levels of participation are high. In some lessons, there are not enough opportunities for students to exercise responsibility, for example by leading warm-up activities or acting as coaches or officials.
121. Curriculum provision is particularly good in Years 7 to 9, where students experience all six areas of activity. At present, there are no opportunities for older students to take any additional accredited courses. The possibility of introducing the Junior Sports Leaders Award is included in the current development plan. Extra-curricular provision is good, although the range of indoor activities that can be offered at mid-day is limited by the existing lunch arrangements. Teams compete at local, district and regional level in a variety of sports.
122. Good improvement since the last inspection has seen a large increase in the number of students following the examination course. The use of ICT has developed considerably. The head of department has been in post for just a year. He is showing good leadership and management. He has the full support of all his colleagues. There is an excellent team spirit and a clear sense of common purpose. The commitment to further improvement is very evident.

## **BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES**

### **Business studies**

Provision in business studies is **very good**.

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

- The quality of teaching is very good.
- The curriculum development is very good.
- Schemes of work are excellent.
- Assessment information is not actively used in lesson planning to provide different work to match different needs.
- Citizenship is not yet fully integrated into lessons.

#### **Commentary**

123. The college has introduced the new GCSE applied business course, and the present Year 11 are the first cohort through. Therefore, there are, as yet, no school or national examination results for this subject.
124. The standards being reached by students in Years 10 and 11, in this new and challenging course, are above average and achievement is very good. Students in a Year 10 lesson confidently apply cash-flow forecasting to a case study and then evaluate the outcomes which show high initial costs in the first months, using their own judgements on whether these outlays are worthwhile in the longer run. Then, working in groups, they consider the advantages and disadvantages of using a computer to complete the cash flow, brain-storming their ideas on the board. By Year 11, students are developing good investigative and analytical skills to explain how and why two contrasting businesses use different forms of communication in order for the people to carry out their different tasks. Students then go on to comment on the



appropriateness of these methods to each business, using higher order skills to assess the impact.

125. The quality of teaching is always good, and sometimes excellent; its impact on learning is highly effective. Teaching is very careful and well paced, with very clear explanations, supported by excellent questioning so that students have a clear and thorough understanding of the subject content. Students are fully focused and actively engaged in their own learning, listening and asking questions which extend their own understanding. This was especially evident in a Year 11 lesson on internal and external business communications methods with their stakeholders, which students had to evaluate. A real strength of teaching in business studies is the use of lesson time, high expectations, excellent subject knowledge, stimulating content and questioning and very good teacher-student relationships.
126. The quality of leadership and management given by the head of department is excellent. There is very good collaboration between staff, who share a common vision for the subject and have well-defined priorities and strategies to meet their objectives. Despite very tight time and human resource constraints, the staff deliver an excellent curriculum which provides some of the best results in the college. The curriculum is kept under constant review, the quality of schemes of work is excellent, standards of marking and moderation are very high and the department's self-evaluation is thorough and insightful. The department recognises and is addressing the areas where further work is needed, like integration of ICT, increased differentiation and wider contacts for students with industry and business.

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

### **Citizenship**

Provision in citizenship is **good**.

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

- The subject leader has a very good vision for the subject.
- There is a full scheme of work and full coverage of the course for students in Years 7 to 11.
- The taught aspects of the course have assessment criteria with levels to help students know what they need to do to improve.
- Aspects of citizenship that are covered by other subjects are inconsistently delivered.
- Opportunities to develop skills of participation and responsible action are excellent.
- There is an active college parliament.

#### **Commentary**

127. Standards by Year 9 and Year 11 are above average. The college has made a good start to introducing citizenship through the programme of personal, social and health education, the establishment of a college parliament, citizenship days and challenge week. All students have opportunities to develop their civic skills through the college parliament, community links and charity work. Standards are above average at the end of Year 9. Students display a good knowledge and understanding of how choices are made and how people are influenced about decisions. By Year 10, students plan for, and carry out, a social enterprise project in the community that involves leadership skills, team working and decision making.
128. Students' achievement is good by Years 9 and 11. Students are increasingly aware of the relevance of citizenship to their everyday lives because the subject is embedded in the ethos of the college and the units of knowledge and understanding are provided as entitlement through tutorial periods. Skills of enquiry and communication are developing due to the opportunity to investigate topics as independent learners. Assessment levels for each unit of the taught

course are coming into use and enable students to understand how they are progressing and what they need to do to achieve a higher level.

129. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers are provided with clear lesson plans that they can tailor to their classes but, at this stage in the development of the course, there is inconsistency in delivery. A variety of methods are used, including involving students as active learners. Discussions and paired and group activities engage all abilities. Treating citizenship equally with other National Curriculum subjects is helping to establish its importance to students, who respond accordingly. The opportunities offered for participation are excellent. Whilst a number of subjects make a contribution to citizenship topics, these are not identified as such to students and there are inconsistencies in approach.
130. The leadership is very good. There is a very clear vision of how this new subject should develop. There has been an enormous amount of effort put in to produce the full scheme of work, resources and assessment criteria for all year groups. Management is good. It is supportive and evaluates carefully, but needs to monitor provision to ensure consistency.

## SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM

In the inspection, eight 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.

The table below shows entry and performance information for courses completed in 2003.

### *Level 3 GCE AS-level courses*

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Art and design	1	100.0	80.1	100.0	23.7	50.0	29.9
Biology	13	15.4	65.2	0.0	11.1	3.8	20.6
Business studies	13	69.2	76.4	0.0	16.3	16.9	26.2
Chemistry	9	44.4	72.7	0.0	13.9	14.4	24.1
Communication studies	2	100.0	86.4	0.0	23.8	35.0	32.0
English literature	3	100.0	85.9	0.0	19.1	36.7	30.2
Design and technology	1	100.0	74.9	100.0	15.1	50.0	25.3
General studies	10	100.0	73.9	50.0	17.8	43.0	25.7
Geography	4	100.0	74.3	0.0	19.8	32.5	26.5
History	4	75.0	80.7	0.0	19.5	20.0	28.6
ICT	3	100.0	67.0	0.0	10.9	23.3	21.4
Mathematics	13	30.8	61.9	0.0	17.1	8.5	22.1
Other sciences	1	0.0	71.4	0.0	15.8	0.0	24.3
Other social studies	2	100.0	69.7	0.0	16.7	25.0	24.1
Physics	2	42.9	68.6	0.0	14.4	10.0	22.7
Sociology	3	0.0	71.8	0.0	18.4	0.0	25.4
Sports/PE studies	1	100.0	73.2	100.0	11.4	50.0	23.1

### *Level 3 GCE A-level and VCE courses*

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Art and design	8	100.0	98.6	37.5	50.2	85.0	87.5
Biology	6	100.0	96.4	16.7	39.2	63.3	78.6
Business studies	21	95.2	98.7	19.0	36.8	62.9	80.1
Chemistry	5	100.0	97.6	0.0	49.0	52.0	84.9
Communication studies	13	100.0	99.4	23.1	37.4	83.1	82.1
English literature	28	100.0	99.5	25.0	46.5	78.6	86.5
French	2	100.0	98.8	100.0	51.5	120.0	87.6
Design and technology	9	100.0	97.8	44.4	35.0	82.2	77.9

General studies	59	98.3	94.7	28.8	31.0	74.9	73.1
Geography	7	85.7	98.7	14.3	44.5	45.7	84.0
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Number entered</b>	<b>% gaining grades A-E</b>		<b>% gaining grades A-B</b>		<b>Average point score</b>	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
History	4	75.0	99.0	25.0	44.6	65.0	84.6
ICT	4	100.0	95.6	25.0	24.6	75.0	69.5
Mathematics	12	91.7	96.7	58.3	55.6	78.3	88.8
Other social studies	9	100.0	97.4	22.2	42.7	66.7	81.8
Physics	11	100.0	96.7	45.5	44.6	78.2	81.7
Sociology	23	87.0	98.2	30.4	44.3	68.7	83.6
Sport/PE studies	6	100.0	98.0	0.0	30.9	63.3	75.2

## ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

The focus was on English literature, but the newly-introduced combined English and English literature AS-level course was also sampled. Two lessons in the combined course were seen. The implementation is very good and the course is well planned and resourced. Standards are above average and students achieve very well because of their enthusiasm and the very good teaching.

Though very few students take a modern foreign language to A-level, results are good. French and German were sampled. A French lesson was observed with Year 13 and a German lesson with Year 12. The three Year 13 students were working on a passage about French prisons. They showed a good understanding and spoke quite confidently about the advantages and disadvantages of sending people to prison. In preparing for written work, they showed familiarity with a good range of grammatical structures. The six Year 12 students watched an extract from a film as part of their topic on the German cinema. They went on to do some demanding language work based on it. Both activities revealed a wide range of attainment within the group. There was a good atmosphere in both lessons. Teachers gave good help and guidance. Students worked well with their teachers and with each other.

