

INSPECTION REPORT

ROBERT PATTINSON SCHOOL

North Hykeham, Lincoln

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120709

Headteacher: Mr S E MacFarlane

Lead inspector: Elizabeth Charlesworth

Dates of inspection: 22nd - 26th March 2004

Inspection number: 259241

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	11-18
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	1342
School address:	Moor Lane North Hykeham Lincoln Lincolnshire
Postcode:	LN6 9AF
Telephone number:	(01522) 882 020
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Barbara Wells MBE
Date of previous inspection:	27 th April 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Robert Pattinson is a large 11-18 comprehensive school and Language College in the town of North Hykeham, close to the cathedral city of Lincoln. There is a joint sixth form with North Kesteven School which is very close by. Pupils and students come from the immediate vicinity of North Hykeham as well as from the outlying villages of up to 15 miles away. There are selective schools in the area which take a small number of pupils who might otherwise choose Robert Pattinson School. The proportion of pupils claiming free school meals is low, a third of the national average. Attainment on entry is average, though there are few pupils at the extreme ends of the ability range. Attainment on entry to the sixth form is below average. There is an average number of pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements. The majority of their needs are related to behaviour and literacy. There are very few pupils whose mother tongue is not English, from Eastern Europe and Asia, and all are fluent in the English language. There are very few pupils who join or leave the school other than at the normal times. The school is a Beacon School and won the School Achievement Award in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
19532	Elizabeth Charlesworth	Lead inspector	Music in the sixth form
11104	Michael Fleming	Lay inspector	
19530	Jennifer Bray	Team inspector	Geography
12762	Roger Catchpole	Team inspector	Science
18888	Jan Boulton	Team inspector	Physical education
17453	Clive Edney	Team inspector	Mathematics
17530	Mary Cureton	Team inspector	English
15678	Joe Fitzpatrick	Team inspector	Religious education
24127	James Kidd	Team inspector	Citizenship; sixth form co-ordinator
30746	Julie Woolley	Team inspector	Information and communication technology; physics in the sixth form
12721	David Riddle	Team inspector	Design and technology
3569	Anthony Shield	Team inspector	Music
18854	Malcolm McGregor	Team inspector	Art and design
32173	Barbara Brown	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
21822	Helen Maskew	Team inspector	History

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school provides a **satisfactory** standard of education for its pupils. Good teaching and learning promote good achievement and pupils progress well from their average standard of attainment on entry, to reach GCSE standards which are above average. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory but governance is unsatisfactory in that not all statutory requirements are met and governors do not challenge the school enough. The school provides **satisfactory** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are above average and pupils achieve well.
- Teaching is good and this, together with pupils' good attitudes and attendance and very good behaviour, promotes good learning.
- The school does not make enough use of performance information to set challenging targets based on past performance.
- Heads of department, especially in physical education, science, mathematics and modern foreign languages, lead their departments with vision and enthusiasm, but they are not all well supported with professional development to empower them to be even more effective managers.
- Senior managers are not sufficiently well informed of current educational developments and do not systematically monitor teaching and learning.
- Provision in art and design and ICT is unsatisfactory.
- The governing body, led by a hard-working and dedicated chairman, is not sufficiently well-informed to challenge the school and hold it to account.
- The international dimension of the Language College broadens pupils' and students' horizons.
- Pupils and students enthusiastically take part in musical and sporting activities.
- There is no whole-school approach to pupils' spiritual development and no provision for a daily act of collective worship.

Improvement since the previous inspection has been **satisfactory**: standards are maintained but the key issues of improving development planning, supported by professional development, effective use of performance information and provision of a daily act of collective worship have not been dealt with.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Years 11 and 13 results

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

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

Results in national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2003 were overall **above average** and in English well above. Standards in work seen during the inspection are also above average-part of a pattern of results which are rising faster than results are nationally. Overall, boys and girls do equally well compared with boys and girls nationally. However, pupils did not do as well as pupils with similar prior attainment, with results in English being average and in mathematics and science well below average. Because they are well-taught, pupils **achieve well** through Years 7 to 9. However, in ICT,

achievement is unsatisfactory because pupils do not have their full entitlement to the National Curriculum. In art and design, where achievement is also unsatisfactory, pupils do not develop essential basic skills to reach high enough standards. However, achievement in English is very good because pupils are developing their ideas and communicating very well both orally and in writing.

GCSE results in 2003 were **above average** compared with all schools but average compared with pupils with similar prior attainment. The school does not have a consistent method for setting targets, not all of the published targets were met in 2003. Lower targets have been set for 2004. Following a period of stability, results rose sharply in 2003 and overall are rising faster than results nationally. The gap between the results of boys and girls is wider than nationally, with girls ahead of boys. However, in history and geography boys did much better than girls by gaining more grades at A*. This deviation from the national pattern was also observed in lessons and is in part due to the style of teaching and course content which suits boys better than girls. Overall in work seen standards are **above average**. Achievement is **good**, except in history where it is satisfactory, and art and ICT where it is unsatisfactory. This underachievement is due to pupils not developing their skills and knowledge well in the earlier years to give them a sound basis for achieving well at GCSE.

Results in the sixth form at AS and A-level were below average. However, with its partner school the school has an open policy of entry to the sixth form, with below average attainment on entry. In work seen standards were **average** and achievement **good**. Eight subjects, all based at Robert Pattinson School, were inspected in depth.

Because the school does not take a whole school approach to pupils' spiritual development and fails to provide a daily act of collective worship pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory. However, there are good features in moral, social and cultural development which make pupils' overall attitude, values and other personal qualities **satisfactory**. Pupils' attitudes to their work are **good** and their behaviour is **very good**. They show respect for each other and their environment and respond well to the challenge and motivation provided by staff. Attendance is **very good**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are **good**. As a result of expert subject knowledge in most areas pupils extend their own knowledge and understanding, frequently working independently, and at a good pace. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are well-met and though the school does not specifically identify pupils who are gifted and talented, those with particular aptitude for music, sport and languages are given every opportunity, both in class and in enrichment activities, to hone their talent. Teaching and learning in the sixth form are also good and students are encouraged by the good role model of their teachers to pursue learning with enthusiasm.

The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory but because there is not enough ICT in Years 7 to 9, provision overall is **unsatisfactory**. Participation in sport is very good and in the arts is good. The school provides a welcoming environment where pupils feel secure and are **well cared for**. Because the school does not systematically track the progress of pupils in order to keep them informed of their progress and targets support, advice and guidance are **satisfactory**. Parents value the school's work and their links with the school are **satisfactory**. Pupils and students benefit from the **good** partnerships which are maintained with other schools and with the community, many links arising out of the Language College.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **satisfactory**. There are pockets of good practice in teaching and in assessment procedures, developed by the good leadership of heads of department. However, the school does not have a whole school approach which gives the vehicle for sharing good practice. Development planning which puts raising standards at its heart, linked to the continuing professional of staff, is not in existence. A further consequence of this is that the governing body is not fully

informed about the school's performance and is not therefore in a position to fulfil its role of holding the school to account. As there are also statutory breaches the governance of the school is **unsatisfactory**.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents express a range of views about various aspects of the school's work but are satisfied overall with the education and support it provides for their children. They have confidence in the school's management and its educational ethos. Pupils and students are pleased to be at their school and consider that it enables them to make good academic and personal progress. However, they would like the school to seek their views more. They value the induction arrangements and the range of courses offered.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Ensure that all managers at middle and senior level are fully trained in the analysis and use of performance information in order to establish priorities, set targets which will challenge pupils and students to even higher achievement and determine spending and professional development needs.
- Ensure that all managers at middle and senior level are fully trained in the analysis of teaching and learning in order to share good practice and ensure consistency for all pupils and students.
- Ensure that all managers at middle and senior level are fully up to date with national developments in education thinking.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- provide a daily act of collective worship for all pupils.
- ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum in ICT in Years 7 to 9.

SIXTH FORM SECTION OF THE SUMMARY REPORT

THE SIXTH FORM AT ROBERT PATTINSON SCHOOL

The sixth form caters for students following advanced and intermediate courses and there is a growing range of vocational programmes on offer. Provision is made jointly with a neighbouring school.

OVERALL EVALUATION

The sixth form is effective and provides well for students with varying levels of prior attainment. Standards attained on advanced courses are average overall, but from the below-average attainment on entry to these courses, students achieve well and make good progress in their studies across both years. Teaching and learning are good and teachers have a secure command of their subjects. The curriculum is good and there is a wide range of advanced courses, though few intermediate programmes and GCSE subjects. The good provision has been maintained since the last inspection. **The sixth form is cost effective.**

The main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Provision in French and physical education is very good and students achieve very well in these subjects.
- Teaching and learning are good and teachers have a very secure command of their subjects.
- Students approach their studies maturely and have a very positive attitude towards their work.
- There is a good variety of courses on offer but not enough intermediate programmes to better meet the needs of all students.
- Procedures for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are not systematic and there is a lack of a strategic approach to planning for development.
- There is good advice for students wishing to pursue their studies in higher education but a significant number would like more information on careers open to them.

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	English: Good. Teaching and learning are good and lead to students achieving well and reaching average standards. French: Very good. Teachers have a very secure command of their languages, high expectations of their students and challenge them realistically. Students reach well-above-average standards and enjoy their studies.
Mathematics	Good. Teaching and learning are good. Standards are average and students achieve well. Students' attitudes to learning are very good.
Science	Physics: Good. Teaching and learning are good and are leading to above-average standards and to students achieving well.
Information and communication technology	Good. Teaching and learning are good and students achieve well.
Humanities	No subjects were inspected in depth.
Engineering, technology and manufacturing	No subjects were inspected in depth.

Visual and performing arts and media	Music: Good . Good teaching and learning results in students achieving well to reach above-average standards. Students extend their learning well through extra-curricular music-making both in and out of school.
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	Physical education/sports studies: Very good . Teaching and learning are very good. Leadership is very good and students have excellent attitudes Standards are above average. There are very good links with the neighbouring school.
Business	No subjects were inspected in depth
Health and social care	Good . Teaching is good and supports the development of independent learning. Very good links with local care providers are improving the standards of present students. Standards are average and achievement is good.

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 school. 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

Guidance and support for students is satisfactory.

Students speak highly of their teachers and say they are accessible to provide help and support when needed. They receive good advice on the choice of courses on entry to the sixth form and are grateful for the guidance on applying for higher education. Careers education is satisfactory but students feel, and inspectors agree, that more information on careers should be open to them. There is a tutorial programme but students in Year 13 only meet with their form tutors on three days per week.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SIXTH FORM

Leadership is good and has a clear vision for the development of the sixth form. The provision with a neighbouring school is mutually advantageous and provides a good range of courses. Management of the sixth form in general is satisfactory but there is a lack of strategic planning to ensure future developments and effective evaluation of teaching and learning and to track the progress of students in a more systematic way. Day-to-day management is good and the sixth form day runs smoothly. Governance is satisfactory and all statutory requirements are met. However, there is no joint oversight of sixth form arrangements with the partner school by the governing body.

STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM

Students enjoy being a member of the sixth form, find the teaching challenging and demanding and are positive about the quality of education they receive. Many would like the school to seek and respond more readily to their views.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

Achievement **throughout the school and in the sixth form is good**. Standards are **above average in the main school**, matched by recent results. In the sixth form, standards are **average**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results are rising faster than they are nationally.
- Pupils did better in English at the higher grades at the end of Year 9 than in mathematics and science.
- Compared with pupils with similar prior attainment, pupils' results are only average.
- Standards in art and design and ICT are held down because pupils' basic skills are weak.

