

INSPECTION REPORT

CAMPSMOUNT SCHOOL AND TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE

Doncaster, South Yorkshire

LEA area: Doncaster

Unique reference number: 106791

Headteacher: Peter Trimmingham

Lead inspector: Val Lynch

Dates of inspection: 1st – 4th March 2004

Inspection number: 259350

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:	Community
Age range of students:	11 - 18
Gender of students:	Mixed
Number on roll:	807
School address:	Ryecroft Road Norton Doncaster South Yorkshire
Postcode:	DN6 9AS
Telephone number:	01302 700474
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Geoffrey Hall
Date of previous inspection:	2 nd March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is on the outskirts of the ex-mining village of Campsall. It provides education for students from the village, Norton and the ex-mining community of Askern. It became a specialist technology college in September 2003. There are 807 students in the school of whom 85 are in the sixth form. Parents' confidence in the school has increased as test examination results and the curriculum have improved. When students join the school at age 11 their attainment is below average, particularly in English. Until five years ago attainment was well below average at this age. The proportion of students with special educational needs is below average, although the proportion of students with a statement of special educational need is above average. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is similar to the national picture. This does not reflect the socio-economic circumstances of the area, which is part of a regeneration programme following the pit closures of 20 years ago. There are very few students from ethnic minority groups. The school welcomes all students who want to stay on to study in the sixth form but numbers are currently small. In 2002 the school received the *Artsmark* Gold Award. In 2003 it was recognised again as an *Investors in People* organisation. The school is an active member of the Doncaster Excellence in Cities partnership.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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23393	Brian Dower	Team inspector	English
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32878	Steven Goldsmith	Team inspector	Science Chemistry
13805	Lynn Lowery	Team inspector	Design and technology
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8070	Joe Haves	Team inspector	Citizenship History
17349	Paula Askew	Team inspector	Information and communication technology
31660	Marianne Young	Team inspector	Music
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20619	Jenny Hazlewood	Team inspector	Business education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Campsmount is a very good school. Students achieve very well in Years 7 to 9. In Years 10 and 11 teachers build on these achievements so that standards are now very close to average. Teaching is consistently good. The leadership of the school is very good. The headteacher and senior team have a passion for improvement that is shared by many staff. **The school provides good value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher, with the support of a talented senior team and effective governors, has established a vision for the school and its role in the community based on high aspirations and a belief that adults and students alike have a right to fulfil their potential.
- There have been significant improvements in teaching and learning, achieved by making the best use of expertise both within and outside the school.
- Students do particularly well in Years 7 to 9 which enables the majority to study a range of academic courses in Years 10 and 11 and ultimately for some to be the first generation going to university.
- Students mature well during their time at the school and are well prepared for life in the wider community, not the least because of the care and respect they receive in school.
- Staff manage any poor behaviour well but not enough training has been provided for staff to ensure that students ultimately take responsibility for managing their own behaviour.
- Assessment is regular and supports the monitoring of student's progress. However, it does not always provide students with information on how to improve and particularly how to achieve the higher grades.

The school has improved significantly since the previous inspection. Results are much better and the school has regained the confidence of the local community. Much successful work has been done to improve the standards that boys achieve. Achievement by the end of Year 9 is very high when compared with what students achieve in similar schools. Achievement by the end of Year 11 is now satisfactory. Attendance has improved. Teaching and learning is monitored carefully so the school knows that lessons have more pace. There are policies for literacy and numeracy that staff follow. Systems are in place to track students' progress. Teaching time has been increased for mathematics. There is still insufficient time given to religious education in Years 10 and 11 and the school still does not meet the requirement to hold a daily act of collective worship.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 11 and 13 results

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

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

Achievement overall is good. Standards in Years 7 to 9 and test results at the end of Year 9 are average but achievement is very good. This is because students do much better than their results at the start of Year 7 suggest they would. This is true for English, mathematics and science. Students are doing very well in these subjects in the current Year 9. They are also doing well in French, ICT, design and technology, drama and citizenship. Test results are improving at a faster rate than is seen nationally.

Standards of the current Years 10 and 11 are average and achievement is good. This was not the case last year when GCSE results were well below average as the table indicates. Results in 2003 were not as good as in 2002. When the Year 11 who took their examinations last year joined the school in Year 7, the standards they had achieved were well below average. This group achieved well in Years 7, 8 and 9 but did not do as well as they should in Years 10 and 11. Analysis of GCSE results shows that a significant minority of boys underachieved because they did not attend school nor want to learn when they did. The school is predicting much better results for this year, close to or even above average. Work seen in Year 11 during the inspection confirms these expectations. Students are now achieving well in mathematics, science, design and technology, drama, business and citizenship. They are not doing as well as they could in religious education because of the time gap between the different units of work. **Achievement in the sixth form is good** and nearly all students gain their predicated grades.

Attendance overall and punctuality are satisfactory. Behaviour is good, although a few students do have difficulty controlling their own behaviour at times. **Students' personal development is good. Students' attitudes are very good.** They relate well to each other and adults. They have a strong sense of what is right and wrong. Through English, drama, French and German and music they appreciate their own culture and other world cultures. They have a strong sense of their own identity and respect for the values and belief of others. They are keen to learn and to participate in all that the school has to offer.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good because the school has made good use of the National Key Stage 3 Strategy to improve lesson planning. Teachers plan lessons that have pace and a variety of activities. This has helped them improve boys' achievement. **The curriculum is satisfactory** and there are some good initiatives in Years 10 and 11 to motivate students better. Opportunities for activities outside of lessons are very good, particularly in drama but also in music and physical education. The school provides very good support, advice and guidance and makes sure that students are cared for and are safe at school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good, evident in the very good improvement since the previous inspection. The work of the governing body is good and has many strengths. Governors have considerable individual skills and expertise and as a group they fulfil nearly all their statutory responsibilities. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. He is well supported by a talented senior team with complementary skills. Middle managers are also good leaders, many at a whole school level as well as in their departments. Management is very effective at all levels in the school.

PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very happy with almost all aspects of the school and appreciate the very good relationships that permeate the school. This is confirmed by students who feel that staff really care and want them to do well. Some students are concerned about the behaviour of a few students but most feel that the school deals well with misbehaviour when it occurs. Parents feel that students are well served by the school and most students agree wholeheartedly with this view.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- provide training for all staff so they can help a few identified students to manage their own behaviour;
- use assessment to identify what students have to do to improve and to reach higher levels or grades;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- provide for a daily act of collective worship.

SIXTH FORM SECTION OF THE SUMMARY REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The sixth form is a good and cost effective feature of the school despite being small. **Examination results overall are average and students achieve well.** Boys did exceptionally well in 2003 examinations. Nearly all students continue their education or training when they leave. **Teaching is consistently good.** It inspires a commitment and willingness to study in students and raises their aspirations. **The leadership of the sixth form is good** and there is a very positive atmosphere among students. **The sixth form is very well managed. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.**

The main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Sixth formers provide very good role models for students in the main school through their commitment to the school and their mature approach to learning.
- The guidance and support that is provided is a subtle blend of supervision and autonomy that students appreciate as they adjust to more independent learning.
- Teachers monitor students' progress on a monthly basis which ensures that students remain on track to achieve their predicted grades.
- Although the curriculum includes a key skills programme and general studies there are not enough opportunities for students to participate in sport and community activities.

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	Students achieve well although results in 2003 were well below average. The standard of work seen now meets national expectations. This is due to good teaching and students' enthusiasm for the subject. The subject is popular and nearly all students complete their course.
Mathematics	In 2003 results were well below average but students gained their expected grades. Numbers on the course are small. Current work is closer to average. Teachers provide lessons that are insightful and well structured. This enables good learning by students.
Science	Standards of attainment in A-level chemistry are average. The number of students completing the A-level course is small. Teaching is sensitive to the needs of the students but consistently challenging and is very good overall. Students are keen to learn but the use of ICT to support their learning is under-developed.
Business	Standards in the vocational A-level business examination were above average in 2003. Achievement is good. Teaching is good and motivates and interests students. Assessment of students' work is used well to offer them guidance for improvement in their assignments.

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

Sixth form tutors and teachers provide students with very well-informed help, support and advice. In order to make sure that students make good use of time for independent learning the head of the sixth form introduced a policy where by four of those periods have to be identified and students have to indicate where they will be studying at that time. Students appreciate this as they

know they need help in managing their time. Many teachers give time, often after school, so that students can follow courses that cannot be accommodated within the timetable. Guidance on careers and continuing education is very good. Sixth formers are fully involved in the life of the school and many younger students look up to them.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SIXTH FORM

The leadership of the sixth form is good and management is very good. There have been some good initiatives introduced in order to improve standards further. The head of the sixth form along with tutors had generated a strong sense of community within the sixth form. The school has tried to develop the sixth form curriculum through links with other schools and colleges. These have not been as successful as they could have been. The school is located in the very north of the borough of Doncaster and travel to other schools and colleges is time consuming. Procedures for monitoring students' progress are very good. Monthly progress reports are compiled and sent to parents. It is activities like these that are helping students to achieve what they are capable of.

STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM

Students in the sixth form feel that they are suitably challenged and well supported by staff. They have very good relationships with their tutors and feel that their views are considered. Most feel well informed about future courses and feel well advised when making choices about careers or further education. Students are proud of their school.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

Achievement by the end of Year 9 is very good. Results in national tests and teachers' assessments in most subjects are either average or close to average. These results are much better than expected based on the standards students had achieved when they joined the school in Year 7. **By the end of Year 11 and in the sixth form achievement is good.** Although GCSE examination results in 2003 were well below average, the standard of examination work seen during the inspection was close to average in most subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 9.
- Students with lower levels of literacy make very good gains, particularly in their reading and writing skills, during Years 7 and 8.
- Boys' results in national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2003 improved and they did better than girls.
- A significant proportion of boys underachieved in their GCSE examinations in 2003.
- Most students in the sixth form achieved their predicted A-level grades and many proceeded to higher education and training.