### English

Provision in English literature is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Areas of underachievement are being addressed; therefore standards are rising.
- There is a very good range of curriculum enrichment.
- Some students do not analyse texts well.

#### Commentary

131. Standards attained in A-level examinations have regularly been well above average; however, they fell to below average in 2002 when there was some underperformance. Following a recovery in 2003, achievement was satisfactory, though overall results remained below average. Overall, lower and middle attaining students have not achieved as well as the most able over the past two years.
132. Current standards of work are above average by the end of Year 13. Most students readily and competently discuss a range of issues and topics which arise from literature, for example an outstanding discussion on 'The Bible is an incendiary device' in Year 13 showed their mature understanding of the use and abuse of language. In their writing, higher attaining students produce very good, independent responses, and their essays are well organised and fluent. Less able students have problems when they write about characters and plot as if they are real people and events, forgetting that they are literary constructs. Although these students usually identify the main features of a writer's form, language and style, they do not show a detailed understanding of their impact on the reader, nor do they analyse language closely enough, especially when comparing texts. They also struggle when referring to social and historical contexts, and have difficulty synthesising this information with critical and analytical comments and quotations.
133. Achievement is good. Students have positive attitudes and show strong commitment to the course. They enjoy literature and work well, collaboratively and independently, especially when given choices of assignments. Their learning is enhanced through their regular use of ICT for research and presentations; and their experience of literature is enriched by a very good range of theatre trips, visiting writers and speakers and close links with the library.

134. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations of their students whom they know well; therefore, they often challenge them and use a good range of techniques to help them become effective learners. They increasingly use the examination board's grade descriptors to plan lessons and to show students exactly what they need to do to improve. This sharing of information is helping teachers to identify and target students' learning needs, to check their progress and provide appropriate support, especially for the less able.
135. Leadership and management are good. There is vision and commitment, and the lead teacher provides a good role model for others. Communication and teamwork are good. The department is currently reviewing and evaluating its practices in order to improve standards and achievement further, and to ensure that it has really robust systems in place for the analysis and monitoring of students' performance and the sharing of best practice. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory. More students now take the subject, and a much-needed scheme to develop students' wider reading is being introduced; however, overall standards and achievement have fallen, although inspection evidence shows that these are now rising.

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

136. English language and literacy skills in the sixth form are above average. Speaking and listening are especially strong because there are many opportunities for discussions in all lessons and students are very willing to share their ideas. Some teachers say that students do not read enough, in spite of the excellent library facilities, but deductive and inferential skills are above average. Writing is above average overall, although many students do not know how to take effective notes in order to record their learning, and there is some poor spelling, even by those taking English courses.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Students have a choice of modules within applied mathematics AS-level in Year 12, and those who continue in Year 13 follow a heavier diet of pure mathematics modules to complete A-level mathematics in Year 13. The inspection covered modules in pure mathematics, statistics, mechanics and decision mathematics. One lesson for students re-taking GCSE mathematics was also observed.

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Leadership and management are excellent and weaknesses are now being addressed urgently.
- Teaching by a knowledgeable specialist team is good, often very good, and helps develop confident, independent learners.
- The subject is unusually popular and staff-student relationships are relaxed and mature.
- Homework and assessment are used to particularly good effect.
- The guidance students receive about the advantages of re-sitting GCSE mathematics is not robust enough, particularly for boys.

### **Commentary**

137. A-level students' prior attainment in mathematics is average. The subject is a popular choice, particularly amongst boys. Results in AS- and A-level examinations were below average in 2003 but the standard of work seen among AS-level students in the current Year 12 was higher. Current Year 13 students reach average standards. Students are better prepared for statistics than for decision mathematics, but they get twice as much time for the harder pure mathematics module. This gives them a good grounding for the subsequent rigours of A-level

study in Year 13 and means that those who discover they are not well suited to mathematics at this standard do so early on. Students' notes are comprehensive and well organised,

providing a good source for revision. The achievement of students who complete the AS-level in Year 12 and A-level in Year 13 is good. It is often very good in lessons.