Commentary

Key Stage 3

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	36.6 (34.5)	33.4 (33.3)
mathematics	36.4 (34.7)	35.4 (34.7)
science	34.5 (33.6)	33.6 (33.3)

There were 233 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

1. Results have been rising in recent years and inspection evidence confirms that standards overall are above average. In English, both results and standards in lessons are well above average. Pupils achieve well because they are well motivated and their good attitude to work makes them ready to rise to the challenge which many teachers set before them. However, the school's approach to target-setting is not systematically based on previous performance and while some lessons may be challenging, pupils are not always aware of what level they are expected to reach. When compared with pupils with similar prior attainment at the start of secondary school, the proportion of pupils gaining the higher National Curriculum levels, though above average in English, is well below average in mathematics and science.
2. There are very few pupils in the school who have English as an additional language. The achievement of these pupils is in line with that of their peers. The school does not identify pupils who are gifted and talented and so there is no evidence to show whether their achievement matches that of other pupils. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well. This is due to the programme of support each pupil receives. In Years 7 and 8, small classes are created for English, and these classes benefit from specialist teaching in English and language development.

Key Stage 4

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	56 (55)	52 (50)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	95 (95)	91 (91)
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	99 (97)	96 (96)
Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects)	37.2 (35.9)	34.7 (34.8)

There were 220 pupils in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Pupils achieve well to maintain their above average results and standards in lessons. Compared with all schools, GCSE results are rising at a faster rate than they are nationally. However, when pupils' results in 2003 were compared with pupils who had similar results at the end of Year 9, they were average. This suggests that they are not fulfilling their latent capacity to reach even higher standards and achieve even better results. In English, results dipped because of illness in the department and classes were covered by temporary teachers, though pupils still gained many more A* grades than nationally. The situation is still not resolved but the acting head of department gives very good support to these teachers and pupils' standards of work are returning to the former level shown by the 2002 results. This is similar to the situation in mathematics where a full complement of specialist teachers is putting the pupils back on track after a temporary dip in results.
4. Other subjects where pupils did particularly well were French, chemistry, the full course in religious education, and boys in history and geography. The head of humanities is aware that boys did so much better than girls because they found the course content motivating, and is looking at ways to bring girls' standards up to meet them. In art and design, however, because of an absence being covered by temporary non-specialist staff, pupils have a significant deficit in basic skills which is holding them back from gaining higher results.
5. In most other subjects, pupils are building well on their prior knowledge and the use of self-and peer appraisal is making them aware of the requirements of the examination course and where they need to put more effort. Boys and girls are achieving equally well in lessons, though in design and technology, girls do better than boys, largely because the components they choose are better taught and the design element is well understood.
6. The school has recently introduced an alternative curriculum in Years 10 and 11, aimed largely at pupils in these years with special educational needs. Pupils following this course receive increased support for their needs in language, number and ICT which helps them continue to achieve well.

Sixth form

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good.
- Students link academic and practical application well.

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	87.2 (90.7)	89.4 (92.6)
Percentage of entries gaining A-B grades	23.1 (22.6)	32.6 (35.3)
Average point score per pupil	219.6 (217.4)	258.2 (263.3)

There were 162 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

- Standards seen in work during the inspection were average, and higher than past results suggest. This is because the subjects inspected had higher results than the average of the two schools in the joint sixth form. Students make good links between the academic study of a subject and its practical application. This is particularly notable in sport and music, where students demonstrate their ability by taking part in musical and sporting events, which they do to a high standard. Also in French and other foreign languages, students speak fluently and show a real enthusiasm for language, as was seen in the Russian Day. In health and social care, students visit local care centres and the evidence they collect from these visits helps them to complete their assignments to a high standard, with a high level of independence.
- In English, students are sharp and perceptive analysts of literary texts. Their oral presentation is a strength of their achievement and because they articulate their ideas well, they go on to write equally well. However, low numbers in some subjects, particularly French, restricts the range of debate in which students engage. In mathematics, students build well on their GCSE work and have a good grasp of the concepts demanded by the course.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to their work are good and their behaviour is very good. Attendance is very good. Their personal development through spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' very good behaviour and positive attitudes are a strength of their commitment to learning.
- The lack of a whole-school approach to personal development means that there are not enough planned opportunities for spiritual development.

Commentary

- Pupils show respect for each other and their environment, work well together and respond well to the challenge and motivation provided by staff. They take responsibility for their own learning and enjoy very good relationships with staff and each other. They support extra-curricular activities well and are motivated and engaged in their work. Parents, in the pre-inspection consultation, expressed concerns that the behaviour of certain pupils was holding back the progress of others. Except in a very small number of lessons observed, this was not found to be the case and in fact behaviour in lessons and around the school was found to be very good.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data:	95.8
National data:	91.7

Unauthorised absence	
School data :	0.3
National data:	1.1

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

10. As a result of good procedures to encourage attendance, there is very little absence from school and most is accounted for by parents.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	1306	68	3
White – Irish	5	0	0
White – any other White background	10	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	4	0	0

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

There are no national comparisons for fixed term exclusions, but this figure, involving 50 boys and 11 girls, is not unusual for the size of school and relates mainly to unacceptable behaviour and language used to adults and pupils.

11. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is overall satisfactory. There is no whole-school policy for the personal development of the pupils and, whilst some departments give some thought to their contribution in this area, others do not. Generally speaking, the spiritual development of the pupils is unsatisfactory. This was noted in the last inspection report and not enough has been done to put it right. As at the last inspection, the school does not meet the required provision for all pupils to experience a daily act of collective worship. Some of the well planned and delivered assemblies and some lessons in religious education make provision for the pupils' spiritual development but other subjects contribute little. Opportunities for pupils to reflect on deeper questions are relatively rare and self-reflection and self-knowledge are not strengths of the school's ethos.
12. By contrast, the moral development of pupils is good. Teachers are good role models and in a variety of subjects, including religious education and citizenship, pupils discuss ethical issues in depth. A 'Disability Day' is held in Year 7, charity organisations make contributions to school assemblies and the pupils raise funds for a variety of charities. The social development of the pupils is good. There are regular trips abroad in modern foreign languages, residential trips are

made in geography and physical education and there is a good range of extra-curricular activities and inter-house activities – all of these contribute to the pupils’ social development.

- The cultural development of the pupils is also good. The multi-faith approach adopted in religious education helps pupils to understand the customs and practices of peoples from different cultures. Recent curricular innovations, like citizenship and *Learning for Living*, also help prepare pupils for life in a culturally diverse British society while pupils learn about British traditions and heritage through subjects like English and history. The Language College makes a significant contribution to extending pupils’ awareness of other cultures around the world.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is **satisfactory**. Though teaching and learning are good, pupils do not have access to the full National Curriculum for ICT in Years 7 to 9.

Teaching and learning

Pupils learn well because they are well taught by experienced and knowledgeable experts. Assessment is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good subject knowledge on the part of teachers means that pupils make good gains in their own learning.
- Information about pupils’ past performance as a basis for target-setting is not understood by all teachers and senior managers.
- Not enough emphasis is given to meeting the needs of gifted and talented pupils.
- Pupils’ good attitude helps them to be independent and learn well.
- Pupils with special educational needs are taught well.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 153 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
7 (5%)	49 (32%)	62 (40%)	30 (20%)	3 (2%)	2 (1%)	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.

- Teaching is good, with a high proportion of very good and excellent lessons. The hallmark of these lessons is teachers’ expert knowledge and understanding of their subject, particularly in art and design, physical education and modern foreign languages. As a result of this, pupils make good gains in their own knowledge and understanding because they are helped to consolidate what they know before moving on. Explanations are clear and give pupils a good basis for their own problem-solving. However, where pupils are taught by temporary non-specialists in art and design, they do not acquire and develop basic skills, which holds back their ability to express their ideas. Temporary non-specialists in English, however, are well supported within the department in, for instance, the structured way technical aspects of English are taught so that pupils’ learning is not impeded.
- Pupils’ own good attitudes to learning are an asset which teachers work with well, encouraging and challenging them often by their own example. Most modern foreign languages lessons are conducted in the foreign language and when pupils hear their teachers speaking naturally to each other, they follow suit. Good planning, where teachers share with pupils what they are expecting them to learn, gives a good structure and impetus to most lessons. Pupils engage

well with their learning and concentrate well because activities are varied. However, because the school does not specifically monitor pupils who are gifted and talented, many teachers are not aware of the potential of these pupils to achieve even higher standards, and it is only in music and physical education where they are really stretched.

16. There are very few pupils who have English as an additional language. Their high standard of fluency in English is such that they are not held back in their learning.
17. It was these very strengths in teaching and learning which were missing in the unsatisfactory and poor lessons observed. Pupils are very willing to learn but when the teaching is not well organised and there is a lack of clarity about the purpose of the lesson, behaviour deteriorates and gets in the way of learning.
18. Teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs are good. In their separate lessons, they are fully involved in their learning, have many opportunities to listen, speak, read and write and are helped to organise their thinking as well as their speaking and writing. Excellent relationships and detailed knowledge of their individual needs mean pupils learn well, and there is an excellent element of fun in the pupils' learning. Helpful advice from the special educational needs co-ordinator helps teachers to make just as good provision for pupils when they are taught in mixed classes by planning activities which help them to work towards the targets in their individual education plans.

Assessment

19. Most assessment information, for example about pupils' performance at the end of primary school, and GCSE predictions made at the start of Year 10, is held centrally. Departments are left to track achievement and set targets themselves without rigorous monitoring for consistency by senior management. Whilst some departments do this well, the lack of a common approach to target-setting means that good practice is not shared and pupils, parents and teachers do not have a complete picture of what is expected. Geography and religious education are unsure of how to set targets which allow them to measure pupils' progress accurately. Departments which do set individual targets for improvement, such as English and history, do not use them rigorously to track achievement by individuals or groups. Science is rigorous in its recording and tracking of progress but does not fully share targets with all pupils.
20. A new marking policy was drawn up last November, but lack of monitoring means it is not being rigorously or consistently applied. Many departments mark work thoroughly and regularly, making specific suggestions for improvement. Teachers give constructive oral feedback in class which helps students to identify their strengths and weaknesses. There is particularly good practice in English, history, modern foreign languages and also in mathematics, where self-assessment has been introduced. However, the school's marking policy is not used by all departments; much work is unmarked in art, there is inconsistent practice within design and technology and departments make no contribution to the assessment of ICT at the end of Year 9.

Sixth form

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers know their subjects and the course requirements very well.
- Teaching is stimulating and inspires students to do well.
- Assessment is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

21. Teaching and learning are good in most subjects inspected in depth. Students want to learn and progress because teachers set such a good example in their own commitment to their subject. Teaching is almost always good and none unsatisfactory. Learning is made relevant to students because teachers share with them their own experiences, such as in health and social care, music, physical education and physics, to put students in touch with other professionals. Teachers match their methods to the requirements of the subject but also to encourage students to collaborate and share their ideas. This not only encourages students to learn independently of their teachers but it helps them to help each other to get to grips with difficult concepts.
22. In common with the main school there is a lack of a common approach to the setting of targets based on previous assessment of students' work. There is no overview of the progress individual students are making across all their studies. However, when work and assignments are marked, teachers give clear guidance on how to improve. Students themselves spoke of how they value this from their teachers

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory in Years 10 and 11, but **unsatisfactory** overall. Enrichment opportunities are **good**. The accommodation and resources of the school are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Opportunities for enrichment are good and large numbers of pupils take part in a wide range of sports and musical activities.
- There is a very good modern foreign languages curriculum and the international dimension of the Language College broadens pupils' and students' horizons.
- The *Learning for Living* course and the extension studies programme contribute well to pupils' personal development.
- Statutory requirements for ICT in Years 7 to 9 are not met.
- Provision for art and design is unsatisfactory.
- Although the school is developing an alternative curriculum in Years 10 and 11, opportunities for pupils to follow vocational courses are limited.