Commentary

Main school

1. When students join the school their standards of attainment are below average. Very few students achieve above average results in tests at the end of Year 6 in their primary schools. This has been the situation over the last five years. Students and their teachers therefore do exceptionally well to achieve standards that are average by the end of Year 9 in English and science. National data indicates that in English, mathematics and science, students do very much better than students in schools with similar standards at the start of Year 7. Results have been improving at a faster rate than is seen nationally. Teachers' assessments in all other subjects, with the exception of art, geography and history, are also average. In these subjects assessments are below average.

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	32.7 (30.2)	33.4 (33.3)
Mathematics	33.5 (32.4)	35.4 (34.7)
Science	33.1 (33.0)	33.6 (33.3)

There were 137 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. A significant minority of students join the school with low levels of literacy. Those experiencing particular difficulties with reading make very good progress in Years 7 and 8. Students with special educational needs make very good progress. Higher ability students do well and gain above average results, although few reach the very highest levels. These students did particularly well in science.

3. In the 2003 national tests at the end of Year 9 boys did better than girls in English, mathematics and science. In English boys' results were above average, reflecting very good achievement. The school has worked hard to improve the standards that boys achieve through teachers using methods that better suit the way boys learn. These include ensuring lessons have pace and a variety of activities. During the inspection there were no obvious differences between the achievements of boys and girls.
4. GCSE results in 2003 were well below average and well below results in similar schools. Results were below average in all subjects, with the exception of drama and physical education. Until last year results had been improving but they dipped in 2003. When this group of students joined the school their attainment had been well below average, so while they achieved well in Years 7 to 9 they did not realise their potential in Years 10 and 11. One of the main reasons for these results was the underachievement of 14 boys. Students in the sixth form talked about a group of boys who, although they did not stop others learning, did not want to learn themselves. Many were poor attenders and others had serious personal difficulties in their last years at school.

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	28.0 (39.5)	51.5 (49.9)
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	86.0 (79.8)	90.5 (90.9)
Percentage of students gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	97.0 (93.0)	95.9 (96.0)
Average point score per student (best eight subjects)	30.4 (31.3)	40.6 (34.7)

There were 140 students in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

5. The work seen during the inspection was of a higher standard than results indicate. In many subjects the work was average or close to average. This was the case in English, mathematics and science. The school is monitoring students' work closely to ensure that they all achieve as well as they can. Predicted grades show that the difference in the results of boys and girls in 2003 is unlikely to be repeated in 2004 and suggest a significant improvement in GCSE results.
6. In all years students' literacy and numeracy skills are good enough for them to be able to cope with the work in all their subjects. This is because the English and mathematics departments ensure the development of these essential skills. Students use computers confidently. Their level of skill is such that teachers can expect them to make use of them in lessons when needed.

Sixth form

7. The sixth form is small and so the grades gained by a few students in their AS and A-level examinations can have a very significant impact on the overall results. In 2003 results were average and, although boys did much better than girls and have done so over the last two years, this difference is not an issue with the current Year 13. Nearly all students achieved their expected results and many went on to higher education. A few students dropped out of their courses in Year 12, particularly in science. No students dropped out in Year 13. In recent years a number of students have been the first generation in their family to go to university, making their achievement all the more impressive.

Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance rates and punctuality are satisfactory. Students have very good attitudes to their work. Behaviour is good in the main school and very good in the sixth form. Students' personal development is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been a significant improvement in attendance because the school has very good procedures in place to track attendance and deals firmly with non-attenders.
- The school excludes very few students and does all it can to make sure students continue to learn.
- Behaviour in assemblies, the dining hall and around the school is good.
- Strategies for dealing with the rare instances of bullying are effective.

Commentary

Attendance

8. Attendance rates at the school are only slightly below those achieved nationally and show considerable improvement in the last few years. Strategies introduced since the previous inspection have been instrumental in achieving this improvement. Any absence is followed up immediately and the school works hard to encourage and reward good attendance.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	7.5	School data:	1.5
National data:	7.2	National data:	1.1

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

9. The attendance of students in Years 9 and 10 falls below 90 per cent at times. This is a result of a small number of students with attendance problems. These students are closely monitored and the school is successfully improving the attendance rate in the following years of schooling. Attendance rates in Year 11 are above average. The alternative curriculum, provided partly offsite for a minority of Year 11 students, is proving successful. It is helping to ensure that these students remain within the education system as their attendance there is good. This forms part of the very effective re-engagement programme for non-attenders and excluded students that is successful in getting students back into the school system.
10. Behaviour overall is good. Although there are a few students who misbehave around the school or in lessons on occasion, staff are very quick to identify and sort out problems. As a result of systems for dealing with poor behaviour and the support given to students to help them improve, the school exclusion rates are low.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of students

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of students on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	789	36	2
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	7	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0

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

11. Personal development is good in the school. There is a respectful and caring ethos as a result of the strong leadership style, which reflects these attributes. The school promotes a very positive ethos and a safe learning environment, which allows students to flourish. Students and teachers show respect for each other and for the environment. In lessons students listen attentively to teachers and are respectful of other students' points of view. This is also reflected in their attitudes to all aspects of school life which are very good both in relation to learning in the classroom and around the school. Students appreciate each other's unique qualities and talents. During the inspection students in wheelchairs were seen being helped around the school by willing student volunteers. Students felt that there was no discrimination and that there were very few instances of bullying. Any instances were dealt with immediately they were reported. Campsmount is a very inclusive school.

Sixth form

12. Students in the sixth form show very good attitudes to their work. Their behaviour is very good and they provide superb role models for younger students. They get on well with each other and with their tutors and they appear confident, mature and responsible. They are particularly appreciative of the support they receive. They are very supportive of the school and feel that they are encouraged to do their best. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. There are still, however, only limited opportunities for them to take responsibility and become involved with other students in the main school and with the wider community.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. Assessment is good and thorough, especially in Years 10 and 11.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school benefits from having a good team of highly qualified teachers who have very good command of their subjects and courses.
- The school has made good use of the National Key Stage 3 Strategy to get a consistency in the way lessons are planned.

- Teachers know their students very well and encourage them to enjoy learning and achieve well.
- Teaching and learning in the sixth form are good. Students make good progress and achieve well
- Most teachers and support staff deal with any poor behaviour well but teaching is unsatisfactory when this does not occur.
- Assessment is not used well enough to inform individual students about what they need to do to improve.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 129 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
5 (4%)	25 (19%)	69 (54%)	25 (19%)	5 (4%)	0 (0%)	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.

- The school has successfully developed its approaches to teaching and learning since the previous inspection. The proportion of lessons that were satisfactory or better and good or better is much improved. The establishment of the staff teaching and learning group is especially effective in sharing good practice, particularly in the use of data to inform planning and teaching in all subjects. Students benefit from knowledgeable teaching that results in well planned lessons. Students know they are well taught and expected to work hard.
- All lessons for all years are very well planned. Good use is made of the Key Stage 3 Strategy for planning and so students know clearly what is expected of them in each part of the lesson. Lessons are suitably challenging for all students of all abilities. All students are very clear about what they are learning. They respond very well, frequently enthusiastically, especially when given the opportunity to take an even more active part, using the interactive whiteboard to check their answers in mathematics or guessing games in French lessons. Some of the very best teaching was seen in mathematics and science with excellent teaching in English, history and modern foreign languages.
- Teachers are successful in encouraging students to enjoy learning. Using a good range of styles they get students of all ages working productively at a good pace to clearly planned learning targets. It is improvement in the pace of lessons and in the variety of activities that teachers now use that has improved boys' achievements and their commitment to learning. Younger students make considerable gains in their literacy and numeracy skills by the end of Year 9 due to the very good teaching they get from entering the school. Support staff are well briefed by teachers and good at helping students with special educational needs to understand and learn. Frequently support staff work with other students, which saves the teachers' time. In the best lessons resources are adapted and modified by staff to boost students' learning.
- In the very few unsatisfactory lessons the strategies used for managing behaviour were not effective, the pace of learning slowed and students did not do as well as they could. Support staff often make sure that any lapses in students' behaviour do not affect the rest of the class. Neither teachers nor support staff have received enough training in managing these few but more challenging situations.
- Teachers include all students and keep the challenges right for the wide range of different abilities. Students with special educational needs are closely monitored in relation to their individual education plans. These are frequently updated and used well to show immediate gains and to set new targets for learning and personal development. Students in Years 10 and

11 who need extra support, especially with coursework, benefit very well from the influence of their learning mentors.

18. The assessment of students' work is good. Teaching staff employ a very good range of methods, including students' assessment of their own work, to keep an eye on the rate at which students learn and how much they know and understand. However, teachers do not always share the information with individual students and do not often tell them what they need to do to improve.

Sixth form

19. Teaching and learning in the sixth form are good. Students make good progress and achieve well. Teachers have a secure knowledge of their subjects and of how to develop key skills. Homework and the level of challenge in assignments support the development of independent learning skills. Relationships are good and teachers set realistic challenges and students work hard to achieve them. The schools arrangements for private study are effective in supporting students in making the best use of the time. Assessment helps students to improve their work and gives teachers the information they need to set challenging targets for most students. Monitoring of students' progress is effective and efficiently done.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory. It is good in Years 7 to 9 and satisfactory in Years 10 and 11. The curriculum in the sixth form is satisfactory. Opportunities for enrichment are very good. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Opportunities for personal development provided on 12 days during the year when the timetable is stopped are very good.
- There is good provision for students with special educational needs and for lower attainers in Year 11.
- The enrichment programme provides very good experiences beyond the school day for all students including those in the sixth form.
- The provision of religious education is not well planned to ensure that students make progress and sustain their interest in the subject.
- In the sixth form, despite it being small, there are opportunities for students to achieve through both vocational and academic courses.
- There is no provision for students in the sixth form to participate in recreational sport.