138. A small number of sixth-form students re-take GCSE mathematics in November or June, aiming to secure a grade C from just 90 minutes of teaching per week. Their achievement is satisfactory, with most progressing by at least one grade. This is similar to the national picture. However, the course is provided as optional, and students receive little guidance when they join the sixth form about its relevance to their future career plans.
139. Teaching and learning are good in both years but are better in statistics than in decision mathematics, which is to be abandoned as an advanced option in future. A talented team of knowledgeable specialists engages students' enthusiasm, and relationships with teachers are relaxed and mature. The development of independent learning skills is better here than in some other areas of the curriculum, and students have opportunities from time to time to contemplate demanding problems, to collaborate, to discuss and to prepare presentations to the class. They become confident learners who persevere when they encounter difficulties. Teachers' specialist subject knowledge is of a high standard, and this helps them to diagnose and resolve students' errors quickly. Homework and assessment are used very well to extend classroom learning. Marking is thorough and helpful and students' notes are reviewed periodically to improve their organisational skills.
140. Leadership and management are excellent, and well focused on diagnosing areas of weakness. For instance, able mathematicians in Year 11 will in future be better prepared for the rigours of advanced study by taking GCSE early, and going on to take a free-standing advanced certificate instead of GCSE statistics. There has been good progress since the last inspection, with a broader range of modules offered and improvements in the use of assessment. Some students also offer valuable support for Year 7 students twice a week to help them overcome their barriers to learning mathematics.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

141. Students have sufficient mathematical skills to meet the needs of subjects they choose to follow in the sixth form. There is no organised provision for students not taking a full qualification in it to develop mathematics further as a key skill. Nevertheless, those who study physics are encouraged to take the mechanics module in AS-level mathematics, which gives them the confidence to tackle complex formulae, and mathematical skills are further developed in business studies, psychology and geography.

## **SCIENCE**

Biology was inspected in depth but physics and chemistry were sampled. Though teaching and learning in the sampled lessons were effective, A-level results fluctuate in both chemistry and physics and indicate that there is a measure of underachievement, particularly in chemistry.

### **Biology**

Provision in biology is **unsatisfactory**.

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

- In examinations, a significant number of students underachieve; this is unsatisfactory.
- Opportunities for students to take responsibility for their learning are too limited; this makes teaching unsatisfactory.
- Ineffective guidance leads to some students following a course that they are likely to fail.
- Relationships in lessons are good.
- Some teachers use ICT very effectively.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good and explanations are clear.



## Commentary

142. Results in A-level examinations in 2002 were about average and at AS-level below average. In 2002 and 2003, A-level students did significantly less well than was predicted from their GCSE results and were below average in 2003. In the AS-level examination, more than half of the students failed to gain a pass grade. The underachievement of these students is unsatisfactory. Almost all students complete their courses, and numbers choosing the AS-level biology course have risen substantially. However, the number that continues from AS- to A-level is relatively small.
143. In lessons, standards are well below average in Year 12 but they vary, some students being above average and others well below. In Year 13, standards are about average and some students are above average. Assessment records show that a significant number of students in Year 12 are likely to fail; many are not achieving the grades they are capable of.
144. Achievement is unsatisfactory over the period of the A- and AS-level courses because teaching provides too few opportunities for students to learn independently through research or by presenting their ideas. Work in some lessons is demanding because the teacher ensures that the lesson has good pace and students' achievement is good. When the demand diminishes and the pace of the lesson slows towards the end, achievement becomes unsatisfactory.
145. Overall, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory because teaching is not sufficiently challenging and does not offer students enough opportunities to take responsibility for their work. When teaching is good, lessons are well prepared and make good use of ICT so that time is used well and students learn the complex interactions between hormones well. Explanations are clear and teachers' knowledge of their subject is very good. When students are given too little time to prepare presentations, they learn slowly. Useful information sheets are provided but they are not discussed sufficiently and books are not used for further study, so the pace of learning slows. The majority of the work in students' records is descriptive and little is evaluative.
146. Both leadership and management are unsatisfactory. There is insufficient time to monitor teaching and there is no development plan to improve teaching. To raise standards, a bridging course between GCSE and AS-level has been introduced. A more rigorous assessment system has been introduced and study skills, which students lack, are beginning to be taught. New plans for teaching are being produced, although they are still incomplete, and good use is made of computers to make teaching materials available to students. Marking does not often provide information about how to improve and does not ensure that work is completed.
147. Ineffective guidance about choice of courses leads to students with relatively low GCSE grades failing their AS-level course. Practical work and ICT are not used often enough and teachers have not received recent training in new teaching methods. Progress since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory because provision has deteriorated.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students' make good progress and outperform the predictions based on their prior attainment.
- Teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about their subject.
- Teaching is consistently good and often very good.
- The management of the post-16 ICT provision is good.
- There is insufficient choice for students – no vocational courses are offered.
- Very few girls study AS-level computing.