Commentary

23. Because pupils' entitlement to ICT in Years 7 to 9 is not fully met, the curriculum is unsatisfactory overall. However, in all years there is a suitable range of courses to meet their needs and aspirations. The modern foreign languages curriculum is very good and pupils have opportunities to study French, German, Spanish and Russian and also to take advantage of many educational trips and exchanges to foreign countries. The Languages Day is a particularly strong feature. Moreover, as part of the personal, social and health education course in Years 10 and 11, all pupils have an opportunity to study for a GCSE short course in religious education. Because of staffing difficulties in art over a number of years, skills have not been systematically taught and the National Curriculum has not been covered in enough depth, therefore provision is unsatisfactory.
24. The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory and the majority of courses lead to GCSE qualifications. However, there is not enough time in Years 8 to 11 in physical education and as a result, pupils' achievement is held back. The school recognises the need to expand its offer to meet more closely the needs of all its pupils and has introduced an effective alternative programme for 20 pupils in Year 10. Pupils follow applied courses in science, business and ICT and there is also a GNVQ programme in French. However, the needs of all pupils are not fully met because the range of vocational courses is, as yet, underdeveloped. The provision of

careers education and guidance is satisfactory and pupils benefit from the input of the Connexions initiative.

25. There is a good range of extra-curricular opportunities during the lunch break and also after school. Pupils speak highly of the musical activities, support them in large numbers, and several groups have gained prestigious awards in musical competitions. Similarly, there are many sports teams and associated clubs and the playing fields are a hive of activity at the end of the school day.
26. The school has a well-organised programme for pupils' personal, social and health education. The *Learning for Living* course in Years 7 to 9 and the extension studies programme in Years 8 and 9 give pupils a choice of taking an extra lesson in a subject they particularly enjoy and also to increase their understanding of what makes a good citizen. Because there is emphasis on the responsibilities of living in a community, pupils take part in placements in a range of neighbouring establishments and have a good understanding of a variety of local issues. 'Disability Day' in Year 7 gives pupils practical experience and a greater understanding of the needs of others.
27. Resources are adequate for most pupils but for many, ICT resources are inadequate. The library is unsatisfactory, particularly for senior pupils and students, but there are plans to convert it into a resource centre with more computers. The majority of departments are staffed by well-qualified subject specialists. Staffing vacancies in mathematics have been filled but English and art and design rely on non-specialist and temporary teachers to cover the curriculum. Accommodation is satisfactory. Most departmental teaching rooms have been brought together, each with its own base for the teaching or pastoral team, thus helping to make them more effective. Some still lack space, though, and in one or two cases, this has a negative effect on pupils' progress. A new music block is currently under construction, in memory of, and through the generous legacy of, a local music-lover.
28. The Language College outreach work is successful in promoting a clear sense of enjoyment in language learning in local primary schools and a special school and prepares pupils well for their subsequent studies at Robert Pattinson School. The College promotes very good community links in its teaching of languages to adult learners. Pupils are offered two additional language GCSEs in Spanish and Italian in after-school sessions. The school has developed links with China, South Africa, the Czech Republic, France, Spain, Holland, the United States, Guadeloupe, Germany and St Petersburg in its successful efforts to promote the importance of international links and the celebration of cultures of the world.

Sixth form

The curriculum is **good**. There is a **good range of enrichment activities** which make a positive impact on students' personal development. Key skills are taught across the curriculum. Accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good range of advanced courses.
- The range of opportunities to extend learning beyond the classroom is good.
- There are insufficient intermediate courses to meet the needs and abilities of all students.

Commentary

29. The school is rightly proud of its open-door policy and is always willing to take students whose academic qualifications are less than those required for other sixth forms. The shared provision with a neighbouring school is mutually advantageous and there is a broad range of advanced, GCSE and general studies courses and a growing range of vocational programmes. However, a limited range of intermediate courses does not meet the needs and

aspirations of all students. In all the subjects inspected in depth, provision is at least good and in French and physical education it is very good.

30. There is a good range of enrichment activities and students take part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and the Millennium Volunteers programme. In addition, sixth form students support younger pupils with reading and other aspects of their studies and can be seen offering their support in the library during the day. However, because enrichment activities are purely voluntary, the numbers of students taking part are not as large as is often seen.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes **good care** of pupils' welfare. Pupils are provided with **satisfactory support, advice and guidance**. **Satisfactory account is taken of pupils' views**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are good induction arrangements for new pupils.
- Systems for ensuring pupils' health and safety are mostly good.
- Good account is taken of pupils' special educational needs.
- No effective general overview of all individual pupils' progress is established.
- Good guidance about options is provided.

Commentary

31. There are good links with many primary schools so all new pupils are able to meet staff and visit the school to experience lessons and familiarise themselves with the school before starting. Parents appreciate the school's enquiries about how pupils have settled during their first term. Pupils keep the same form tutors for several years, which enables staff get to know them well. Good relationships between pupils and teachers are established and maintained, so pupils feel secure and well supported. Pupils consider it is good to be at this school.
32. Form tutors and pastoral staff share information about pupils' personal development and are well informed about any emerging academic concerns. Personal and academic issues are handled well when they occur, but pastoral systems do not encourage the close monitoring of pupils' general progress, particularly when things appear to be going well. Assessment information is used inconsistently: not all pupils understand how well they are doing in all their subjects or what they need to do in order to improve. Pupils receive satisfactory information about course options and careers. They are well prepared for work experience in Year 11, when a wide range of activities is undertaken. The support provided by the Connexions service is valued, although the Connexions advisers have insufficient time for all pupils to benefit from their advice.
33. Through the year group councils, pupils have opportunities to discuss and influence matters which concern them. However, many do not feel the school takes sufficient account of their views. Child protection is managed effectively by the deputy headteacher. Appropriate measures are taken to ensure pupils' health and safety, and issues are dealt with when they are identified. Pupils are instructed well in the importance of procedures such as warming up before physical exercise.

Sixth form

34. Students value the fact that their teachers are readily on hand to offer guidance about their work and future choices. They are well guided in their choice of courses before they start in Year 12. Careers education is satisfactory but for students with the emphasis on preparation for higher education, there is not enough information on more immediate career choices. In common with the main school, the setting of targets and monitoring of students' work are

weaknesses. There is a tutorial programme but Year 13 students only meet with their form tutors on three days per week. It is not part of the tutor's role to monitor and support students' academic and personal progress and therefore no-one has the overview of students' achievements.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school maintains a **satisfactory partnership with parents**. Pupils and students in the sixth form benefit from **good relationships which are maintained with other schools and the wider community**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils benefit from the global perspective brought by Language College status.
- Several subjects have beneficial links with other schools.
- Strong links are maintained with parents of pupils with special educational needs.
- The joint sixth form arrangements are very effective.

Commentary

35. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, meeting and correspondence, parents indicate they are generally satisfied with the school's work and the way it is led and managed. They praise the quality of their children's induction and the school's expectations. A significant minority of parents say they would like better information about their children's progress and to be more involved through consultation. Most parents feel able to approach the school for further information or with issues; the school deals with such approaches well but does not always report its actions effectively to parents. Some parents express concerns about misbehaviour or bullying but such issues are generally resolved satisfactorily when brought to the school's attention.
36. The quality of information published for parents is satisfactory. The prospectus and governors' annual report include all the necessary information and are well presented. Parents have suitable opportunities to discuss their children with teachers and pastoral staff. Reports have been redesigned to reflect parents' requirements. Interim reports lack precision in the reporting of standards as they focus on pupils' performance relative to their teaching groups. The annual reports sometimes include subject-specific guidance on what needs to be done, which informs parents how they can help their children improve, but such information is not of consistently high quality.
37. Relationships with primary schools are good and mechanisms for the transfer of information are effective and are appreciated by parents and pupils. Some very good work where languages are taught by staff going into the primary schools helps pupils to start well in their new school. Other primary pupils are able to use ICT facilities that are unavailable in their own school.
38. Parents of pupils with special educational needs accompany their children to some lessons and derive personal benefit from the work. The school provides a very good venue for general adult education, which is a valuable community facility as well as providing financial benefit for the school and extra options for those students who participate in courses. Other good links with the local community are manifest in the school's effective sharing of its resources with the neighbouring school and local sports clubs. Pupils have unusually good opportunities through the school's Language College status which has led to links with schools in countries as distant as China, but little use is made of the local community by several departments.

Sixth form

39. There are good relationships between the sixth form and a range of partner institutions. Sixth form students benefit from the school's very effective provision of a good range of courses which is jointly organised with the neighbouring school. There are some very good links with businesses and universities and students also benefit from well-aimed support provided by Connexions advisers.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the headteacher and other senior managers are **satisfactory**. Governance is **unsatisfactory**. The sixth form is **well led; management is satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Several departments are led very well, with vision and enthusiasm.
- Senior managers are not always well versed in current educational thinking and arrangements for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are not systematic.
- The governing body is not sufficiently well informed to challenge the school and hold it to account.
- The induction and support of newly-qualified teachers are effective and the school's advanced skills teachers play an important role in their professional development.

Commentary

40. The senior management team is small and members have a wide range of responsibilities, though they are not always fully aware of the latest developments in educational thinking. As a result, the headteacher and other senior staff do not give a sufficiently effective lead in the evaluation and improvement of teaching and learning. There is, therefore, no consistency of approach to the monitoring of teaching and to sharing best practice across the school. The school does recognise, however, that the appointment of well-qualified and committed teachers is of the essence and has recently been very successful in appointing several highly-skilled members of staff.
41. Performance management procedures are in place and there are effective arrangements for the induction of newly-qualified teachers. New and established teachers are encouraged to express their views on what they need to do to enhance their practice. This includes the appointment of advanced skills teachers who play an important role in supporting colleagues.
42. Several departments, physical education, science, mathematics and modern foreign languages, for example, are very well led. There are good examples of how heads of department have been active in seeking training to support their advancement in the profession. These heads of department have a clear vision for development and are concerned to raise the awareness of their staff about effective strategies to raise standards. The understanding of how assessment and financial information may be used to improve provision and plan strategically is not widespread among heads of department. Information about pupils' performance is held centrally, with little access for middle managers and teachers, who are not therefore fully empowered to become more effective managers.
43. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory in that standards have been maintained, but the key issues of improving development planning, supported by professional development and the effective use of performance information, have not been dealt with.
44. Although the governors are very supportive, their vision for the school is not sufficiently focused on how the school can raise standards further. They do not always challenge with sufficient rigour information provided to them and consequently their knowledge and understanding of the

school's strengths and weaknesses are incomplete. The school fails to fulfil its statutory responsibilities in respect of the provision of ICT in Years 7 to 9 pupils, and in providing a daily act of collective worship.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	4,125,353	Balance from previous year	58
Total expenditure	4,263,677	Balance carried forward to the next	(138,324)
Expenditure per pupil	2,539		

45. The income which the school receives is much lower than for many other schools of a similar size. Arrangements for managing the school's financial affairs are adequate and the school works within its tight financial constraints. It has recently invested substantially in ICT equipment, the cost of which is being spread over three years, thus accounting for the deficit on the last financial year. Before proceeding with the purchase of the computers, the school considered several options. However, the school and governing body do not always apply these principles rigorously to other non-financial aspects of school life and as a result, departments do not know from year to year what their allocation of funding will be and this restricts subject leaders' capacity to implement long-term strategic planning.