Commentary

20. The school provides a good, well planned curriculum in Years 7 to 9, which reflects the inclusive nature of the school and provides very good opportunities for developing students' personal and social skills, life skills and citizenship. There is a satisfactory curriculum in Years 10 and 11 that meets statutory requirements. The school offers a good range of applied vocational and academic GCSEs reflecting the needs of most students.
21. The provision for students with special educational needs is very good. The school, in liaison with Doncaster College and local training providers, provides very good access to an occupationally based curriculum for low attaining students in Year 11, leading to accreditation at NVQ level 1. These students gain increased confidence and improved attitudes to learning. In 2003 more than half the students achieved a full NVQ and many others achieved units towards the final qualification and which they can continue after they leave school. The lack of a similar course for Year 10 students means that in order to participate in Year 11 students must give up some of their optional subjects already started. Religious education is part of a rotational

programme with English and, although this is an improvement since the last inspection and now meets statutory requirements, it is not helpful for maintaining learning.

22. Citizenship and personal, social and health education are taught during 12 days when the timetable is stopped for a range of alternative activities that are followed up in tutorial sessions. There is a very good range of experiences for all students that fully comply with statutory requirements for citizenship and with the governors' policies for sex education and drugs awareness. The curriculum provides valuable insights into and guidance on higher education and careers. On these days teaching is stimulating and captures the imagination of students and helps them develop a good range of personal skills as they progress through the school. All students speak highly of the benefits they derive from these days.
23. A very good range of extra-curricular activities caters well for the needs and interests of students of all attainment levels. They enrich students' learning and extend their opportunities for achievement. Well-organised travel arrangements enable students to participate at the end of the school day. In addition there are many and varied opportunities for travel in England and abroad, for example a Year 9 boys' and girls' soccer team travelled to play in Barcelona.
24. Staffing is well matched to the needs of the curriculum. Well-qualified, experienced and committed staff bring considerable expertise to their teaching and this underpins students' good achievement. Support staff make a good contribution to students' learning and contribute well to the smooth operation of practical work in science, art and generally in design and technology, although there is no food technician.
25. Resources for learning are good, they are particularly good for students with special educational needs. In business, electronic teaching resources produced in the school stimulate and motivate students. The library resources are satisfactory. The number of computers is average but students do not have access to e-mail. Some subjects do not have satisfactory access to computers because of timetabling arrangements and heavy usage. Accommodation is satisfactory. The school has begun a major building and refurbishment programme to update science and technology. The three-storey block and toilets await improvement.

Sixth form

26. Although the sixth form is small, the curriculum is well designed to meet the needs of most students through vocational and academic courses at levels 2 and 3. To extend the courses offered, music technology and drama are taught after school but there is insufficient time for these to be wholly successful. There are no opportunities for sixth formers to participate in sport. In collaboration with other sixth forms, as part of the Doncaster Northern Corridor Federation the school is planning to improve the range of courses offered. Already some students take AS and A-level French elsewhere and some students from other schools travel to Campsmount for the music technology course. There are very good opportunities for personal, social and health education, religious education and citizenship. There are also good opportunities for the development of key skills and for students to prepare for the world of work. There are not enough opportunities for sixth formers to participate in voluntary and community work. Students appreciate their newly developed study and social areas and they have good access to computers to support their learning.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements for ensuring students' care, welfare health and safety are very good. The school provides very good support, advice and guidance. The way the school seeks and acts on the views of students is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of activities for students in Year 6 in primary schools provides students with a good start to their secondary education.
- Procedures for ensuring the protection and safety of students are very good, both within school and on the many visits they make.
- Very good information and guidance provided for students extends into the sixth form where it further supports students' high aspirations.
- The effectiveness of the use of tutorial time is too variable.
- Form, year and school councils enable students to contribute valued views to developments in the school

Commentary

27. Students are enthusiastic about joining the school in Year 7. They feel that they know the school well and that teachers quickly get to know them. There is a teacher appointed to work in both partner primary schools and this school and he makes a substantial contribution to the transition process. He ensures that all subject teachers at this school know what work has been covered in the primary schools. Arrangements for transfer from partner primary schools are very good, so the school is able to meet students' needs effectively from the day that they arrive.
28. Procedures to secure the health and safety of students are very detailed and well understood by staff and governors. Detailed risk assessments include close monitoring of building works and allows the school to plan exciting but safe trips, for example to New York, Barcelona or sailing round Scotland.
29. The care and welfare of students are strengths of the school. Detailed procedures ensure close monitoring of and support for students' welfare and academic progress. The school works very effectively with Connexions, local businesses, colleges and partner schools in Doncaster to meet the continuing needs of students in Years 9 to 11. Good programmes are developing which provide alternative pathways for students in Years 10 and 11. Dedicated staff work with the students to ensuring very high quality care and support for their learning and personal needs so that students feel well involved in the school.
30. A comprehensive system for tracking and supporting academic performance allows teachers and tutors to monitor progress. There is a real sense of community in which adults and students are full partners and students feel very well supported and know whom they can approach when they need help. Form tutors know their students well but some do not make effective use of tutorial time.
31. Parents and students value what the school does and the speed with which staff react to any problem. Students feel that their views matter and members of the class, year and school councils identified several improvements that had come from their suggestions. The school has very good systems for reviewing the impact of what it does and consults with staff, students, support agencies and parents on a regular basis.

Sixth form

32. Sixth form tutors and teachers provide students with well-informed help, support and advice. In order to make sure that students make good use of time for independent learning the head of the sixth form introduced a policy whereby four of those periods have to be identified and students have to indicate where they will be studying at that time. Students appreciate this as they know they need help in managing their time. Many teachers give time, often after school, so that students can follow courses that cannot be accommodated within the timetable. Guidance on careers and continuing education is very good. Sixth formers are fully involved in the life of the school and many younger students look up to them.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with parents and they are supportive of the school. The links with the local community, business and other schools and colleges are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good relationships have been established with parents and they hold the school in high regard.
- The school works very well with the local primary schools and other partner schools.
- The very good partnerships with the community and industry support many students' learning and personal development very well, although there are too few ICT links with industry to support vocational GCSE and AVCE courses.
- There is good consultation between parents and staff about students' progress and excellent liaison with parents of students with special educational needs.

Commentary

33. Parents are pleased with all aspects of the school and have confidence in the staff. The school keeps parents well informed and contacts them not only to deal with problems but also to celebrate their children's success and achievement. Parents are positive about what the school provides and were extremely supportive when the sixth form provision was threatened. Relationships with the vast majority of parents are very good.
34. The school has improved the opportunities for parents to consult staff about their children's progress. The introduction of review days has been successful in increasing the number of parents who meet staff. The school provides useful interim reports as well as annual written reports to parents. The school regularly seeks the views of parents of students with special educational needs and the involvement of these parents at the time of their children's annual reviews is excellent.
35. The liaison between the school and local primary schools is particularly effective. A teacher has been appointed to help to bridge the gap between primary and secondary education. This transition teacher visits local primary schools, teaches in Year 6 and ensures that relevant information in every subject of the curriculum is transferred and used well by the school. This makes a very positive contribution to the induction of students, including those with special educational needs, and to their care and support in Year 7. Teachers in various departments also share expertise with partner schools.
36. Very good links have been developed with the local community and with local business and industry. These have been very effective in extending the curriculum and in promoting students' personal development. The school is very pro-active in sustaining its good relationships with members of the community. The Parents, Business Partners and Friends group works very well and recently supported the successful bid for technology college status. The number of parents involved in this group is, however, relatively small. In most subjects, links with the community and business make a very positive contribution to students' learning. Such links could be improved in ICT to support the learning in vocational GCSE and AVCE as these subjects are expected to use real life situations to help students understand key concepts.

Sixth form

37. The links between the sixth form and other colleges are effective in helping students to prepare for entry into higher education or the world of work. Staff have very good contact with other colleges, universities and training providers. This liaison is effective in providing students with good advice and guidance when making choices. Parental involvement in this is also very good. Sixth form students support the local community through charity fundraising and organise hampers for senior citizens at Christmas. Community service is carried out by those students

involved in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme but this kind of involvement is not currently extended to other students.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent. Governance is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school based on high aspirations.
- Senior managers work very well as a team, making very good use of their complementary skills and expertise.
- There is an openness and honesty within the senior management team that helps them to recognise what can be improved.
- In an atmosphere of care and respect students and staff feel well supported, so give of their best.
- Financial management is excellent and helps the school to make the best use of its resources.
- Governors' wide range of skills and experience enables them to fulfil their roles and responsibilities.

Commentary

Main school

38. The headteacher knows the school and its community well. He has a passionate belief that students can achieve more than their test results at age 11 indicate. With this in mind he has made some very good appointments and made contact with local and national initiatives to bring additional knowledge and expertise to the school. A good example of this is the work the school has done on analysing data. A leading national figure visits the school every two years to help staff make the most of the data they collect. As a result the school has made very good improvements since the previous inspection and students' achievement is good. Through the way he treats his staff and students he has secured their commitments to these aspirations.
39. The senior team are a mix of staff who have been at the school for a number of years and some new appointments. This mix of experience and expertise has produced a senior team with many complementary skills and the ability to challenge each other as they work. Because the headteacher believes in developing staff, he promotes from within the school when he recognises potential leaders of the future. To help teachers progress in their careers he identifies opportunities for them to participate in local projects. A number of middle and senior managers are participating in the national training programme for aspiring headteachers. This commitment to professional development and the way performance management works in the school was praised when the school gained its re-recognition as an *Investors in People* organisation. The success of this approach is evident in the very good leadership and management identified in most departments.
40. Senior managers, particularly the headteacher, are very honest in their appraisal of the school's strengths and areas that need to improve. They welcome an external view of their work and during the inspection were keen to hear the team's views and judgements. A useful programme of curriculum reviews focuses on departments and leads to an identification of departmental strengths and areas for improvement. There is also an effective programme of whole school reviews. A recent review of the 12 days when the timetable is stopped and a programme of citizenship and other activities occurs was very thorough and made good use of data.
41. Financial planning and management are excellent and have enabled the school to develop and grow when budgets were tight. Although the school development plan does not appear to be costed in detail, financial resources are targeted at priorities. In addition the business manager at the school ensures that services are reviewed in order to get the best value for the school.