## Commentary

148. Over the last two years, results in the AS- and A-level computing courses have been below national averages. The standard of students on entry to the sixth form is generally well below the national average. A significant number of students starting the course have predictions, based on their average GCSE score, indicating that they are likely to fail the course. Despite this, all students make significant progress during the course and, in most cases, students clearly outperform their predictions. This represents good achievement; a judgement supported by the progress made by students in the lessons observed and from the scrutiny of their work. However, despite progress being made, a significant proportion of students do no better than achieve the U grade at AS-level that had been predicted by their prior attainment. Such students may be better served by following a more vocationally orientated course such as the Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education. This course would naturally follow the GNVQ course studied in Years 10 and 11.
149. Teaching is consistently good and sometimes very good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and offer students clear explanations of new applications and procedures. Students' work is regularly and conscientiously marked; errors are corrected and helpful suggestions are made for improvements. Teachers pay particular attention to the preparation of the coursework assignment in Year 13, with students being regularly reminded of the precise requirements of the awarding body's assessment criteria. This enables students to intelligently assess their own work and make changes in a productive manner. Students learn well in relation to their previous attainment and make particularly good progress during practical sessions, when they can work at their own pace while being effectively supported by individual guidance from the teacher. Resources for sixth-form study in ICT are very good. In all the lessons observed, very good use was made of PowerPoint presentations to make difficult concepts more easily understood, and the advantages of using the interactive whiteboard facility were fully exploited by the teachers.
150. The management of the sixth-form ICT provision is good. Detailed schemes of work are in place, including suggestions for differentiated tasks to match the different capabilities of the students. Reliable systems are used to monitor the progress of the students and set individual targets. The department receives good technical support from the two technicians, whose work is closely directed and well managed.
151. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. AS- and A-level courses have been introduced and the resources available for sixth-form ICT students are very good. AS- and A-level computing students have their own private suite of computers to allow easy access in their free periods. There has been a steady increase in the number of students opting for post-16 ICT study but the number of girls choosing AS-level computing remains disappointingly low.

## Information and communication technology across the curriculum

152. There is satisfactory use of ICT across the curriculum. Most students have at least adequate skills in using computers and most make good use of ICT to support their coursework. Students feel that they have good access to computers.

## HUMANITIES

Geography, history and sociology were sampled and psychology was inspected in depth. Numbers taking A-level history are small, but growing. In the lessons seen, teaching and learning were very good and the students were very well motivated. The sociology lesson observed was well taught and students achieved well. Standards were broadly average, though 2003 A-level results were well below average.

In geography, two lessons were sampled at AS-level only as no students continued to A-level. Recruitment remains small and retention has been poor for two years. Students reach average

standards at AS-level. They enter the course from both discrete geography and from humanities so not all have experienced the same depth of prior learning. However, good teaching and careful guidance ensure that all students cope with the work being done. Textbooks and information sheets supplement information in lessons but not all students are conscientious in reading around the topics to broaden their experience. Helpful advice is provided about study skills and examination techniques. Practice papers and essays reflect increasing understanding of the topics being studied, folders contain good notes to support revision with diagrams, and maps are well drawn and annotated. Achievement is good overall.

## Psychology

Provision in psychology is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have appropriate knowledge of modern psychological research which aids learning.
- All lessons are planned to include theory and practical work.
- The use of visual and computer materials, including the website, help learning.
- Detailed schemes of work allow students a clear view of their lesson.
- Good relationships exist between teachers and students which enhance learning in the classroom.
- Inappropriate levels of independence and initiative are shown by students for advanced levels of study.
- Examination results are below average in both Year 12 and Year 13.
- Some students are not undertaking the preparatory work for lessons as directed.

### Commentary

153. The public examination results in 2002 were below average. Girls outperformed boys for the higher grades. In 2003, they remained significantly below average in both years. Again, girls performed better than boys. Psychology is a comprehensive two-year curriculum covering many scientific topics and requiring both good number and good writing skills. It is a demanding academic study. It is the writing skills, particularly for the boys, that limit their success. The number of students enrolled in psychology from Year 11 to Year 12 is expanding. If students are to meet expectations, a greater amount of attention to literacy skills will have to be expended. Students themselves have to undertake a greater independence in their background reading and research. There is insufficient self-organisation and personal responsibility shown.