Sixth form

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The head of sixth form gives good leadership but her strategic role is limited.
- Governance is satisfactory in the sixth form in that all statutory requirements are met.
- The joint arrangements with the partner school are efficient.
- There is no overview of the progress which students make in their academic studies.
- The head of sixth form plays no part in the monitoring of teaching and learning.

Commentary

46. Leadership of the sixth form is good and the head of sixth form has a clear vision for further development, but plays no part in financial planning. The joint provision with a neighbouring school is mutually advantageous and provides a good range of advanced courses. Management is satisfactory, but there is a lack of strategic planning across the joint sixth form, involving all senior managers, in order to ensure the effective development of teaching and learning. The assessment of students' work is handled by departments and there are no arrangements to track the progress of students in a more systematic fashion. Day-to-day management is satisfactory and the sixth form day runs smoothly. Governance is satisfactory because all statutory requirements are met, but there is no joint oversight of sixth form arrangements with the neighbouring school.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well in Years 7 to 9.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Leadership by the acting head of department is very good.
- Staffing is very well managed.
- Documentation fails fully to support progress and continuity in the curriculum.

Commentary

47. The national test results in Year 9 were well above the national average in 2003, and are rising at a faster rate than results nationally. GCSE results in English and English Literature for 2003 were above the national average, but lower than the results in 2002 which were significantly above it. The number of A* grades in both examinations continues to be above the national average.
48. In Year 9, standards are well above average. Throughout Years 7 to 9, pupils achieve very well in response to rigorous and demanding lessons based on the recommendations in the National Literacy Strategy. They make very good progress in speaking and listening, making the most of very good opportunities to contribute orally to lessons. Pupils do very well in reading because they are taught specifically to skim-read for information. They identify types of narrative, and are shown how to read text closely so they develop competent skills of literary analysis. They tackle Shakespeare with confidence and success from Year 9. Writing improves very well because pupils are taught how to write for specific audiences and purposes. Their narrative skills show a very good level of improvement because they are taught how to use subordinate clauses, for example to create complex and varied sentences, which helps their writing style.
49. In Year 11 standards are above average. Throughout Years 10 and 11, achievement is good. Pupils achieve well in response to the good opportunities they are given to further develop their skills of oral collaboration and to undertake activities such as role-play in their study of literature. They have good opportunities for public performance in drama. In their lessons and outside school, there are additional opportunities for them to enjoy the cut and thrust of debate. Skills of literary analysis show good improvement. Higher-attaining pupils write in a sophisticated and confident style with a high level of technical accuracy. Others write competently and often at length, though their work shows less detail and perception and relies heavily on narrative.
50. Teaching and learning are very good throughout Years 7 to 9. Teachers use their excellent subject knowledge to give pupils a thorough understanding of text and the features that make for effective communication. Planning is excellent, expectation of pupils high and pace in lessons is brisk and urgent. Pupils rise to the challenge and do very well as a result. Pupils readily engage with tasks set, and often show themselves capable of an extended degree of concentration. Teaching and learning are good in Years 10 and 11, but staffing difficulties have led to some lack of continuity, progression and pace of learning. Good learning is maintained

by the provision of a high standard of additional help to temporary teachers, which helps them to plan their lessons. This and the monitoring of their performance and pupils' learning is a strong feature of the way the current staffing difficulties are being managed.

51. Leadership by the acting head of department is very good and has rallied a group of teachers hard hit by illness. They have been very well supported to give of their best during the week of inspection. The level of teamwork has been outstanding as teachers known to the school have been drafted in. Part-timers have volunteered extra hours. Some teachers have worked willingly in their free time. Others have moved to teaching groups other than their own as preparation for external examinations becomes crucial, and this has minimised adverse effects on pupils.
52. Since the last inspection, there has been a satisfactory level of improvement. Standards in Years 7 to 9 have consistently improved. The dip in GCSE results, however, is likely to last until staffing difficulties have been finally resolved. It is a strength of leadership and management that teaching and learning continue to be good overall. Although some curriculum development has been done, weaknesses in curricular documentation persist. Word-processing skills still do not make a significant contribution to the subject, as at the last inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

53. Standards of literacy are high, particularly in Years 7 to 9, and this supports pupils' good achievement. Pupils' capacity for careful listening and their good oral contributions to lessons are significant factors in their learning. The co-ordinator makes a very strong contribution to the development of language and literacy across the curriculum. There has been recent staff training in the subject, and departments are making good use of the support she provides.
54. In mathematics, for example, questions are posed in such a way as to allow pupils to give extended answers, and this helps their problem-solving. Group work and class discussion help learning in subjects such as history. Ethical debate is a strong feature of religious education. Pupils read efficiently for information in a range of subjects and have better opportunities to read than is usual in subjects such as history. Keywords and technical vocabulary are well promoted and this helps pupils to learn. As a result of systematic monitoring, extended writing has been identified as a current weakness, and has become a target for further development.

Modern foreign languages

Provision in modern languages is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE results in French are above the national average.
- Teachers have very good command of the languages and challenge pupils to use them which they do very well, but marking is inconsistent.
- The use of ICT to support learning is excellent.
- Very good leadership ensures successful implementation of initiatives, although assessment and target setting in Years 7 to 9 are underdeveloped.

Commentary

55. Standards at the end of Year 9 are just above national expectations in all languages. In GCSE in 2003, results were above the national average in French but well below in German. Results in Russian are compared nationally with 'other languages', many of the candidates being native speakers of that language. Results were below the national average but for pupils studying Russian as a second or third language, this represents good achievement.

56. Standards of work seen during the inspection in all years were above the national average and achievement was good. This comes about as a result of the good teaching the pupils receive. Teachers have very good knowledge of their languages and of the course requirements and most use the language extensively in class to challenge pupils and ensure improvement. A particularly strong feature of the department is the fact that pupils, at their teachers' insistence, use their languages for realistic communication in the classroom. This high level of expectation is supported by very good relationships and clear routes through the learning process. Pupils are given very clear verbal feedback and in Years 10 and 11 are aware of their targets and how to reach them. Written comments in exercise books are less consistent, and the process is not as rigorous in Years 7, 8 and 9. The beginnings of lessons provide a good introduction to subsequent learning but lesson endings do not sufficiently consolidate that learning. Less progress is made in lessons where teachers use too much English so that pupils do not gain the most benefit from hearing plenty of the foreign language. In a minority of lessons, they respond less well when tasks are mundane, there is a lack of expectation and pace is too slow, resulting in them not making sufficient progress.
57. The department is very well led by an effective manager who has evaluated pupils' needs and staff expertise and altered deployment for the benefit of as many learners as possible. She works very well with the director of the Language College to successfully promote the importance of celebrating world cultures and languages. Systems for accurate assessment have been established but there are no targets set for National Curriculum levels at the end of Year 9. The Language College outreach programme in local special and primary schools successfully fulfils its aims of enhancing pupil interest in, and enthusiasm for, learning languages but there is as yet no formal evaluation of performance at this level. The department follows the Language College targets but has no separate plan for its own development.
58. Particular strengths of the department are its international dimension and real contact with speakers of the languages learned, the excellent use made of ICT, and the very clear training pupils have in really thinking about how to develop their own skills and so become independent learners. Progress has been good since the last inspection, particularly in the use of ICT, the progress made by pupils with special educational needs and the use made of assessment information to drive up standards.

Example of outstanding practice

An excellent celebration of students and pupils sharing a love of language.

The department is an excellent example of the celebration of the joy of both learning and teaching another language. In a whole-school Russian day, students in Years 12 and 13 taught a variety of tasks and activities to pupils in Year 10. The older students had clearly been meticulous in their own accuracy, carefully considered the needs of younger learners and how to plan for increasingly difficult tasks and were sensitive yet rigorous in their error correction and expectations. They made excellent use of ICT in producing support materials and demonstrated a love of language which was infectious. Pupils in Year 10 took part enthusiastically, responded very well and were clearly impressed by the level of fluency of the older students. They came away with a sense that they too could be as competent and successful!

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average at the end of Year 9 and Year 11.
- Pupils achieve well in all years.
- The impact of very good leadership is seen to be improving teaching and learning and raising standards.
- The use of assessment information is not used analytically to set targets.
- ICT is not used enough to support teaching and learning.

Commentary

59. Results in tests at the end of Year 9 have risen steadily since 1999 and in 2003 were above average when compared with all schools nationally. However, results in GCSE examinations were previously above average but in 2003 dipped to average. This happened because a significant proportion of classes were taught by temporary teachers covering permanent staff absence.
60. Work seen during the inspection in Year 9 was consistent with test results and indicates that above average standards are being maintained. In Year 11, inspection evidence indicates that standards are now above average and have improved because of more stable staffing arrangements. In all years, pupils are achieving well and have a good all-round understanding of all areas of mathematics. Higher-attaining pupils think more deeply about their work and apply previous knowledge well to solve problems leading to good achievement. Lower-attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs make good progress in lessons because work is well matched to their needs. Consequently, almost all of these pupils achieve a grade at GCSE. Opportunities for all pupils to attend revision classes are a significant factor in helping to raise achievement and boost confidence in tests and examinations. There is no difference in achievement of boys and girls.
61. The quality of teaching and learning is good. In lessons, pupils are productive and willingly answer questions. They explain clearly and confidently what they have learnt. They have a good understanding of work and their rate of progress in lessons is good and a direct result of good teaching. The main strengths of teaching are effective questioning and well-structured lessons. Teachers formulate questions well to probe understanding and the answers pupils give are carefully evaluated to assess understanding. All lessons are well-structured with a strong focus on what pupils are expected to learn. In the best lessons, imaginative and well-chosen introductory activities lead to good quality learning and achievement early in the lesson. Lesson endings do not sufficiently involve pupils in reviewing what they have learnt during the lesson. In some lessons, there is also a noticeable drop in pace towards the end of the 70 minute double period. There is at present insufficient use of ICT to motivate pupils and raise achievement. This is in some cases due to unsatisfactory access to computers. Assessment procedures are thorough and constructive with good use made of pupil self-assessment after tests to highlight areas for improvement. However, this information is not always used by teachers to improve teaching and learning. The use of performance information to set pupils challenging targets for monitoring their achievement is also not currently in place.
62. The quality of curriculum leadership provided by the head of department is very good, with a strong focus on teaching and learning. She has clear vision, provides a very good role model and has worked hard to successfully cope with recent staffing difficulties. All teachers are well supported and are strongly encouraged to share ideas on effective teaching and learning. Good procedures are in place to monitor the quality of teaching and learning through lesson observation. The staffing of the department is now good, with a well-qualified and enthusiastic team of teachers. Improvement since the last inspection is good. Schemes of work have been rewritten, teaching has improved and standards at the end of Year 9 have risen.