Where possible additional grants are sought and revenue raised. Unit costs are high but this is because the school attracts additional funding linked to current developments. The school is carrying an underspend because money has been saved so that the new building can be fully equipped. Both the business manager and the headteacher work closely with governors on all financial matters. The school provides good value for money.

Income and Expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total Income	2,958,139	Balance from previous year	250,380
Total Expenditure	3,155,939	Balance carried forward to the next	153,031
Expenditure per student	3,999		

42. The governors take their roles and responsibilities seriously. They work very effectively with the headteacher because both he and they understand their respective roles. They know the school well. The governing body is made up of individuals who have a broad range of experiences and expertise both in the public sector and the business community. They ensure that the school fulfils most statutory requirements but have not yet ensured that the school provides a daily act of collective worship.

Sixth form

43. The leadership and management of the sixth form are good. There have been some good initiatives introduced in order to improve standards further. For example, students have to identify four study periods when they will be in school and studying. This guarantees that the head of sixth form can monitor their use of this time and ensure that it is being used for the correct purpose. The head of the sixth form along with tutors has generated a strong sense of community within the sixth form. The school knows that to provide more choice for students it needs to collaborate with other schools. Staff are very keen to do this but the distances involved mean that very few students take up courses at other schools and colleges.

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 **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students' achievement by the end of Year 9 is very good.
- Results in the GCSE English language and literature examinations have been well below average but there is now a marked improving trend in the standard of work seen in Years 10 and 11.
- Students achieve well because of the good teaching and the efficient way in which the subject is led and managed.
- Students have insufficient time in lessons to reflect on and consolidate their learning.

Commentary

44. In 2003 GCSE results in English language and literature were well below average for boys and girls. Achievement was satisfactory when account is taken of those students' weak language skills on entry to the school and their well below average performance when they were in Year 9. Results were similar to those attained at the time of the previous inspection. There is now a marked improving trend in the quality of work seen during the inspection in Years 10 and 11. Standards, although still below average, are now close to national expectations. The achievement of these students is good.
45. Results in the 2003 national tests at the end of Year 9 were average but very much better than in similar schools. Boys did particularly well and their levels of achievement were very good. The achievement of the girls was satisfactory. The results were a significant improvement on the standards attained in 2001 and 2002 and at the time of the last inspection, when students' performance was below average. Students continue to progress well and achievement evident in the work seen at the end of Year 9 is very good. Students are maintaining standards at national levels; the girls have improved and are now attaining in line with their national counterparts.
46. Students write well, adapting their styles for different purposes. All are able to write at length and most make appropriate use of paragraphs to organise their work. The most competent students have good analytical skills and write critically about the books they read, using textual references to support and illustrate the points they make and explaining their significance clearly. Students with special educational needs make very good progress in their writing. Errors remain in spelling and punctuation in the work of the least able students. Many also struggle with grammar when attempting to write complex sentences. Good use is made of computers by all students for drafting and improving their writing and for presenting it in various forms. Written standards overall are average and achievement in this skill is very good.
47. Standards of reading, speaking and listening meet national expectations and achievement is good. Students read a wide range of increasingly difficult texts as they move through the school and the issues they explore in that reading contribute significantly to their moral and social awareness. They read aloud fluently and with expression. Students speak well when working in groups and many have the confidence to give oral presentations to the whole class. Such confidence arises from the respect with which such contributions are received and the very good working relationships seen in lessons. Discussion skills are not so well developed and students are not exploring ideas or learning through debate.

48. Achievement is as it is because of the good teaching and learning. Teachers are well informed about their subject and their planning takes account of students' different levels of competency and their different learning styles. Expectations are high and varied teaching strategies are employed to motivate and engage the students. Boys and girls respond by working productively, concentrating for extended periods and so learn well. Teachers' questioning is particularly effective, being used to challenge thinking and test understanding. Every encouragement is given to make students take responsibility for their own learning. In some of the lessons seen there was insufficient time for students to reflect on their work or share their learning with each other through discussion. In those lessons teachers had not achieved an appropriate balance between the pace of activity and time for thought.
49. The leadership of the subject is very good. The head of department provides a strong sense of direction to the work of her colleagues with the focus on raising standards and improving achievement. She is well supported by able, committed teachers who work effectively as a team. Morale is high. Management is good. There are appropriate procedures in place to monitor and evaluate the subject's performance and good assessment systems inform students about their progress and what they must do to improve. Significant developments have been made in promoting students' self-assessment skills. Teachers share good practice with each other and the quality of teaching is monitored on a regular basis. There have been very good improvements in standards, in the quality of teaching and learning and in the use of computer technology since the previous inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

50. Students have average language and literacy skills. A key issue from the previous inspection was support for subject areas in raising literacy standards through implementing a comprehensive policy for language across the curriculum. This has been addressed and much has been done to improve students' literacy skills as they move through the school. They enter Year 7 with weak language skills but the provision is so good that they soon attain expected literacy levels.
51. The present literacy co-ordinator has promoted a whole-school approach to improving students' literacy skills. She has worked closely with other colleagues to spread good practice and to ensure that members of staff have been trained in various productive teaching strategies. The result of these strategies is that the profile of literacy in the school has risen and there is much good practice in evidence. Students in all subjects have a good command of specialist terms and technical vocabulary and they are able to adapt their writing to the different needs of those subjects.

Modern foreign languages

The provision in modern foreign languages is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students' attitudes are good, as are relationships between teachers and students.
- Students' good achievement in Years 7 to 9 is a consequence of teachers' high expectations and challenging work.
- The modern languages department is well led and managed.
- Teachers do not use the foreign language enough in some lessons in Years 10 and 11.
- The department does not have enough information about boys' and girls' achievement in French and German.
- The marking of work is not consistent enough.

Commentary

52. In 2003 teachers' assessments at the end of Year 9 in French were above average. This reflects very good achievement. The students get on well with their teachers and this helps them to feel confident in their learning. They learn particularly as a consequence of good teaching. The teachers are skilful linguists and use the foreign language as much as possible. For example, in one excellent Year 7 French lesson, students of all abilities were enthusiastically engaged in a lesson where hardly a word of English was spoken. They responded to the teacher's expectations and worked hard, quickly and with obvious enjoyment and, by the end of the lesson, their French pronunciation and grammar had greatly improved.
53. GCSE results were below average in 2003. Girls performed considerably better than boys, as they did in most subjects. The work seen in Year 11 is in line with national expectations. This represents good improvement since the last inspection. Girls still perform better than boys, but this is now similar to the national picture. Achievement in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory. Teaching is good. In the high ability sets in Years 10 and 11, good teaching results in the students speaking confidently and accurately in the foreign language. In some lower and mixed ability groups teachers do not use the foreign language enough and the lessons are therefore less challenging. Learning is slowed down by explanations in English and, as a result, students in these lessons speak the language hesitantly and their pronunciation is frequently poor. Students in all years have a good attitude to language learning and this shows in the care they take with their written work. Teachers mark this thoroughly and give helpful comments so that students know how they are doing. However, the students do not have enough clear information about how to improve because the marking system is not consistent and not based on national levels. Test results and examination grades are also not analysed closely enough to give teachers information that might help improve boys' performance.
54. The modern languages department is well and energetically led. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The department's vision for the future is entirely consistent with that of the school. Management of the department is good. Teachers are clear about what is expected of them and a well written, comprehensive staff handbook backs this up. Accommodation is used well and the vast majority of lessons take place in fully equipped rooms that are well decorated, making them pleasant, stimulating places to learn. The department manages its teaching resources well, but planning does not take enough account of the need to use computers to help students learn.
55. The department provides a wide variety of trips abroad. This gives students practice in what they have learned as well as real opportunities to appreciate the culture of the countries they visit. A lunchtime language club supports students' experience of language as a whole, as do community volunteers.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management of the department are excellent, providing vision and resources for improvement of standards.
- Although in 2003 results in Year 9 tests were below average, students achieved very well and gained results that were much better than expected on the basis of their test results at the end of Year 6.
- Teaching is good overall and provides students with a good variety of learning experiences.
- Assessment of students' work is good and contributes well to their understanding of their progress.