154. Standards of work seen in Year 12 are below average. There is potential for them to rise. Standards in Year 13 are average. Students in Year 13 are able to show some intellectual rigour in their writing in terms of their knowledge. They are able to demonstrate a measure of independence in their research. The weakness remains in their ability to produce extended writing. Students are not producing psychology work that is grammatically well structured or in an appropriate style, such as being in the third person and factually informative. In Year 12, there is a wide range of capability from average to well above average. This translates into a standard that is variable. Good mathematical skills and passable writing produce good research reports at the top and some mediocre work at the bottom. Girls achieve well, relative to college expectations, as do many boys. The weaker boys struggle to recall previous work accurately or to use psychological terms correctly. Work on social influences and the quantitative methods of investigation is sound. Psychology is a new study to Year 12 students and they are starting to make sense of it. They are already taking their knowledge to greater depths. They have a secure grasp of the ethical issues that psychological research produces. This has more to do with the clear tuition they receive than their own efforts.

155. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons are carefully prepared and presented, providing the right pace and challenge. The majority of students work hard in class, but less

strenuously outside when they are independent. The teachers too often provide students with the right answer to a problem; answers they could discover for themselves. Electronic sources are used but their use could be developed. Extra reading beyond the classroom is encouraged. Some students do follow their teachers' advice but many have still to heed the call. The teachers are looking for strategies to further improve students' independent reading. Assessment of work is good and guidance is appropriate. Students are being well prepared for examinations. Marking is clear and advice helpful. The programme of study is well organised.

156. Leadership and management of psychology are satisfactory. Teachers' main teaching roles are in other subjects, hence they are not dedicated psychology teachers. There is no other academic support when required and requested to assist them in developing and extending their own knowledge, and in helping to develop the psychology curriculum and its delivery. However, teachers are striving to keep up to date, be self-motivated and find support outside the college. Lessons are planned and time set aside for evaluation. Teachers have high expectations of students. Strong and weak areas of work are identified and students are in no doubt as to what has to be done to reach a higher grade. Unprofitable, meandering digressions are challenged. There has been progress in the provision of psychology over time. Until recently, psychology was taught as a twilight class which did not help students to cover the syllabus efficiently. Teachers were concerned with results, resources, ambience and physical environment. Now offered in normal hours, there is provision of equal opportunity, and the coverage of the course is appropriate in breadth and depth.

## **ENGINEERING, TECHNOLOGY AND MANUFACTURING**

The college teaches product design, which was inspected in depth, as well as textiles technology.

### **Design and technology – product design**

Provision in product design is **good**.

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

- Co-operative and enthusiastic team teaching improves achievement.
- Tutorial work helps students to improve step by step.
- Systems that require self-assessment and active participation are underdeveloped.

#### **Commentary**

157. The GCE A-level examination results in 2003 were above average. Only a small number took the examination. Nine out of ten gained certificates. Almost half the number gained grades A or B. Overall, they made better progress than expected. Standards fell between 2002 and 2003. Overall, they have improved since the last inspection.
158. The standards of work of the current students are above average. Standards in textiles are higher than those in graphics. All students in both aspects of the subject are achieving well in relation to their GCSE results. They use a wide range of sources. Product quality is especially good in textiles. Experimentation, testing and the use of computers ensure good products, from nursery furnishings and patchwork to concept cars and soccer stadium designs. However, the range of resistant materials is too narrow. Boys annotate their work and communicate with less confidence than the girls.
159. There are more students in Year 12. They have better GCSE grades and were seen to be doing well, although better with practical work than with theory. They worked precisely and thoughtfully when joining fabrics and used equipment, such as digital cameras, with confidence to celebrate three-dimensional designs such as a catwalk and display area. However, the boys

especially were less confident in their own use of language skills for research and debate and what to do next to improve.

160. Teaching is good overall and students learn equally well as a result. Teachers worked well together to provide more relevant expertise to different students and situations. Tutorial support and guidance about what to do to improve were frequently good when a teacher worked with an individual student or a small group. In larger groups and more theoretical contexts, some students were not actively involved because, for sections of the lesson, all were expected to work at the same rate. Activities that require more thoughtfully active participation, especially with book-based research and conflict resolution, are underdeveloped. Students do not systematically check the quality of their own work nor annotate it to match the scheme used in the marking of their work.
161. The students' written work showed a good understanding of social issues such as safety requirements for young children and the need to make public transport more appealing. The best students combine creativity and design decision making very effectively by continually seeking to refine their work as it proceeds. In discussion, it was clear that many have high aspirations, for example to gain places in higher education, which some have already done.
162. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The good teaching and learning result from the subject being well led and managed so that expertise is shared and systems are continually reviewed to sustain improvement.