Mathematics across the curriculum

63. The management of mathematics across the curriculum is successful. The majority of departments have incorporated development of numeracy skills into schemes of work. Pupils' numeracy skills are good and effectively support learning in other subjects. In science, there is direct evidence of teachers improving numeracy skills when they reinforce techniques for rearranging formulas when pupils do calculations

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are willing to learn and achieve well.
- Teaching is very good and with excellent features.
- The curriculum is designed to enable all pupils to make good progress.
- The provision of ICT is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

64. Results in the 2003 national tests at the end of Year 9 were above the national average, although the number of pupils attaining the highest grades were lower than average. Results in the GCSE examinations at the end of Year 11 for those pupils taking the double award were just below the national average. 2003 was the first year in which approximately half of the pupils were entered for biology, chemistry and physics as separate subjects. The results were well below the national average but, as the comparisons are with mainly selective schools, they are good. The pupils performed particularly well in chemistry where there were 56 per cent passes at A* to C, with the boys attaining the best results for any subject in the school. Work seen during the inspection indicates that overall standards are rising and are now in line with national expectations. This improvement has been caused to a great extent by the introduction of courses which meet the needs of the full range of pupils and the way in which both teachers and pupils have risen to the challenge.
65. Achievement is good overall in Years 7 to 9, leading to above average levels of attainment in Year 9. In Years 7 and 8, where the full impact of the development of the curriculum is making a very positive impact, pupils are making very good progress. By Year 11, standards are well above average because of very good achievement in Years 10 and 11. The introduction of an applied science course for Year 10 lower-attaining pupils, many of whom have special educational needs, is also leading to particularly good pupil achievement. In other classes, pupils with special educational needs make good progress with very good help from their support assistants. When challenged appropriately the pupils in all classes respond with enthusiasm to participate and learn, and behaviour is very good.
66. Overall, teaching and learning are very good and two of the lessons observed were excellent. For example, in an excellently planned and paced Year 8 investigation into the conditions for mould growth, the teacher drew on the pupils' knowledge of real world examples, recorded their ideas, giving excellent support as they designed and carried out their investigation and ended with a challenging discussion using a very thoughtful question from a pupil. In general, learning was at its best when, in very well planned lessons, the approaches and materials used catered for the needs of all pupils and teaching techniques ensured the involvement of the whole class. Explanations are of high quality with the teaching team using its considerable subject knowledge to good effect. Sparky contributions from pupils in class discussion are encouraged and built upon. The displays in laboratories create a stimulating environment for learning, though not enough use is made of projectors to present information and stimulate learning with visual images. Pupils are made to feel responsible for their scientific investigations and, well organized and managed, they work in small groups with focus and interest. High expectations, very good relationships and firm but quiet class control, all contribute to their increasingly good progress.
67. Assessment practice is good. Pupils' work is marked consistently and the best practice makes clear how work can be improved. The use of assessment information to set pupils targets and monitor progress is currently a departmental priority and good progress is being made. However, the department is managing its own assessment as whole-school information is held centrally and not shared routinely with departments. The department does not ensure that

pupils know what they will have to do to achieve higher levels and grades. ICT provision is unsatisfactory. It is poorly resourced with computers, data loggers and projectors, and classes have limited access to the school's computing suites. Other resources for teaching and learning are only just satisfactory, particularly as there is much ageing equipment that will soon need replacing.

68. The leadership of the department is very good. Changes that have been implemented by the relatively new head of department over the past two years are now starting to make a very positive impact on pupil progress. There is a clear plan for the next stage of development that is shared by the very committed and able team of teachers and technicians. There is much very good and innovative practice, though there is no system for sharing this across the whole school. Management is good but, whilst being very effective in the department, is not supported well by senior management. The school's funding arrangements make it difficult for the department to implement strategic planning, for instance in formulating a repair and replacement plan for equipment. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The National Curriculum is not being fully met for those pupils in Years 7 to 9.
- Teaching in the lessons seen was good.
- In Years 7 to 11, assessment, monitoring and target setting are not used effectively to support learning. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 are not arrived at in a satisfactory way.
- Accommodation and resources are unsatisfactory despite recent improvements.
- ICT is not used sufficiently in subjects across the curriculum.

Commentary

69. The standard of work by Years 9 is below average. There is a shortage of time in the subject for development of skills which are not taught in other subjects, resulting in unsatisfactory achievement. Despite the recent introduction of a new scheme of work, pupils' skills in modelling, data handling, sensing and control mechanisms are poor. They are consistently better in using ICT to exchange, share and present information. Good examples of presentations were seen. Standards by Year 11 are above average for the pupils who take the GCSE examination. All pupils in Years 10 and 11 have better access to ICT than in earlier years and achievement for them is satisfactory.
70. Overall teaching is satisfactory, although National Curriculum requirements are not being met because of the constraints of curriculum time and access difficulties. This, along with insufficient exposure to ICT in some subjects, is resulting in the overall learning of pupils being unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching in ICT lessons for pupils in Years 7 to 9 is good but in many other subjects it is unsatisfactory. In the GCSE examination courses, teaching is good but those who do not follow an examination course in the subject receive too little teaching of ICT. Strengths include good quality lesson planning, good exposition and skilled use of monitoring software. Those pupils with special educational needs are catered for and ICT is used well to improve literacy and numeracy.
71. The use of assessment is underdeveloped in all year groups. Apart from in separate ICT lessons, subject teachers do not have the confidence to contribute towards the assessment of the subject in Years 7 to 9. Long-term monitoring and target setting are not used effectively by the department to monitor pupils' achievement. In examination courses, learning is good and is a direct result of good teaching and appropriate courses.

72. The management of the department by the co-ordinator is good; however, overall leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator knows how to improve standards and what he needs to do to achieve this. He leads the team well and there is a common sense of purpose. Progress in achieving change has been held back by constraints outside the department; these, however, are starting to be dealt with.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

73. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to practise and develop their skills in ICT in other subjects. The situation has improved since the last inspection when access to all aspects of ICT required by the National Curriculum for every pupil was identified as a key issue for action. The number of computers is average for the number of pupils but departments have difficulty in accessing them because there are insufficient machines to service ICT lessons and the other subjects that need to use them. Two technicians, one of whom is specifically allocated to the modern foreign languages department, ably support the work of this and other departments. Good use of the Internet is made by a number of subjects; however, pupils are unable to use e-mail communication because the system has been temporarily disabled. The use of this technology is at an early stage of development.
74. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory although some improvement has been made. The additional coverage of ICT across the curriculum still does not offer a broad range of opportunities across the curriculum by the end of Year 9. The number of subjects using ICT effectively has increased, with good contributions from modern foreign languages, design and technology and music. However, science, physical education, English and the humanities subjects still do not make enough use of ICT. Pupils still do not have access to a whole range of ICT experiences to develop their capability in the subject.

HUMANITIES

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The positive attitudes and good behaviour of the majority of pupils have a good impact on their learning.
- All teachers in the department have very good subject knowledge.
- There is insufficient opportunity for the head of department to fulfil her management role in formal monitoring of teaching and learning.
- Teaching styles are not sufficiently varied to meet the learning needs of the wide range of pupil ability.
- Pupils do not make enough use of ICT to support their learning, which was a weakness in the last inspection.

Commentary

75. GCSE results in 2003 were slightly below the national average and lower than in 2002, when they were well above the national average. Boys' performance was better than that of girls, which is the reverse of the national picture, although a small percentage of girls achieved higher percentages of A* and A grades.
76. Teachers' assessment of pupils' work at the end of Year 9 in 2003 suggests standards were in line with national averages. Current standards in Year 9 are also average. Higher attainers reach well above average standards in some aspects of their work; for example, they use their knowledge, understanding and very good literacy skills to provide well-substantiated accounts

of the outbreak of the First World War. Standards for lower attainers are well below average, mainly because of their poor skills of communication, but also because teaching methods are not always appropriate or stimulating.

77. Standards in Year 11 are average. Pupils satisfactory progress towards their target grades and this reflects satisfactory achievement. The highest attainers use their previous knowledge and understanding of events well. They achieve well-structured arguments to support their conclusions when analysing sources of information. The quality of organisation and presentation of work in pupils' books varies widely.
78. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The combination of pupils' positive attitudes, good behaviour and teachers' very good subject knowledge produces a good climate for learning in most lessons. However, although subject knowledge is used well in explanations and discussions with pupils, lessons were seen where the style of delivery is not motivating and is too concentrated on mechanistic aspects such as note-taking or filling in work sheets. This is particularly inappropriate for pupils with lower abilities who require varieties of teaching styles to keep them interested and engaged. Teachers do not extend the highest attaining pupils of all ages by encouraging them to widen their reading. Insufficient opportunities are taken in lessons for moral issues to be discussed and teachers do not always make the link between events in the past and their impact on the present. Consequently, some pupils see history in isolation, with no relevance to their own lives. Neither are connections always sufficiently made for pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of citizenship. In a very few lessons, a small number of pupils are very disruptive and challenging. Teachers do not have effective strategies to manage their poor behaviour, which consequently impacts on learning.
79. Leadership is good. The new subject co-ordinator has a clear view of what is necessary to raise standards overall. For example, she is dealing with the issue of girls' under-performance by tailoring course work to suit their interests. Management of the department is satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator does not formally monitor teaching and learning in order to raise standards.
80. Since the last inspection there has been satisfactory improvement. Assessment processes are good. However, whilst individual pupils are monitored and targets identified for them, there is a need for more precise monitoring and targeting of specific groups of pupils. The increased and more effective use of ICT to support learning has still not been addressed satisfactorily.

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils respond with enthusiasm to good teaching and achieve well.
- Standards are above the national average by the end of Year 11, with more boys than girls reaching the highest grades.
- The setting of targets based on rigorous tracking and assessment is not in place.
- The use of ICT and fieldwork is not integrated in all year groups.
- The department makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Commentary

81. In 2003, by the age of 14, pupils attained results in the National Curriculum teacher assessments in line with the national average. These are likely to have been an underestimate as work in exercise books seen during the inspection was of above average standard. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. At GCSE, the percentage of

students getting A* to C grades was above the national average. The performance of boys was significantly higher than that of girls, especially at grades A* to B.

82. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is average but they have weak geographical skills. By the end of Year 9, standards are above average as a result of good achievement through Years 7 to 9. They use technical vocabulary well and describe the processes that shape the earth's surface. They understand the impact of climate on tourism and the causes and consequences of natural hazards such as volcanoes. Achievement in Years 10 and 11 is also good. Standards in work seen are above the national average overall, and particularly good in coursework. Pupils understand the main features of river basins and how trade and aid affect the economy of less developed countries.
83. Boys achieve as well as girls in class in response to the variety of practical activities, but less well when extended writing is required. The achievement of high-attaining students is good as they are given challenging tasks both in class and for homework. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well as a result of careful attention to the targets in their individual education plans and the personal attention they receive in well-behaved classes.
84. Teaching overall is good. In all years, pupils benefit from teachers who have good subject knowledge and who plan well-structured lessons with varied activities and resources. Pupils are interested in the subject, work well together and respond to the pace of learning set by their teachers. Lessons start briskly and questioning techniques are well used. Homework is mostly used well to extend learning, and comments by teachers in general terms show pupils how to improve. Assessment is not used satisfactorily to set targets based on rigorous tracking and monitoring of pupils' progress.
85. Pupils develop satisfactory literacy skills through the reinforcement of key words and the many opportunities for discussion. Good teaching of numeracy results in the accurate use of graphs and charts. There has been a satisfactory improvement in the use of ICT and internet research since the last inspection. The statutory entitlement is met but ICT is not integrated into all units of work. Pupils' skilled extraction of evidence from world-wide case studies contributes to their good cultural and moral development.
86. The subject leader was new to the post in September and both leadership and management of the department are satisfactory. There is now a clear vision for the raising of standards. Both experienced and newly-qualified staff are working well as a team. The routine management of the department is efficient.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 11 are above average.
- Achievement throughout the school is good.
- A thoughtful curriculum is well matched to pupils' needs and interests.
- Good quality teaching leads to good quality learning.
- Pupils have good attitudes to the subject and want to do well.
- The subject contributes well to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils.