Commentary

56. In 2003, results in Year 9 tests were below average but continued the very good improvements in results since 2001. When the low level of attainment on entry is taken into account, this represents very good achievement. Results were below those in English and science but well above results in similar schools. Year 11 GCSE examination results were well below average and well below those gained in similar schools, representing underachievement for many students. These results reversed the improving trend of previous years. The major cause was the impact of staffing problems in that year and the negative impact of a significant number of students, mainly boys, who did not attend regularly nor apply themselves to their work.
57. Achievement in all years is now very good. Students are reaching and often exceeding their targets. Standards at the end of Year 9 and Year 11 are those expected nationally. Standards are higher than those seen in previous years. The quality of students' work reflects these improving standards. Students are confident when handling algebra and are able to understand methods without being distracted by awkward numbers. However, the quality of graphic work and the mathematical rigour of students' solutions require improvement to support further development of mathematical methodology. The lack of ordered presentation skills reduces many students' ability to produce high quality investigation work. Students' interest and attitudes to their work contribute to the improving standards. The use of a computer based course significantly improves the numeracy skills of very low attaining students. Those with special educational needs and those gifted in mathematics make very good progress. There is no difference in the achievement of boys and girls.
58. Teaching is good in Years 7 to 9 and very good in Years 10 and 11. The National Strategy for teaching mathematics is used well, with well-planned lessons following the three-part model. The use of computers improves the impact of teaching significantly. Very good questioning techniques promote the development of students' speaking and thinking skills when they are explaining their solutions. Teaching is least effective when the pace of work is too slow, especially for the most able students or when work is insufficiently matched to the various abilities of the students. Assessment is good, so all students understand their levels of attainment, their targets and how well they are learning. They take an active role in assessing their own work as they develop independent learning skills.
59. The head of department has a clear view of how to bring about further improvement in standards and he is well supported by an effective team of teachers. He acts as an excellent role model for the department and students. This is driving up the quality of teaching and learning. Continuing professional development of teachers and the sharing of best practice is raising the quality of teaching and improving learning opportunities for students. He has been asked to share his expertise beyond the school in his developing role with the local education authority. Schemes of work are constantly under review and assessment data is used very effectively to modify the curriculum so as to enable students to attain the best results possible.
60. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good. All issues from the last inspection have been resolved. Improved links with feeder primary schools have enabled a smooth transition into Year 7 without disruption of learning. The well-developed use of interactive whiteboards has improved students' participation significantly, making them partners in the learning process.

Mathematics across the curriculum

61. Following a whole-school focus on mathematics across the curriculum, all departments have policies for promoting this aspect of students' learning in their lessons. In mathematics lessons, most students' numeracy skills are above those expected for their age. This supports their learning in other areas of the curriculum well. Graphic skills are not as strong, so many

low attaining students struggle to apply their understanding of mathematics in other subjects they study.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The sustained improvement in national test results of students in Year 9 is exceptional.
- Teaching is consistently good and brings about good learning in the majority of students.
- Teachers' have high expectations and provide challenging work, which extends all students.
- The leadership and management of the department are very good.
- There is good use of assessment to set targets, but marking in books does not help students to understand what they need to do to improve.
- The use of ICT to support students' learning is under-developed.

Commentary

62. Exceptional sustained improvements in the test results at the end of Year 9 have taken place during the past four years to the point where in 2003 they were in line with the national average. These results are very high in relation to schools with students of similar prior attainment and reflect very good progress during Years 7 to 9. As students' attainment is below average on entry to the school their achievement during Years 7 to 9 is very good. Boys and girls achieve equally well
63. GCSE results in 2003 were below average. There is a sustained upward trend in results with students' performance in double award science being significantly higher than their performance in most of their other subjects. Apart from a slight decline in 2003, which was less marked than in other subjects, standards at GCSE have risen to the point where the attainment seen in lessons in Years 10 and 11 is in line with the national average. Since the attainment of these students had been below average at the start of Year 10 their achievement is correspondingly very good. There are no differences in the achievements of boys and girls.
64. Teaching is good. It is characterised by a good variety of methods, which generate a high level of interest in most students. Teachers' commitment to improving the confidence of their students in their own abilities encourages most students to respond positively. They are presented with work which regularly challenges their scientific understanding. In a Year 7 lesson the students were asked how they might tell identical twins apart as a starting point to explore inherited and environmental causes of variation. Teachers' regularly extend students' thinking and demonstrate the high expectations they have of them. In a Year 10 lesson the students were required to explain the operation of a fractionating tower after only being given a diagram and some introductory information by the teacher. Students' written work is marked regularly. This, however, does not help them sufficiently to understand what they have to do to improve, although the department has a clear policy to do so.
65. Leadership and management of the department are very good. Teachers share a common purpose, providing mutual support based on a very strong sense of direction. The department analyses its performance systematically and routinely with a commitment to continuous improvement. The department is very well organised with resources, including the staff guidebook, that are very effective in supporting both newly qualified and supply teachers. Much good practice developed in the department, such as the approach to target setting, has formed the basis for whole school systems.
66. Despite the good improvement of facilities within the department since the previous inspection the use of ICT in lessons is variable and generally not very productive. Teachers use it routinely

in teaching to interest and engage students but its full potential to support and improve students' learning in science is under-developed.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good management of the ICT department.
- Results at the end of Year 9 are above average, reflecting very good achievement. However, high attainers could do better.
- There are good opportunities for using ICT outside lessons which students take advantage of.
- Systems for monitoring the use and the impact of teaching and learning with ICT in other subjects are underdeveloped.

Commentary

67. The school successfully gained technology college status in 2003 and this has resulted in good improvements in the provision for ICT. In 2003 an ICT co-ordinator was appointed with responsibility for both the subject and ICT across the curriculum. The department now has good management and a strong team of ICT teachers with good subject expertise who are given good technical support.
68. Standards in ICT when students join the school are below average. Students make very good progress in Years 7, 8 and 9. In 2003 teachers' assessments at the end of Year 9 were above average which represents very good achievement. This improvement results from the school's full implementation of the ICT Key Stage 3 Strategy and increased teaching time for the subject in these years. Teaching and learning in Years 7 to 9 are good, but planning of lessons does not take account of the needs of higher attaining students who are not being fully challenged at present.
69. In 2002 a GCSE examination course in applied ICT was introduced. The first GCSE entry will be in 2004. Standards of work seen in Year 11 show average attainment but represent good achievement as students' previous experience of ICT was variable. Year 10 students' work, however, shows higher levels of attainment as a result of improved provision and very good monitoring of students' progress. Good provision is made for students not following the GCSE course by the availability of accredited IT courses. All students take these courses. This, together with a substantial programme of out of school access to computers in clubs and courses, ensures that students have the skills to use ICT to support their learning in other subjects.
70. Management and leadership of the department are good. Good procedures for monitoring students' work and tracking their progress are in place. Students are aware of the National Curriculum levels or GCSE grades they are seeking to achieve. In Years 7 to 9 the steps they need to achieve to improve are not so clearly identified as those given by the system used to inform Years 10 and 11 students. Since the previous inspection good progress has been made. All students now receive their full entitlement to ICT. This has resulted in very good achievement by students in the subject and improving competence in using ICT to support their learning in other subjects.

Information and communication across the curriculum

71. The use of ICT to support teaching and learning in all subjects of the curriculum is satisfactory. Since the last inspection resources have improved. All departments have access to interactive white boards and are using them effectively to support the teaching of their subjects. Computers are particularly well used in vocational subjects, design and technology and in the

support of students with special educational needs. Planned use for the support of students' learning in other subjects is less well developed. Access to computers for course work and assignments is good. The ICT co-ordinator has not yet fully developed an effective system for the monitoring of the use of ICT for teaching and learning across all the curriculum subjects.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although improving, standards at the end of Years 9 and 11 are below average.
- Knowledgeable and dedicated teachers provide good support for students in lessons and after school.
- Students do not understand sufficiently clearly what they need to do to improve their work.
- The good tracking of students' progress in Years 10 and 11 does not yet extend sufficiently to Years 7 to 9.
- The progress made by students who receive extra support, including those with Statements of Special Educational Need, is good.

Commentary

72. Standards at the end of Year 9 and GCSE results are below average but work seen indicates that they are improving. Students are generally good at locating relevant information but are over-dependent on teachers asking them supplementary questions. Spoken and written answers tend to be too short. When working on their own, students in all years identify important information accurately but often do not explain its significance. Students enter the school with differing experiences of geography. They make rapid progress in Years 7 and 8 as they develop new skills so that, by the end of Year 9, progress and achievement are both good. Progress in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory.
73. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. All the teaching seen was at least satisfactory and much was good. In the most successful lessons students understand what the learning goals are and teachers plan different activities to help students to achieve them. Where extra support is available the teamwork between teachers and support staff helps students with special education needs to make good progress, even when work is very challenging. At the end of lessons teachers ensure that students have a chance to review their learning. Homework links very well with class work topics. Lesson opening and closing activities are often great fun and students enjoy their geography and work hard. Marking is regular and detailed. Teachers provide encouraging comments but in Years 7 to 9 their marking does not identify individual targets for improvement. Accordingly, while most students can identify their target level, they cannot describe its key characteristics. Many students do not understand what they need to change in their performance to obtain higher grades. The mutual respect between students and teachers is a strength. This encourages students to be active in lessons. Because teachers know them well and take a keen interest in their progress, individual advice and support really encourages less confident learners. There are very few opportunities for students to develop field study skills in Years 7 to 9 but well planned studies of Flamborough Head in Year 11 result in high quality GCSE course work.
74. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The present arrangement where two teachers share responsibility for the subject is less than a year old. They work closely and have complementary strengths so that satisfactory improvements are taking place. However, focusing on their own areas has allowed too much variation to develop, for example, in the styles of marking and the quality of displays. There is insufficient clarity about priorities for moving the department forward. Information on student performance, especially in Years 10

and 11 is detailed, but the analysis of results has not produced a clear enough plan for improving overall standards.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good leadership and management contribute significantly to students' achievement.
- The good curriculum promotes both knowledge and ideas effectively.
- Teaching is good overall, but varied significantly during the inspection.
- Assessment procedures are good in most respects; however, marking is inconsistent.