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

Media studies was inspected in depth and art and design was sampled.

In art and design, standards are above average and the achievement of students is very good.

A small cohort of students follow art and design to AS-level in Year 12 and a much smaller group follow A-level in Year 13. Standards in Years 12 and 13 are very good with percentages of C grades in 2002 and 2003 comparing well with national results. Students with the lowest grades are highly motivated to improve, and achievement is very good. A student who was unable to take GCSE in Year 11 currently achieves good grades in advanced art and design. This complements the requirements of the textile course, supporting this student's aspiration to have a career in the textile industry. The department has maintained the good levels of achievement reported in the last inspection.

Very good teaching ensures that sixth-form students become independent learners, conduct original research and review their work carefully to note improvements needed. Students work individually on contextual studies in a well-established working environment. They talk lucidly about hyper-realistic composition or the nature of interior design and have access to excellent resources. Well-displayed exemplars are carefully exhibited, enhancing the visual environment for all.

### **Media studies**

Provision in media studies is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards in Year 13 are above average.
- Students' learning is enhanced by very good computer facilities.
- Some lower and middle attaining students are underachieving.

## Commentary

163. A-level results in 2002 were well below average, and there was significant underachievement. Standards improved in 2003, but there was still some underachievement, particularly among lower attaining students. Current standards are above average in Year 13 and average in Year 12.
164. Most students readily identify social, cultural, moral and ethical issues arising from their studies and evaluate how these affect the media. By Year 13, they understand several difficult media concepts and theories and exemplify them by referring to a range of texts and practitioners. ICT skills are good; students use the Internet for independent research and presentations, and manage video cameras and the editing suite with ease. Higher attaining students are particularly strong when analysing moving image productions. They are aware of a range of cinematograph techniques and how these influence audiences, and effectively use this knowledge in their own project work. These students analyse and write accurately and perceptively. Lower attaining students are not concise enough in their commentaries, and their writing is often descriptive, rather than evaluative. Some Year 12 students do not regularly use media studies specialist language or refer to its underlying concepts; this is restricting their chances of obtaining the higher grades.
165. Achievement is satisfactory overall. Higher attaining students achieve well, helped considerably by their enthusiasm and interest, but some less able students are too dependent on their teachers, although there is a very good library of videos, DVDs, magazines and books to support and extend their research. A good programme of extra-curricular activities offers valuable experiences which include links with the local community, such as film makers and journalists, and improve students' experience of the wider applications of the subject. There is also a suite of new Apple computers and software, as used in industry, which is already providing exciting opportunities for students to develop their practical skills and creativity.
166. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving. They are very good in those lessons which target assessment objectives, media theories, concepts, practitioners and media language. Working relationships are good and a suitable blend of humour and academic rigour help motivation and learning; but not all students plan their projects, or manage time, well. Marking is usually good; it is challenging and supportive and sometimes encourages students to explore topics more widely by considering additional texts and websites. However, comments do not regularly show students precisely what they have to do to improve.
167. The leadership of this small department is good. Commitment is strong, and new teachers are well inducted and supported. Management is satisfactory. Practical work is well monitored, but the use of students' performance data to identify underperformance and take rigorous action to meet their needs is not yet well developed. There is only one subject specialist and no technical assistance or preparation time; this constrains departmental development.

## BUSINESS

### Business studies

Provision in business studies is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is very good.
- Standards of work are well above average.
- Students achieve very well.
- There is insufficient focus on current national and global business issues.
- Learning opportunities for different needs are not incorporated consistently into lesson planning.