Commentary

87. In the 2003 GCSE examination for the full course, the school's results were well above average, although the numbers taking the exam were small; results were well above the results in other subjects. In the 2003 GCSE examination for the short course, taken by almost

all the rest of the pupils, more than half gained a grade A* to C. The school's results in the 2003 A-level examination were in line with the national average. The number of pupils in the present Year 10 taking the full GCSE course has increased greatly, partly because of the increase in the number of specialist teachers now teaching the subject.

88. The standards seen during the inspection were in line with the national average in Year 9 and above average in Year 11. Over Years 7 to 11 the achievement of pupils is good. In Years 7 to 9, pupils have sound factual recall of some of the major events and personalities in Christianity and Judaism, and, in particular, some of the writing of Year 9 pupils on their Judaism project is of very good quality: substantial, well researched, clearly written and with good standards of presentation. A few pieces are word-processed and some have been researched with the aid of the Internet. In Years 10 to 11, pupils engage in the scrutiny of major ethical issues, examining arguments for and against contentious issues such as abortion or euthanasia, and many write cogently-argued pieces.
89. The quality of teaching is good. It holds the interest of the pupils who pay close attention to what is being said, ask good questions and make frequent oral contributions, some of which are sustained and well constructed. Pupils speak with confidence and many are fluent and accurate in their use of language. The subject contributes well to the development of pupils' language skills. It also contributes to the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. This was clear in a Year 9 lesson on Auschwitz, which was supported by a video film of events at the camp, when the pupils showed deep respect for what they saw and heard. Lessons are well planned, teachers share with pupils what they expect them to learn, good use is made of artefacts, film and Power Point, and learning is reviewed at the end of the lesson. Pupils with special educational needs are included in all lessons and on occasion receive well-targeted support from teaching assistants.
90. The subject is well led and managed. The head of department has a clear vision of the way ahead and there is a good emphasis on raising standards of attainment. The introduction of the short GCSE course has been a major improvement since the last inspection. Although the staffing has been strengthened recently, there is still a small amount of teaching undertaken by non-specialists.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE examination results for 2003 are above the national average.
- Pupils achieve well in Years 10 and 11.
- The head of department has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve provision for design and technology.
- Teaching of systems and control is unsatisfactory.
- There is a lack of access to information and communication technology facilities.

Commentary

91. Teacher assessments of 14-year-old pupils' work in 2003 showed standards to be above average. However, current work, which is average, indicates that these assessments were too high. Pupils produce good quality practical work in a range of materials, but work is not planned for pupils to attain at higher levels, particularly when designing. This leads to pupils' current achievement being satisfactory in Years 7 to 9. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to carry out work using computer-aided manufacturing equipment.

92. The GCSE results for 2003 were above the national average, as they were at the time of the previous inspection. In 2003, there was a significant difference in the work of boys and girls, which is not apparent in work seen. Pupils' current work is also above average and achievement is good, but there are wide variations between the examination options. In food technology, standards are very high, and high in graphic products and textiles technology. Fifteen-year-old pupils following the resistant materials and systems and control courses have unsatisfactory design skills. In all years pupils with special educational needs make progress similar to other pupils.
93. Teaching and learning overall are good. There is some very good teaching of older pupils, for example, in food technology, but also some unsatisfactory teaching. Where teaching leads to effective learning, courses and lessons are well planned and organised, and pupils benefit from being taught by teachers with good subject knowledge. In these situations, pupils develop good attitudes to learning. Where there is a good stress on technical language, as in a Year 11 graphic products lesson, this leads to pupils having a good understanding of underlying theory. Some unsatisfactory teaching and learning result from a lack of understanding of subject requirements in relation to the teaching of design, and there is some confusion between the principles of product design and applied decoration. Where pupils spend much time taking notes, for example when studying systems and control, this does not lead to their improved understanding of designing and making.
94. Assessment is not used effectively for pupils up to the age of 14 to indicate the levels at which they are working, or how to improve their work. Assessment of the work of pupils on examination courses is satisfactory, but practice is not consistent throughout all courses.
95. Accommodation is generally satisfactory, but the resistant materials rooms, planned for refurbishment, do not present good learning environments. Although resources for ICT have improved since the previous inspection, the overall lack of access has a negative impact on pupils' attainment. There is an inadequate supply of textbooks and unsatisfactory provision of library books to support pupils' independent learning.
96. Leadership and management overall are satisfactory. The relatively new head of department has a clear vision of what needs to be done to improve the department, and has already implemented some appropriate strategies, but inadequate oversight by senior managers led to a large number of issues requiring attention at the time of his appointment. Satisfactory improvement has taken place since the last inspection.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are too low.
- Staff absence has severely affected standards and progress and results in some groups being taught by non-specialists.
- There is not a development plan with clear priorities and targets for improvement.

Commentary

97. Standards overall are below average by Years 9 and well below average by Year 11. Since the previous inspection the department has experienced a significant period of staff turbulence and long term absence, which has had a negative impact upon standards and progress. The department is not fully staffed due to long term absence of the senior member of department. It

is dependent upon temporary teachers who are non-specialists. It is about to lose a further member of staff. The school is seeking to secure staffing in the future with the appointment of a new head of department.

98. On entry to the school standards are broadly average though some pupils have relatively limited experience of art. Teacher assessments of standards as well above average at the end of Year 9 in 2003 and for the previous three years appear over optimistic given the current standards seen in Years 10 and 11. This is also borne out by GCSE examination results that have been below the national average for the past three years. In 2003 GCSE results were well below average for both boys and girls.
99. In work seen during the inspection, for most pupils in Years 7 to 9 achievement is unsatisfactory and standards in Year 9 are below expectations. Drawing, observation and composition skills are not progressively developed. Many pupils therefore lack independence being too reliant upon copying rather than making more personal and imaginative responses to subject matter. Pupils' ability to develop or evaluate their own work and discuss and explain the work of artists is weak. Progress has also been affected by staffing changes made to ensure that Year 11 GCSE groups receive specialist teaching.
100. Standards in Year 11 are well below average, resulting from unsatisfactory achievement. However, in Year 10 pupils who have had the benefit of specialist teaching since beginning their course are achieving well and have developed good evaluation skills. Pupils in Year 11 have not systematically developed knowledge and understanding over time. Their understanding of the examination requirements and how to meet them is weak and as a result they underachieve. Some show indifference as a result of the disruption they have experienced.
101. Teaching and learning overall are unsatisfactory because pupils have made too little progress. Teaching seen during the inspection indicates improvement. The very good teaching by newly qualified staff sets high expectations and challenges and involves pupils well in their learning. Specialist teachers are having a positive impact upon standards and work hard to compensate for the lack of continuity that has affected achievement. Teachers manage pupils well and give supportive comments that help pupils develop positive attitudes and learn well. Learning support assistants are used well to help pupils with statements of special educational need. Non-specialists lack skills and understanding at the higher levels and pupils do not develop their own skills and understanding well enough.
102. The school has placed leadership and management with the head of the creative arts faculty. The lack of long term planning or a cohesive scheme of work has been partially implemented and day-to-day management of a difficult situation is satisfactory. The long-term neglect of departmental issues such as assessment requires specialist knowledge and more time to make improvements. Progress has been unsatisfactory on the issues from the previous inspection and standards have fallen.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good, and sometimes outstanding, teaching is leading to good achievement.
- Good leadership of the subject is ensuring a clear way forward.
- The very good range of opportunities for pupils to take part in extra-curricular activities enriches the curriculum and makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development.
- Monitoring of the department is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure a secure foundation for self-evaluation.

- Pupils' appraisal skills are not well developed and teachers' assessment in lessons is not always sharply focused on pupils' musical progress.

Commentary

103. Standards are above average at the end of Year 9 and Year 11. This judgement reflects both the teacher assessments made at the end of Year 9 and GCSE results in 2003. Numbers taking GCSE have been relatively small and national comparisons are not valid, but performance in examinations has improved significantly in the last two years. Pupils tend to do better in music than in the other subjects which they take. The improving profile of music in the school is reflected in the increasing numbers opting for GCSE music next year.
104. Given the pupils' attainment and musical experience on entry to the school, their achievement is good throughout Years 7 -11. Both boys and girls do equally well. Gifted and talented pupils make very good progress, particularly as a consequence of the wide-ranging opportunities they have to extend their performance work in musical ensembles outside of the school day. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in class and teachers are sensitive to their needs while planning work to both challenge and motivate. As a result, the pupils also make good progress. Throughout all years, pupils' performance skills on keyboards and other instruments are above average and pupils have a good theoretical underpinning of their practical skills. Compositional skills are well developed and many pupils show a good understanding of how to structure and develop their ideas. Whilst listening skills are good, appraisal skills are less well developed, and many pupils have not developed a wide critical vocabulary.
105. The quality of teaching and learning is good; much is outstanding. Learning is well organised and both planning and classroom management are exemplary. Clear explanations and instructions are given, and pupils are very clear about the task. As a result, a positive working atmosphere is created and pupils are keen to learn. Many are developing self-reliance as a result of the increasing emphasis placed on working on their own or in small groups. In a very good Year 9 lesson, pupils were asked to compose their own music using Smetana's *Vltava* as a source of inspiration. Because the structure was made clear, pupils tackled the work confidently. They all worked productively and the teacher effectively used ICT to monitor and intervene when necessary. High expectations and levels of musical challenge characterised the learning. Where the learning is less effective, pupils are not encouraged to be involved in the appraisal of their own and each other's work during the lesson. Whilst both peer and self-assessment is undertaken at the end of each project, this is an additional exercise and divorced from the immediacy of the learning.
106. Leadership of the department is good. The head of department has a clear vision and has created a good team who share his thinking. The department is ambitious for further improvement and the building of new music accommodation is tangible evidence of this. Management is satisfactory. While monitoring of the work of the department is carried out through performance management, lesson observations and analysis of examination performance, this is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure a sound basis for self-evaluation... Departmental improvement planning is not sufficiently linked to whole-school planning and does not relate improvement to measurable performance targets.
107. Currently, around 80 pupils are learning instruments through the school's provision. At six per cent of the roll, this is below average. The school has good plans to increase this and to bring class and instrumental teaching closer together. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' social and cultural development through its extra-curricular programme and regular concerts. Good links with the community and partner schools are established through music. Improvement since the last inspection has been good, and the subject has enormous potential for further improvement.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership of the department is excellent.
- Teaching is very good and pupils make very good progress in lessons.
- Pupils' attitudes are very good.
- There is insufficient time allocated to core physical education in Years 8 to 11.
- Extra-curricular provision, including house activities, is very good.