Commentary

75. In 2003, the attainment of students in the GCSE examination was well below average and lower than the previous year. Students in Year 9 achieved standards that were slightly below national expectations, but standards were higher than the previous year.
76. Standards are rising, with good achievement in Years 7 to 9 and satisfactory achievement in Years 10 and 11. As a result, standards of attainment in Year 9 meet national expectations, with a number of students achieving higher standards. In Year 11, standards are just below average, but most students are on track to achieve their target grades. The very good management of the subject ensures that the department follows school procedures effectively. There is careful analysis of data leading to clear action, for example, in grouping students appropriately, so they are best placed to achieve well.
77. Teaching is good. Teachers have secure knowledge and understanding of their subject. Where teaching is very good or excellent, controversial issues such as the Holocaust are sensitively taught so students have good opportunities for reflection and achieve well. Where teaching is less successful in one or two lessons, the management of behaviour fails to establish good listening skills and achievement is only satisfactory and occasionally unsatisfactory.
78. The head of department provides very good leadership in both the quality of her teaching and her support for colleagues. She is influential at a whole school level in promoting teaching, learning and assessment procedures. This work has a direct and positive impact on standards by helping identify best practice in the classroom.
79. The curriculum offers a range of stimulating topics that appeal to both boys and girls. It is well supported by interesting educational visits and extra-curricular provision. History is an increasingly popular subject that promotes skills' development well, being firmly rooted in the analysis of evidence. Students develop competent historical skills that also promote improvements in numeracy, literacy and ICT. The department has a lead role in developing assessment for learning. Using this system, teachers generate accurate data of students' performance. Work is conscientiously marked, but it is not always clear to students whether comments and grades relate to attainment or effort. As a result they are not always clear how to improve their work. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good; standards are higher and resource provision has improved.

Religious education

Overall the provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Statutory requirements are now met, a big improvement since the previous inspection.
- Students in Years 7 to 9 learn and achieve well.
- Attainment and achievement of students in Years 10 and 11 are unsatisfactory.
- The way the subject is timetabled in Years 10 and 11 results in periods of time when students do not study the subject.
- In Years 7 to 9 the subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all students.
- The planned use of information and communication technology, religious artefacts and visits is underdeveloped.

Commentary

80. By the end of Year 9 the majority of the students attain standards that meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This represents good achievement and progress in the light of their low attainment on entry into the school. Students demonstrate satisfactory knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other major religions as required by the agreed syllabus. They recognise the key figures and the chief beliefs of major religious groups and they understand the significance of signs and symbols and Holy Scriptures for different groups of believers. Most students are co-operative learners and they respond well to the satisfactory and often-good teaching they receive.
81. The 12 students in the present Year 10 studying for GCSE examination in religious studies make satisfactory progress. Some of the work benefits from being planned to link with students' own lives as, for example, when they consider current attitudes to the welfare of animals. The standard of work of students in Years 10 and 11 who study religious education as a non-examination subject is unsatisfactory. Achievement is unsatisfactory because the unhelpful timetabling arrangements for the subject. These students do not show the expected interest, attainment and progress. Although the school meets the statutory requirement to provide religious education for all students, the method of delivery in relatively short units with gaps in between impairs the students' progress and the retention of interest in the subject. Consequently the benefits of the improved course in Years 7 to 9 are not fully carried through to Years 10 and 11.
82. In Years 7 to 9 students with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented attain standards in line with their capabilities. They achieve well because the department makes good use of adapted materials and some extra support in class. Teachers also have satisfactory strategies for overcoming students' weakness in literacy skills. Students' use of numeracy skills is satisfactory. Teachers' planned use of computers is satisfactory but there is insufficient access to the school's computer facilities. The assessment and tracking of students' progress is satisfactory but still developing to match up with procedures in other subjects. The religious education provision in Years 7 to 9 makes a good contribution to students' personal development and to citizenship.
83. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Most of the teaching is in the hands of a single specialist teacher who also plays a valued part in the development of themes for assemblies. The best teaching was with the youngest age group on themes related to their spiritual moral social and cultural development. This teaching is characterised by good planning and good organization so that clear objectives are achieved in a good learning atmosphere. The teaching does not include enough planned use of religious artefacts and visits to places of religious significance.

84. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There has been good improvement in the subject since the previous inspection, particularly in fulfilling statutory requirements. The issue of the inadequate planned provision in Years 10 and 11 still needs to be addressed.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management of the department are very good.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. Practical skills are taught well and finished products are of a good standard.
- Students enjoy their lessons and work hard.
- Facilities and resources are improving rapidly.
- Assessment is not always sufficiently helpful to students.

Commentary

85. Standards have improved over the last four years. Students' attainment in Year 9 equates to national expectations. In Year 11 students are on target to achieve GCSE results broadly in line with the national average. Students' achievement is very good when account is taken of the below average standards when they join the school. They take a pride in their work. Practical work is of a good standard. Students work very well in pairs and small groups. They are competitive and try very hard to do well. Students demonstrate a secure understanding of the design process. Formal drawing skills are a relative weakness. Most students study design and technology to GCSE level. They generally make good use of ICT to improve the presentation of their work and for research. Students put a lot of effort into their practical work. Unfortunately this is too often not reflected in their final grade, as they do not always pay sufficient attention to the accompanying coursework folder and so lose marks.
86. Teaching is good and in some lessons it is very good. Teachers are well qualified, experienced and very committed. They put a lot of time and effort into helping students achieve their potential by providing extensive support at lunchtimes and after school. They organise a very good range of visits, giving students a good understanding of relevant industrial processes. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and of the quality of finished work. They plan interesting activities, which students enjoy. Year 8 students proved this in an excellent lesson during the inspection. The class was very tense as the bridges they had designed were tested to see which could support the greatest weight. Everyone was amazed when the winning bridge took the weight of a teaching assistant! Relationships between teachers and students are very good. Students behave well and work with interest and enthusiasm. Teachers take into account students' preferred learning styles when planning lessons. This, combined with a genuine desire to give students who have special educational needs full access to the curriculum, means that all are fully involved. Teachers do not always offer sufficient challenge to the highest attaining students. Students also benefit considerably from the support of two very competent, hard-working technicians. They provide lots of help, which ensures that students' practical work is of a standard they can be proud of. Teachers are accurate when assessing the levels students are working at, but they use this information too infrequently in planning their lessons. Marking is frequent, but there is too much variation in its usefulness. The best marking tells students what they have done well and how they can improve. A minority simply give a grade with no explanation of why it has been awarded.
87. The head of department is relatively new, but has already identified the strengths and weaknesses of the department and has produced a very sensible action plan. He maintains the very strong teamwork that is evident in the department. He is very ambitious for the future of

design and technology in the school and has a clear vision of how it should be developed. He has effective monitoring systems and is very supportive of colleagues. He is a very good role model. He has extended links with local primary schools and provides valuable resources, advice and support.

88. Since technology college status has been achieved, the department's facilities have undergone refurbishment and new rooms have been built. A new food technology and multi-media room with its own ICT suite is about to open and is expected to impact positively on learning in food and textiles. Resources have already been considerably improved. Students benefit from easier access to computers. Good opportunities to experience computer-aided design and making are now available to all year groups. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Music

Provision for music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good for all students.
- Students' levels of achievement are good by the end of Years 9 and 11.
- Assessment is insufficiently developed to ensure that teachers are aware of individual students' strengths and weaknesses.
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory and restricts what can be taught in lessons.

Commentary

89. Standards are average by the end of Year 9 and, because students' musical ability is below average on entry to the school, achievement is good. This is so for all groups, including those who are gifted and talented and students with special educational needs. The standard of work seen in the current Year 11 is also average and achievement is good. Standards are now higher than they were at the time of the previous inspection. Performance in the 2003 GCSE examination was below average but students achieved in line with their teacher's expectations.
90. Students achieve well because of the consistently good and challenging teaching. This is characterised by the good musical knowledge and high expectations demonstrated by staff, which ensure that students enjoy their lessons and are motivated to do their best. Teachers' enthusiasm, combined with good working relationships, keeps all involved. Students have positive attitudes and show consideration to each other during lessons, especially during performances. This is especially commendable given the very cramped conditions in the music room. Literacy skills are insufficiently developed because of the restricted time for lessons. They do not regularly reflect or evaluate their work, either orally or in written form. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to help students understand how to present and improve their answers. In Years 10 and 11 they are able to identify changes in orchestration and melodic construction because they practise listening regularly. The increased amount of computer equipment means that students are becoming more competent using programs to notate their compositions.
91. Leadership is good. The department contributes successfully within the expressive arts faculty and there is a good sense of teamwork and support. Management is satisfactory. Documentation is out of date and, because of time constraints, the head of department is unable to monitor the quality of teaching and learning by other teachers. Assessment follows the faculty guidelines but does not sufficiently enable teachers to identify students' strengths and weaknesses in individual musical skills. Accommodation is unsatisfactory and poor for visiting instrumental staff. This restricts the musical ensembles and practice facilities for students in lessons and at other times. However, the department has made good

improvements since the previous inspection, because standards and achievement are higher. Music contributes significantly to the faculty performances and effective links with other schools both locally and abroad provide good opportunities for students to perform in a variety of venues.

Art and design

Provision in art is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are enhanced by a variety of different approaches.
- Assessing the standard of students' work when they enter the school and tracking their progress is helping students achieve their potential.
- Formal monitoring of teaching and learning is insufficient.

Commentary

92. The proportion of students gaining the higher grades A*-C in GCSE examinations in 2003 is well below average. This has been the trend over the last three years. Standards in the current Year 11 are below expectations. This is satisfactory achievement for the cohort's capabilities, based on teacher assessments in Year 9 in 2002. The standard of students' research and preparation is improving. This is shown by the annotations in sketchbooks that enable students to demonstrate how they have developed their ideas.
93. Standards in the current Year 9 are below average. This represents satisfactory achievement in relation to their standard on entry in Year 7. This includes students with special educational needs. Students of all abilities demonstrate competence in manipulating shape, form and colour to express their ideas. Talented students get good opportunities to enrich their development through the annual summer school.
94. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. It is good when a variety of different approaches are used. Introductions that include lesson objectives and a starter activity motivate students well. This was seen in a Year 8 lesson where students drew textures in pencil. This reviewed their previous learning and ensured they could draw the natural forms they observed in an expressive way. At the end of the lesson a review of what they had achieved engaged students in their learning and led them to work independently at home. When tasks do not challenge sufficiently, or lack pace, a few students behave in an unacceptable way. The use of the interactive whiteboard enhances the quality of teaching significantly. The full potential of ICT as a learning aid has not yet been fully developed. Teachers record marks for work systematically. This enables them to track students' progress. Marks are compared to previously set targets, so that progress, or lack of it, can be closely monitored. Some assessment is inaccurate because it interprets the National Curriculum descriptors too generously for the standard of work seen.
95. Leadership and management are good. The comprehensive development plan is moving the department forward. A strong team spirit exists, which enables improvements to be introduced. Management is satisfactory. Assessing students' abilities when they enter the school and operating the tracking system is raising standards.. The formal monitoring of teaching and learning is insufficient so some unsatisfactory teaching has not been identified and targeted for improvement. Extra-curricular activities, visits to galleries and contact with artists-in-residence have a positive effect upon the quality and range of students' work. The strong links that exist between art, music and drama have a very significant effect on students' overall development.