## Commentary

168. There has been a steady improvement in the A-level examination results over the five years since the last inspection. In each of these years, the college's performance has been at least equal to the national average and, in three of these years, results have been above or well above the national average. In 2002, the college's results were within the top quarter of schools across the country. The dip in the A-level results to well below average in 2003 is accounted for by the significant number of students on GNVQ courses who chose to take business studies as an extra option, and some poor attendance. The AS-level results for 2002 are somewhat distorted by the fact that most students chose, rightfully, that this was not the appropriate time to 'cash-in' their grades as they were continuing their studies to A-level.
169. Standards of work are well above average and achievement is very good. Students have developed a very strong subject knowledge base in business studies on which to build standards and achievement. In a Year 12 lesson on marketing concepts, students demonstrated outstanding capacity to readily grasp, understand and apply new marketing terms and marketing tools to aid strategic business decisions. In the follow-up lesson, they quickly made linkages, bringing different techniques together to evaluate the evidence necessary to launch a new product. Written work is of a good standard, even rough work and diagrams are accurate and well presented. Standards in lessons in Year 13 are also well above average. Students have the challenging task to research and give a presentation on one of the key tools for corporate planning, critical path analysis, time series analysis, decision trees or Ansoff matrix, choosing the one they find most difficult.
170. There is open access to business studies for all students and a wide range of ability is represented in the subject. In the 2002 A-level examination results, a majority of students equalled or exceeded their predicted grades, showing good achievement. Achievement by the present students in Years 12 and 13 is very good.
171. The overall quality of teaching is very good and much is excellent. With such good quality teaching, student productivity is high and there is real momentum to their learning process. Teaching combines great clarity of exposition, using practical examples which students can readily understand, with very stimulating and challenging questioning causing students to think through causal relationships, making linkages and using analytic techniques to access and evaluate business strategies. The strength of teachers' subject knowledge is used to constantly encourage, extend and develop students' understanding. Students are totally focused, concentrated and thoroughly enjoy their learning experiences in business studies. The most complex issues are quickly understood thanks to the high quality of teaching. Nothing is too difficult, and teacher expectations are justifiably high. Marking and moderation are of an excellent standard, with clear feedback to students.
172. The quality and standard of leadership and management in the department, by the head of department, are excellent. This impacts directly on standards. There is very constructive dialogue about departmental objectives; the curriculum is kept under constant review and assessment and tracking of student progress is thorough. Schemes of work for the AS- and A-level courses need further development and elaboration to bring them into line with the excellent schemes of work for Years 10 and 11. Currently, there is not enough focus on current national and global issues in the curriculum.
173. Match of work to varied prior attainment needs to be incorporated more explicitly into lesson planning to reflect the wide ability range at post-16. Some consideration may be given to broaden the post-16 curriculum to include the advanced vocational route. ICT and numeracy are well integrated into the curriculum. Students benefit from extra-curricular activities and visits, such as the recent New York Business week, and the Young Enterprise group which meets weekly and frequently with visitors from industry.

## **PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND GENERAL PROGRAMMES**

The college runs a weekly personal and social education tutorial to provide for students' personal development. The course includes good careers advice and preparation for higher education. Teaching and learning in the three tutorial lessons observed were satisfactory or better. There is no centrally planned enrichment programme, though all students take the general studies course. This provides a good opportunity for students to broaden their knowledge of aspects such as literature, the media and philosophy, as well as contributing well to their moral and social development. Religious education is provided through the general studies programme. From the two lessons observed, the programme is well planned and well or very well taught. Students achieve well in lessons and there are good opportunities for discussion and debate. However, many students are not overly enthusiastic about general studies, some finding that it puts greater pressure on their studies, others feeling that it is not sufficiently valued by some universities. Nonetheless, the A-level results are very good and there is evidence to indicate that an A-level in general studies has helped students to gain a university place. Some students identify the Year 12 general studies programme as being a bit too dry and lacking in stimulation. Though this was not substantiated by the observations, the inspection evidence from direct observation of lessons is very limited.

In addition to the tutorial programme and general studies, all students have the opportunity to participate in community service and this adds to their personal development well.



## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Sixth form grade</i>	<i>College 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	3	4
Cost effectiveness of the sixth form / value for money provided by the college	4	2
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>		<b>3</b>
Students' achievement	3	3
<b>Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>		<b>3</b>
Attendance	4	4
Attitudes	3	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2	3
Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		3
<b>The quality of education provided by the college</b>		<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3	3
How well students learn	3	3
The quality of assessment	3	3
How well the curriculum meets students' needs	3	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-college activities		3
Accommodation and resources	4	4
Students' care, welfare, health and safety		4
Support, advice and guidance for students	3	3
How well the college seeks and acts on students' views	3	4
The effectiveness of the college's links with parents		5
The quality of the college's links with the community	3	2
The college's links with other schools and colleges	3	3
<b>The leadership and management of the college</b>		<b>4</b>
The governance of the college	4	4
The leadership of the headteacher		3
The leadership of other key staff	3	3
The effectiveness of management	3	4

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