Commentary

108. On entry to the school, pupils attain below average levels in most activities. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 9, their attainment is in line with the national average and their achievement is good. Although pupils make very good progress in lessons because of very good teaching, their achievement in Years 8 to 11 is hindered by having only one 70-minute lesson each week. Most groups are taught in single gender and one of two ability groups in Years 9 and 10 and this allows all pupils to progress well alongside others of similar ability. In the 2003 GCSE examinations, results were in line with the national average. Over time, results show a rising trend. Present GCSE pupils are working to above average standards and their achievement is very good. A field trip is arranged for GCSE pupils and this is a key factor in raising standards. The majority of pupils in Years 10 and 11 in the non-examination classes achieve well and attain standards above those expected nationally. Pupils have good evaluative skills, especially those taking the leadership award in Year 11. A feature of the above average attainment of all pupils is their very good knowledge and understanding of health and fitness. A few individual pupils achieve very high standards in district, county and national competitions. These talented pupils benefit considerably from the very good opportunities offered by the hard work and dedication of their teachers. The numbers of pupils who participate in extra-curricular and inter-house activities and the rising numbers in the examination classes demonstrate the very positive attitudes and involvement of pupils in the subject.
109. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was very good, with some excellent features, and this promoted very good learning. In the best lessons, teachers address all four strands of the National Curriculum and the planning and pace of lessons is very good. Teachers share the lesson objectives with pupils at the start of lessons and promote literacy skills by using subject-specific terminology. Key words are displayed around the department but strategies for the development of numeracy and ICT are not as regularly used.
110. The head of department provides excellent leadership for the subject and has drawn together a team of enthusiastic staff, including an advanced skills teacher, who provide very good role models. The issues raised in the previous report have been addressed and very good improvements made. There is no dedicated room for the teaching of the theoretical aspects of the subject and very few ICT resources in the department. The department is very well managed but assessment information is not fully analysed in relation to prior learning.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

No vocational courses were inspected.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

111. There is an effective programme for personal, social and health education, which in Years 7 to 9 comprises *Learning for Living* and which in Years 8 and 9 includes extension studies. In Years 10 and 11, the arrangements include careers education and guidance and a short

GCSE religious education course. Teaching is good across all years and pupils have many opportunities to discuss local and national issues and also to become involved in elections for the year councils. Planning is good and lesson preparation is detailed, taking the different needs and abilities of pupils into account. Pupils themselves speak highly of the programme and say that they find it of real value to their lives both inside and outside school and also to their future ambitions.

Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership is good; it provides a clear vision for development and ensures that pupils' achievements are reported formally.
- Teaching is good, pupils achieve well and are given many opportunities to discuss debate and share views with their classmates.
- The *Learning for Living* programme, extension studies in Years 8 and 9 and the range of conferences and outside speakers enrich the curriculum.
- The audit of citizenship provision is not detailed enough.
- Systems for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching are not yet formalised.

Commentary

112. Standards at the end of Years 9 and 11 are above average and pupils talk maturely and convincingly about a range of moral and ethical issues. Moreover, because living in a community is a major emphasis within the citizenship programme, pupils have a good understanding of local issues and of strategies which may be employed to improve life for everyone.
113. Achievement is good and a significant number of pupils across all years are coming to accurate conclusions about the complexity of issues in relation to disability, local and national politics, health education and law and order. Achievement is fostered by the *Learning for Living* programme, which, for example, includes modules on cultural diversity in British society, human rights and prejudice in all its forms. Furthermore, the extension studies initiative provides opportunities for pupils to take part in community placements well before they prepare for work experience. The Disability Day for Year 7 pupils is a good example of how pupils' learning and achievement are reinforced by practical activities.
114. Teaching is good and staff have secure knowledge of their specialist modules. Challenge is realistic and questioning is designed to make pupils think more deeply about the subject matter, irrespective of their ability. In a good lesson on the young child, for example, pupils were encouraged to consider the many different ways in which young children learn and how pictorial resources and toys can foster their natural inquisitiveness. Similarly, a well-taught lesson on hidden messages in the media allowed Year 9 pupils to discuss in a very mature fashion how popular soap operas can sometimes trivialise important aspects of life, in relation to sexual behaviour, for example. Teachers place emphasis on pupil self-evaluation and there are many opportunities for pupils to reflect on their progress after each new topic.
115. Leadership is good and has prepared teachers well for the rigour of delivering the course, and there is clear vision for development in the subject. Pupils' strengths and weaknesses in their studies are reported formally each year and pastoral staff and form tutors make detailed comments about their progress. Management is satisfactory and staff recognise that a more detailed audit of just exactly where other subjects contribute to the programme is now needed. Furthermore, they are now planning for a more systematic approach to the monitoring and

evaluation of teaching and learning quality in the various strands, which make up the citizenship curriculum. The department is well placed for future success.

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 school.

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	5	60	80.1	20	23.7	26	29.9
Biology	6	50	65.2	0	11.1	13.3	20.6
Business studies	2	100	76.4	0	16.3	30	26.2
Communication studies	5	100	86.4	20	23.8	36	32
Dance	4	75	86.9	25	35	32.5	34.5
Economics	3	100	73.6	0	20.1	33.3	26.4
English/English language	11	72.7	82.9	0	17.5	21.8	28.7
English literature	2	50	85.9	0	19.1	15	30.2
French	2	0	78.2	0	18.9	0	27.6
Design and technology	10	80	74.9	50	15.1	36	25.3
General studies	81	70.4	73.9	12.3	17.8	22.2	25.7
Geography	4	75	74.3	25	19.8	27.5	26.5
German	1	0	81.5	0	19.3	0	28.9
History	6	100	80.7	16.7	19.5	31.7	28.6
Mathematics	6	66.7	61.9	0	17.1	18.3	22.1
Music	2	100	86.5	0	21.4	35	30.7
Other social studies	17	70.6	69.7	11.8	16.7	22.9	24.1
Physics	1	100	68.6	100	14.4	50	22.7
Religious education	3	66.7	80.2	33.3	22.6	30	29.8
Sociology	13	76.9	71.8	15.4	18.4	26.2	25.4
Spanish	1	100	78.5	0	17.7	30	27.3
Sports/PE studies	1	0	73.2	0	11.4	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	15	100	98.6	33.3	50.2	86.7	87.5
Biology	16	100	96.4	31.3	39.2	75	78.6
Business studies	13	100	98.7	15.4	36.8	70.8	80.1
Chemistry	11	100	97.6	45.5	49	81.8	84.9
Communication studies	15	93.3	99.4	26.7	37.8	72	82.1
Dance	2	100	98.5	100	44.9	110	83.9
Drama	8	100	99.5	50	40.1	90	83.6
Economics	4	100	98.9	75	52	95	88.3
English/English language	21	95.2	99.4	19	36.3	71.4	80.9
English literature	21	100	99.5	33.3	46.5	81.9	86.5
French	3	100	98.8	66.7	51.5	100	87.6
Design and technology	11	100	97.8	45.5	35	80	77.9
General studies	53	75.5	94.7	18.9	31	51.7	73.1
Geography	16	100	98.7	43.8	44.5	82.5	84
German	2	100	98.4	0	47.9	60	84.8
History	20	100	99	45	44.6	80	84.6
Mathematics	25	84	96.7	28	55.6	71.2	88.8
Music	6	100	98.8	33.3	38.9	83.3	81.1
Other social studies	42	100	97.4	23.8	42.7	75.2	81.8
Physics	8	87.5	96.7	25	44.6	72.5	81.7
Religious education	5	100	98.8	40	46.7	72	84.6
Sociology	6	100	98.2	16.7	44.3	80	83.6
Spanish	4	100	98.3	0	50.2	75	86.9
Sports/PE studies	6	100	98	33.3	30.9	70	75.2

Level 3 vocational qualifications

Qualification	No in final year	% gaining qualification		% gaining merit		% gaining distinction	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Business	16	100	88.6	18.8	20.6	77.5	60.1
Health and social care	24	91.7	93.2	0	22.3	50.8	63.5
ICT VQ	18	100	87.2	50	27.9	86.7	64.9
Leisure and recreation	8	100	88.1	0	15	50	57.9
Travel and tourism	16	81.3	90	6.3	19.5	53.8	62.2

ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

English and French were inspected in detail. In addition, lessons in Russian and German were sampled. Both Russian lessons were very good and students were challenged, motivated and supported very well by teachers who have high expectations of what students can achieve. In German, one lesson was satisfactory and one was good. In both lessons, students attained average standards and teachers demonstrated a secure understanding of the subject.

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and students achieve well as a result.
- The curriculum is well matched to the needs, interests and aspirations of all students.

Commentary

116. A-level results consistently reach the national average and current standards in Year 13 mirror this performance. Students write newspaper articles and short stories confidently and fluently. They provide competent analytical commentaries which demonstrate good awareness of a range of literary devices. Their analysis of literary text shows well-developed and thoughtful comparisons of technique. In a lesson on 'Anthony and Cleopatra', for example, students rapidly entered into constructive dialogue with the teacher to develop their perceptions of how linguistic devices are used by Shakespeare to shape character.
117. In Year 12, standards are satisfactory and students' skills in active listening are good. Sharp literary analysis and competent oral presentation were key strengths in students' individual presentations to the class of their choice of poems by Robert Frost. Moreover, they analyse in depth how language is used to create meaning and substantiate their conclusions with apt quotations. In both sixth form years, students achieve well.
118. Teaching and learning are consistently good. Teachers have a secure knowledge of their subject. Furthermore, they demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the requirements of the examination and plan their lessons accordingly. Key skills are well developed, and students have good opportunities for both independent learning and collaborative work with their peers.
119. The deputy head of department provides a satisfactory level of temporary leadership as teachers are moved from other classes to minimise the adverse effects of staffing difficulties. Support for teachers and students is good.
120. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Although standards have declined, attainment on entry is lower than formerly. The new curriculum provides effectively for the needs, interests and ambitions of all students but the scheme of work needs further development if their achievement is to be maintained.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

121. Students' good communication skills support all aspects of learning in sixth form subjects. In mathematics, collaborative oral work is strong. In physics, a conscious effort is made to develop discussion in the subject and this extends students' learning. Technical vocabulary is well developed in ICT and students discuss a topic thoroughly before they begin to write, so clarifying what they intend to say and improving the content of their essays. Students read effectively for information and their well-developed research skills fully inform their independent learning. Oral competence is a key strength of their attainment.

Modern foreign languages

Provision in French is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at A-level are well above average.
- Teachers have very good command of the language and use it well and consistently to challenge learners.
- Contact with French speakers develops a wider appreciation of the language.
- Students make very good progress as a result of very good teaching and a mature approach to their studies.

Commentary

122. In 2003, results at A-level were well above average for the higher A and B grades. AS results were disappointing but work seen during the inspection mirrors A-level performance and students are achieving very well. The group sizes involved mean that any viable comment on trends over recent years is not possible.
123. Students achieve significantly during the two years of the course because of very good teaching. Teachers have very secure command of French and use it extensively in lessons to challenge and motivate their students. They provide tasks which engage their charges and which lead to very good attitudes towards the subject. Teachers provide very good verbal and written feedback and students are well aware of how they might make improvements to their work. Lessons are carefully planned and provide increasingly more difficult tasks which promote students' confidence in using the language as a natural method of communication. Very good relationships abound and support an atmosphere in which students make much better progress than their prior attainment would suggest.
124. The department is very well led and managed by an able team leader who maintains good relationships with the head of department in the partner school, so that transition arrangements are smooth and staff are deployed to maximum benefit.
125. Students make excellent use of information and communication technology to reinforce not only their learning of the French language but also their knowledge of French-speaking cultures. They have very good contact with native speakers of French and this serves to improve their speaking and listening skills.
126. The department has made good progress since the last inspection, particularly in raising standards at the higher grades at A-level.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 13 are average and are consistent with past A-level results.
- Students learn in a systematic way as a result of good teaching.
- Students' attitudes to learning are very good.
- Opportunities for independent research and use of ICT are underdeveloped.