Drama

96. Students attain satisfactory standards by the end of Year 9 and well above average standards in GCSE examinations. This represents very good achievement when account is taken of students' weak communication skills on entry to the school. Teaching is very good and at times inspirational. The provision outside of lessons for students to broaden their understanding and enjoyment of the subject is excellent. The subject is very well led and managed. Accommodation is poor and resources are inadequate.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good; knowledgeable and enthusiastic teachers have high expectations in terms of participation and behaviour.
- Teachers provide an extensive range of extra-curricular activities that students enjoy.
- Assessment information is insufficiently used to influence curriculum planning.

Commentary

97. GCSE results in recent years have been average or above average. Students' results in this examination compare very favourably with those achieved by the same students in their other subjects. The majority of the students currently in GCSE groups are achieving well, with several very able students performing at the highest level.
98. By the end of Year 9 the majority of students are attaining at or above the level expected nationally. This represents good achievement by students who often bring with them very limited experience and attainment levels from their primary schools. The majority of students in Years 10 and 11 are also performing at or above the level that would be expected at their age. In all year groups there is a wide spectrum of attainment but teachers accommodate this through individual support, encouragement and adapting activities to suit students' abilities. In consequence, students in all year groups achieve well. Students are able to apply techniques, skills and competitive rules to several aspects of the physical education curriculum, most notably soccer, netball, rugby football and basketball. Basic skills are well developed and provide a sound platform for future development.
99. Students with special educational needs are fully involved in all lessons. They get much support and encouragement from both staff and fellow students and achieve well. Staff give generously of their time to provide a wide range of extra-curricular activities, which are very well supported.
100. Teaching and learning are good and a strength of the department. Teachers have a good depth of knowledge, which ensures that students gain a solid grasp of skills and basic strategies. Teachers inject fun and enjoyment into the lessons and students respond very positively to their enthusiasm and energy. They work hard and behave well as a result.
101. The head of the department had been in post for just over one term. He has had a very positive impact on the work and organisation of the department. He has introduced a new assessment system and comprehensive records of students are now kept. It is necessary for this information to be used to inform curriculum planning. Hard-working teachers combine well as a team, support each other and show strong commitment to the improvement of the department. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

In Years 10 and 11 the GCSE courses in vocational subjects were sampled in leisure and tourism, health and social care and business.

Leisure and tourism

102. The co-ordinator, although a non-specialist, has built up good knowledge and experience from teaching the course. She gives good support to the other teachers from differing curriculum areas who are keen to be involved but who have not yet benefited from specialist subject training. Teaching provides a good range of activities to motivate and engage students and this results in satisfactory learning and achievement.

Health and social care

103. Teachers use their good knowledge as science specialists to enhance learning. Teachers plan a good range of activities to maintain pace and motivate students through a combination of theoretical and practical activity. Students enjoy the content of the course; they have good attitudes and are motivated by its relevance to their future careers. Regular visits to different care organisations are in progress and students use this experience well to develop their understanding of the needs of the different clients from first hand knowledge.

Business education

104. Teaching by non-specialists, during the unexpected absence of the permanent teacher, ranged from satisfactory to very good. Teachers used their knowledge of the business world well, for example, to help students understand the implications of the miners' strike in the 1980s. The most able students are attentive, motivated and compose well thought-out responses to written questions using the computer. Less able students are more easily distracted during teacher presentations but are better motivated to concentrate by the good access to ICT.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

It was not possible to see any lessons in personal, social and health education or citizenship because most of the work is done on 12 identified days throughout the year. During the inspection students' work and the scheme of work was analysed in depth and inspectors talked to students about their experiences on those days.

Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- High quality experiences on the 12 days generates interest and enthusiasm amongst students.
- Very good leadership and management ensure clarity of vision and effective teamwork.
- Students make significant gains in both their learning and personal development.
- Assessment procedures need further development to inform students more fully of their progress.

Commentary

105. This is a very successful course that fully meets statutory requirements and is regarded as a model of good practice by the local education authority. It is influential on the development of teaching and learning throughout the school.

106. Standards of attainment for students aged 11 to 16 are above expectations. Students' knowledge and understanding of a wide range of local and global issues is good. This is because the curriculum provides considerable variety of content and many opportunities for students to succeed. Students have a good understanding of how democracy works and most are actively involved at different levels in the work of the student council, which has real influence within school. Students are confident in communicating their ideas in such matters as human rights, justice systems and conflict resolution. They develop the skill to reflect upon differing experiences and express themselves clearly. Achievement is very good throughout Years 7 to 11. Students develop confidence and identify how they might contribute to society.
107. The quality of leadership and management is very good and all staff are very well supported in teaching citizenship. The school's vision of what the programme can be is excellent. A very high standard of resources is made available, including a wide range of external support. As a result, standards of teaching are good and this is evident in the overall quality of learning displayed by students. The course has a very positive impact upon students' personal development and they apply their learning well in a wide range of situations.
108. Students speak highly about the course and this is confirmed by the comprehensive evaluation recently undertaken by senior staff. The school is currently reviewing new materials as it progressively seeks to upgrade its overall provision. Staff training is promoted actively and new approaches to learning are being developed. Assessment procedures are developing satisfactorily but students do not know sufficiently how to improve their work. The school has not undertaken a comprehensive audit to clearly identify opportunities within the whole school curriculum to support provision. The school is aware of this.

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM

In the inspection, four subjects or 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	3	100	80.1	0	23.7	23.3	29.9
Chemistry	3	66.7	72.7	0	13.9	20.0	24.1
English	1	100	82.9	0	17.5	20.0	28.7
Design and technology	1	100	74.9	0	15.1	40.0	25.3
General studies	15	46.7	73.9	6.7	17.8	12.7	25.7
Geography	5	60.0	74.3	0	19.8	16.0	26.5
History	3	0	80.7	0	19.5	0.0	28.6
Mathematics	3	0	61.9	0	17.1	0.0	22.1
Other social studies	4	50.0	69.7	0	16.7	12.5	24.1
Physics	7	14.3	68.6	0	14.4	2.9	22.7

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	6	100	87.5	0	98.6	66.7	87.5
Business	8	100	88.6	26.7	20.6	77.3	60.1
Biology	3	100	96.4	33.3	39.2	60.0	78.6
Chemistry	5	80	97.6	20.0	49.0	56.0	84.9
English	10	100	99.4	0	36.3	54.0	80.9
French	1	100	98.8	0	51.5	80.0	87.6
General studies	10	100	94.7	30.0	31.0	70.0	73.1
Geography	4	100	98.7	25.0	44.5	75.0	84.0
History	6	100	99.0	0	44.6	56.7	84.6
Mathematics	4	100	96.7	50.0	55.6	80.0	88.8
Other social studies	1	100	97.4	0	42.7	40.0	81.8
Physics	5	100	96.7	40.0	44.6	80.0	81.7
Sports/PE studies	1	100	98.0	100	30.9	100	75.2

ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved significantly since the examinations in 2003.
- Students are now achieving well because of the good teaching and their own positive attitudes to the subject.
- Students are not reading the works of critics to inform their own views on the books they read.

Commentary

109. Nineteen students are following an English course. There is a one year GCE AS course in English language and literature for students in Year 12 and then a further year of Advanced study in the subject for Year 13 students.
110. Results in the 2003 A level examinations were well below average, as they had been in previous years and at the time of the previous inspection. The standard of work seen now meets national expectations and the achievement of both male and female students is good. This significant rise in standards is because of improved teaching techniques and students' higher aspirations. The subject is popular with male and female students and nearly all students complete their course.
111. Students in Year 12 have a good understanding of the context in which writers work and the cultural and social issues which influence them. They are confident in putting forward their own ideas about literature, supporting those views with appropriate textual references. They are not, however, reading widely to broaden their understanding of the subject and to develop their own critical faculties. Students in Year 13 have developed good analytical skills and an independent approach to their work. Reading skills are highly developed in the interpretation of texts. On the language side of the course students understand the linguistic devices used in written and spoken language. All students have positive attitudes to the subject and high academic aspirations.
112. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers are well qualified and experienced and they convey their own enthusiasm for the subject to the students, who respond by working productively as individuals and in groups. The pace of lessons is challenging and expectations are high. The teaching encourages students to follow their own lines of enquiry and to take responsibility for their own learning. Good use is made of a range of questioning techniques both to extend students' learning and to test their understanding.
113. The leadership and management of English are good. Teachers collaborate closely to share good practice and the monitoring and evaluation of students' progress is undertaken efficiently. There has been good progress since the last inspection in improving standards and the quality of teaching and learning.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

114. Provision for the development of key skills in language and literacy across the curriculum is good. Close attention is paid in geography to students' oral skills and they regularly give formal presentations on their work. There is an insistence in science and mathematics that students think logically and explain themselves clearly. Such approaches support their learning and enable them to achieve well in their examination courses.

Modern foreign languages

115. French and Spanish were sampled. In both subjects teaching and learning were good and standards are in line with expectations. This represents good achievement, since attainment on entry to the sixth form is below average. A particular strength is the relationships between students and staff, which give students the confidence to tackle difficult grammatical problems without resorting to English.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management are excellent, providing high quality learning opportunities for students.
- Improving standards in examinations are reflected in current work.
- Teaching is good; it provides well-structured introduction and development of new topics.
- Teachers develop students' independent learning skills well.
- Very good classroom relationships between students and teachers provide a challenging learning atmosphere.

Commentary

116. Advanced level and further mathematics courses were inspected. Four students entered for A-level in 2003 and all were successful, gaining their expected grades. Six out of nine students gained AS-level grades. This is a satisfactory improvement on previous years.
117. The numbers of students studying mathematics has now improved and standards of attainment are in line with those expected on A-level courses. The number of male and female students varies each year but there is a predominance of male students. The range of mathematical competence of Year 12 students is wide and the majority of them find difficulty in extracting mathematical content from real life problems. For example, in a lesson on linear programming, the majority of students were unable to develop the required inequations from the given information. However, they were competent in applying the appropriate techniques to solve the problem when it was given in an algebraic form. Students cover their programmes of study well and, by Year 13, students are confident and take responsibility for their own learning. They present work in their own style, assess their own work and produce and collate their own notes. Students' work is often of high quality but graphic work often lacks accuracy. They achieve well in lessons, supported by very mature group relationships that promote openness and co-operative learning. Students following the further mathematics courses make rapid progress.
118. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and experience. They provide lessons that are insightful and well structured. This enables good learning by students and provides solid foundations for further progress. Teachers know their students well and provide appropriate challenge and pace in lessons. Students respond well to the use of ICT teaching tools. Individual learning, support from other students and 'buddy' study pairings add to students' learning experiences. Teachers care about the success of their students and give freely of their time to provide support for groups of students and individuals.
119. Both leadership and management are excellent. The curriculum team leader has, for example, provided the most appropriate courses for students' requirements. Well-produced induction materials help students to make the transition from Year 11 into the sixth form. He has developed a very skilled team of teachers who offer a wide variety of learning opportunities for students. There is an effective assessment system by which students are monitored and kept informed of their progress toward their target grades.

120. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Results are improving. A-level mathematics is more popular and courses have been developed to match the improving ability profile of students. Developing use of interactive whiteboards is further enriching learning experiences for students.

Mathematics across the curriculum

121. Students' mathematical skills support their learning well. Students of mathematics are very confident in using their skills. In other subject areas, students display competence in what they do. Those following vocational courses complete the application of a number module as part of their course. In science subjects, students are competent users of algebra when solving equations. In chemistry they show good data analysis techniques. Students' statistical skills support their analysis of data in history lessons.

SCIENCE

The focus was on chemistry, but biology and physics were also sampled. Results in 2003 were below average in biology and average in physics. One lesson of each subject was observed. Both were good. These observations and the scrutiny of students work show that they have made satisfactory progress compared to their GCSE results.

Chemistry

Provision in chemistry in the sixth form is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students have consistent success in AS and A-level examinations.
- Teaching is very good because teachers have very good subject knowledge.
- Teachers have high expectations and provide appropriate challenge for students.
- The use of ICT to support students learning is under-developed.

Commentary

122. Standards attained in A-level examinations since 2000 have improved to be in line with the national average, but dropped just below in 2003. The number of students completing the A-level course is small but has remained stable for the past five years. In the last two years larger groups have started the AS level course in Year 12 but over half of the students have either left the school or ceased their study of chemistry after having completed the AS examination. In Year 13, students' achievement is good based on their GCSE results. The results from their AS level module examinations during Year 12 confirm this.

123. Teaching is very good overall. Four lessons were observed taught by three different teachers. All lessons were at least good and two were very good. The teachers have very good subject knowledge and lessons are well planned with clear objectives, which are shared with the students. All three teachers have high expectations of the students and provide support sensitive to their needs without compromising the challenge of the work undertaken.

124. Very good working relationships exist between students and their teachers based on mutual respect and good humour. Students enjoy practical activities and are interested because the teacher shows the relevance of the chemistry being taught. The teachers provide good feedback to students on the accuracy of their work, which provides them with information to help them to improve.

125. Scrutiny of previous work shows that students complete a wide range of tasks and have good opportunities to work independently or in pairs. Whilst they are set tasks that require them to

research particular topics they have few opportunities to develop the skills of speculation and sustaining arguments. Whilst in Year 13 lessons students used the relevant software to make presentations to their peers and gathered information from websites, they do not use ICT routinely in their work or exploit its particular advantages to fully support their learning in chemistry.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

126. In the sixth form both GNVQ and AVCE IT are offered. Two lessons in these courses were sampled and in those teaching and learning were good. Students make good progress and show a mature attitude to the subject and understanding of the ICT in the wider world. Only two students took the GNVQ in 2003 and so national comparisons are invalid. 2004 is the first examination for AVCE.

HUMANITIES

History

127. History was sampled during the inspection. Results were below average in 2003, although numbers of students taking the subject are small. Current standards of attainment are below average overall, although all students are achieving their current targets. In a lesson observed, the teacher's very good subject knowledge led to well judged questions that generated lively discussion. Students enjoy the course and are able to identify its benefits in supporting their future aspirations into higher education and employment. A number of students intend to pursue further studies that have close links with history.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA

Music

128. Music technology was sampled. One lesson was observed, together with discussion with students and analysis of their work. Only Year 12 students are studying music technology and only a few have studied music at GCSE level. Teaching is good and results in good achievement. It is characterised by enthusiasm for and knowledge of the subject. Students discuss their work capably and with genuine interest, reflecting on their strengths and weaknesses and using technical language with ease. There is, however, insufficient curriculum time in order for the subject to be delivered thoroughly and students have to use their free time in order to complete coursework.

Art and design

129. Two lessons in the sixth form were sampled. In both, teaching and learning were good. Standards are average and achievement is good. Three options are available which indicates the good breadth of the curriculum offered. Numbers taking the courses in the recent three years have been small but retention of students in Year 13 has been good. Results are well below the national average. Recruitment to courses is improving and therefore group sizes are growing. Students are well motivated and show real determination to achieve their full potential. They enjoy the frequent opportunities for independent learning. Students use various ICT applications well on the courses.

Drama

130. The subject is taught to AS level where it is a popular choice for both male and female students. The standard of their work is above average and achievement is good. There is, however, insufficient time during the school day for the subject to be delivered thoroughly.

HOSPITALITY, SPORTS, LEISURE AND TRAVEL

Physical education

131. Provision in physical education is good. Teaching is good and students achieve well, attaining standards that are in line with those attained nationally. There are no opportunities for students other than those on the examination course to participate in sport.

BUSINESS

Business education

Provision in business education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The team, led by a very able team leader, have positive strategies for raising attainment.
- Excellent teaching resources and industrial visits enable students to achieve well.
- Good procedures for assessment help students to improve their work.
- Students have good access to ICT for research and enhanced presentation.
- Schemes of work do not contain enough detail to support non-specialist or new teachers.

Commentary

132. Standards in the vocational A-level business examination were above average in 2003. All students attained at least grade E. The attainment of boys was particularly high and above that of girls.

133. Achievement is good. Students have positive attitudes and work hard in the temporary absence of their permanent teacher. Students make good progress. Reports are based on up-to-date research into company resources although not all students summarise their findings from the Internet effectively enough. Year 13 students increase their understanding through discussion, for example about changing employment patterns.

134. Teaching by the cover teachers, who are not business specialists, is satisfactory, with a range of teaching strategies used well to motivate students. These teachers benefit from the excellent teaching resources, prepared by the head of department, which are available on the school intranet. These provide good starting points for learning. Teachers use their own knowledge of business, drawing examples from the real world to complement the students' knowledge of business theory. There is not enough depth in the lesson content for advanced level work. Learning is satisfactory in lessons observed, but with insufficient opportunities for students to carry out self-supported study or independent learning. Interim assessment of students' work by the permanent teacher is used well to offer them guidance for improvement in their assignments.

135. Leadership and management are very good. The head of department has a clear vision for the future success of the subject and raising attainment is a high priority. Procedures for tracking students' progress are good and extra teaching is provided for students causing concern. Students visit local companies to learn about human resource management at first hand and benefit from their recent trip to New York where they took part in a business conference. Schemes of work lack detail on deadlines for unit completion and there is not enough information for inexperienced teachers on the wider use of textbooks, Internet resources and homework. The head of department shares his experience of producing high quality ICT-based teaching resources with other subjects in order to improve teaching and learning.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

136. The GNVQ in health and social care at intermediate level was sampled. Teaching is good and teachers use their knowledge of science well to enhance students' learning. Students are motivated by the course, always attentive and collaborate very well, for example in planning a day trip for their health and social care clients. There are good opportunities for regular work experience and as a result the students make good progress. Achievement is higher than expected when compared with the low prior attainment at GCSE.

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	2
How inclusive the school is		2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3	2
Cost effectiveness of the sixth form / value for money provided by the school	4	3
Overall standards achieved		4
Students' achievement	3	3
Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities		3
Attendance	4	4
Attitudes	2	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2	3
Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		3
The quality of education provided by the school		3
The quality of teaching	3	3
How well students learn	3	3
The quality of assessment	3	3
How well the curriculum meets students' needs	4	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities		2
Accommodation and resources	4	4
Students' care, welfare, health and safety		2
Support, advice and guidance for students	2	2
How well the school seeks and acts on students' views	3	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents		3
The quality of the school's links with the community	4	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3	2
The leadership and management of the school		2
The governance of the school	3	3
The leadership of the headteacher		1
The leadership of other key staff	3	2
The effectiveness of management	2	2

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