Commentary

127. In 2003, A-level results were average and there was no significant difference in the performance of male and female students. Of the two students who took further mathematics, one obtained an A grade and the other a C grade. AS results were also average and nearly 70 per cent of students have continued their studies into Year 13.
128. Standards of work seen during the inspection are consistent with results achieved in external examinations. In Year 12, for example, students build upon their GCSE studies and cope well with the demands of the AS course. Moreover, students taking further mathematics have a very good all round grasp of their modules and are on course to attain high grades. In both sixth form years, students make good progress and achieve well.
129. Students develop their knowledge and understanding systematically as a result of good teaching. Teachers have a very secure knowledge of both their subject and the requirements of the examination courses. In lessons, work is explained clearly and sequenced into manageable and logical steps. Students respond to this approach, work well collaboratively and independently, and demonstrate a very mature approach to their studies. Homework is used effectively to reinforce and extend learning. However, further opportunities for the use of ICT for independent research would help to broaden students' experience of mathematics and prepare them better for post A-level study.
130. Leadership and management are good. Teachers work well together as a team and support each other in developing effective teaching and learning strategies. Teachers monitor their charges' progress effectively and all students are aware of their predicted grades and current performance. Very good relationships exist and the curriculum is well matched to students' needs. The department has made good improvement since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

131. Students' mathematical competence is generally sufficient to allow them to learn effectively in other subjects. In physical education and health and social care, numeracy skills are strong, particularly in relation to graphing skills and the use of data handling. However, in physics, underdeveloped numeracy skills are a barrier to achievement for those students who have not studied the subject at a high enough level at GCSE.

SCIENCE

Physics

Provision in physics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and lead to above-average standards.
- Few students opt for advanced study in the subject.
- Access to ICT facilities is poor.

Commentary

132. Standards at both AS and A-level are above average. As a result of good teaching and an examination course appropriate to students' needs and abilities, they achieve well. However, the low numbers taking the subject restrict discussion and the exploration of a wide range of opinions. The department is addressing this problem and more students in Year 11 are showing an interest in advanced study in the subject.

133. Teaching is good. Teachers plan effectively, have secure subject knowledge, high expectations and reinforce their students' learning with clear explanations of difficult concepts. Some students, for example, find calculations and independent investigations in the subject challenging but teachers give individual support to enable them to achieve. Visits are well used to illustrate the commercial uses of physics. Teachers use resources effectively and students respond well to class practical work.
134. Assessment is good and teachers give regular and detailed feedback so that students understand how they can improve their work. This assessment is supported by a strong quality assurance system that ensures consistency. Better use could be made of long-term monitoring and target setting.
135. Accommodation and resources are good. However, access to ICT is poor and restricts the development of these skills in the subject. Leadership and management are good, there is a clear vision for the development of the subject and the head of department co-ordinates the work of the strong teaching team with skill.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and lead to students achieving well and reaching above-average standards.
- Students demonstrate good attitudes to their studies; they show respect for the equipment and listen intently to the opinions of others.
- Students are adept at working independently.
- Assessment is good and provides students with valuable feedback on how to improve their work.
- Monitoring and target setting are underdeveloped.

Commentary

136. In 2003, A-level results were well above the national average, with male students performing better than females. In work seen during the inspection, there is a similar picture and, in both sixth form years, students achieve well and approach their studies with confidence.
137. Teaching is good and there are high expectations of what students are capable of. Teachers' planning is effective and staff encourage their charges to work effectively in groups, pairs and also independently. Clear explanations of difficult concepts support students' learning and results in both male and female students making equally good progress, even though there is a greater percentage of male students following the courses. Students enjoy the facilities available to them and value the opinions and skills of their peers.
138. Assessment is systematic and teachers offer detailed feedback given to their students in order that they that they understand more fully how they may improve their assignments. However, long-term monitoring and target setting are underdeveloped as learning tools.
139. Although accommodation and resources are satisfactory overall, there are considerable demands for private study made on the facilities in the vocational resource centre. Students, therefore, sometimes find difficulty locating vacant machines.
140. Leadership and management of are good. Teamwork is a strong feature and a clear vision for raising standards is shared by every member of staff.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

141. Teaching and learning are good and standards average in vocational subjects and languages. Students use ICT to produce reports and to display and analyse data. In PE, students use ICT to present assignments, and spreadsheets are used to analyse fitness data. In history, science and art and design, ICT is under-used as a tool to enhance learning. This is due to a lack of coherence in the planning for the delivery of ICT and difficulties of computer access. In ICT and vocational subjects, assessment is good with regular and detailed feedback given to pupils. However, there is a lack of long-term monitoring and target setting in other subjects in order to provide a co-ordinated approach to skill development. Considerable demands for private study are made on the vocational resource centre and students sometimes find difficulty locating vacant machines. There is no compute-aided manufacture in design and technology although some computer-aided design is available. The co-ordinator of ICT and the vocational education co-ordinator work well together and there is a clear vision for raising standards in these areas but this is not so in all subjects.

HUMANITIES

No subject was inspected in depth. Geography was sampled. One lesson was satisfactory and one was good. In both lessons, students attained average standards and teachers demonstrated a secure understanding of the subject.

ENGINEERING, TECHNOLOGY AND MANUFACTURING

Teaching was very good in the two design and technology lessons sampled and the students were highly motivated and thrived on the high levels of challenge.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA

Music was inspected in depth. An art lesson was sampled, in which the teaching was good and in which students were motivated by exemplar work from another school.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students' achievement is good, leading to above-average standards.
- Teachers are expert musicians and share their enthusiasm with students.
- Joint arrangements with the partner school mean that students have access to a wide range of musical expertise.

Commentary

142. Results at AS level in recent years have been above average. Very few students continue to A-level but, based on their average points at the end of Year 11, students achieve well to gain these results.

143. In work seen during the inspection, students are maintaining these standards. Achievement is good as students develop skills and build on their experience as musicians. The highest-attaining students have a good grasp of classical harmony and demonstrate this through their perceptive written evaluations, competence at aural dictation and their harmonisation of melody. Lower-attaining students have a more mechanical approach but produce effective harmonic workings. ICT skills are well-developed and students use notation software with ease.

144. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers' very good subject knowledge and ability as musicians inspire students and provide them with very good role models. Probing questions direct students' thoughts, causing them to think out answers for themselves. Because teachers have an analytical approach, they anticipate some of the hurdles and introduce students to methods which help them to succeed. The tutorial style suits the small groups and encourages students to share ideas with each other and not to rely solely on their teacher. Students benefit from good marking, which encourages them but also points out what they need to do to improve.
145. The department is well led and there is good collaboration with the partner school. Students say that the teachers organise the various aspects of the syllabus well, according to teachers' specialisms and that they know exactly where each component will be taught. Management is satisfactory. In common with the main school, strategic planning does not link to whole-school development. Assessment is satisfactory but there is too much reliance on senior management to provide essential information about students' performance.

HOSPITALITY, SPORTS, LEISURE AND TRAVEL

Physical education was inspected in depth and travel and tourism was sampled. Teaching was good in travel and tourism and students benefited from teaching strategies well suited to their abilities.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average.
- Teaching is very good and leads to very effective learning.
- Students' attitudes are excellent and they have very good relationships with their teachers.
- There is no dedicated room for teaching the theoretical aspects of the subject.

Commentary

146. In previous recent years, the percentage of A and B grades has been consistently above average and this mirrors the standards seen during the inspection. The courses are becoming more popular and students' achievement is good in relation to their abilities and overall GCSE results. Students are very good performers and take part in at least one sport to a high level. Students' personal exercise programmes show detailed analysis based on first-hand experiences and the use of a wide range of resources. Progress is firmly rooted in the very good relationships which teachers establish with the students and the students' enthusiasm for the subject.
147. The productive work ethos in most lessons is a reflection of the very good teaching. Students' work is marked in an informative manner and they have a good understanding of examination requirements. Lessons are well structured and taught at a good pace; teachers use a variety of independent activities that strengthen learning. Teachers frequently link the theoretical elements of the courses to the practical interests and expertise of their students. This helps to consolidate students' knowledge and understanding. When teachers manage discussions skilfully, as in a Year 13 lesson on leadership, for example, students enjoy the topics and their knowledge and understanding increase rapidly. However, teaching takes place in a variety of rooms and this sometimes restricts methods to meet different learning styles.
148. Leadership is very good and links with the consortium school are well established. The joint teaching provision has been changed recently to provide better continuity for students. The use of external fitness centres has provided Year 12 students with first-class facilities for their

assignments. Management of the department is good and the analysis of statistical information in relation to students' prior learning is now being developed. Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good, particularly in relation to the introduction and establishment of the AS and A-level courses.

BUSINESS

Business education was sampled. Teaching and learning in business education are good and produce examination results better than national averages. The results are at least as good as, and often better than, prior attainment predictions. This is due in no small amount to well-planned teaching and learning that is well resourced and students accepting responsibility for their own learning. The students know what their targets are and precisely what is required to reach them. Focus on local businesses and inviting local businessmen into school adds relevance and motivation to their studies. Relationships all around are very good. The students gain the full range of pass grades, and performance at the top grades would be even higher with development work focusing on greater precision in use of economic terminology incorporating fuller explanations and a sense of a little more urgency.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Provision in health and social care is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching supports the development of independent learning.
- Discussion and written feedback help students improve their assignments.
- Students have very positive attitudes and very good relationships with their teachers.
- Results and assessment information are insufficiently analysed, especially in relation to prior attainment.
- Students cannot always secure access to the vocational resource centre.
- Visits to local health care centres and visits from practitioners provide students with very good primary evidence for their studies.

Commentary

149. In previous years, standards have been below average and students have performed less well than expected based on their GCSE results. Most students are female and they pursue careers linked to care, with nursing, teaching, physiotherapy, and social work being popular destinations of previous students. The attainment of the majority of present students is average and their achievement is good. As the course progresses, students become less reliant on their teachers and begin to manage their learning independently. Students in Year 13 fully understand the main concepts of health and social care and have selected a particular interest topic to research for their final portfolio. Their previous assignments are thorough and well presented, with good use of ICT and reference to a variety of care organisations. Because Year 12 students draft their work, use first-hand evidence and discuss their research with their teachers, their assignments are often of a good standard. However, a few lower-attaining students transcribe material from text without fully understanding the context.

150. Teaching and learning are good overall, mainly because students are encouraged to carry out independent research and develop their reasoning and enquiry skills within a supportive structure. The unit task and mark sheets provide clear guidelines to help students understand the requirements of each assignment. Students have very good relationships with their teachers and very positive attitudes towards their studies. Teachers review and evaluate students' draft work, giving detailed areas for improvement in writing and through discussion. Students achieve well as a result. However, teachers do not keep sufficiently detailed records

of day-to-day monitoring to ensure that all students make maximum progress when working towards their short-term targets.

151. The department has moved forward well since the previous inspection, especially in the appointment of the new subject team leader whose leadership and management are good. She has excellent subject expertise and provides valuable links with external care settings. Information about students' performance is not monitored in a way that reveals patterns and identifies areas for improvement. Students' learning is hindered when the ICT resources in the vocational area are not made available to them.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND GENERAL PROGRAMMES

General studies was sampled, where teaching and learning were good and the varied range of topics is giving students the opportunity to explore many of the issues facing them in the world today. Students' entitlement to religious education is also covered in these lessons.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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