

INSPECTION REPORT

ISLINGTON ARTS AND MEDIA SCHOOL

Finsbury Park

LEA area: London Borough of Islington

Unique reference number: 131690

Headteacher: Mr Richard Ewen

Lead inspector: Brian Rowe

Dates of inspection: 8 – 11 March 2004

Inspection number: 259369

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 pupils: 11 – 16
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 865

School address: Turtle Road
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mrs Jill Barton

Date of previous inspection: May 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Islington Arts and Media School is a mixed comprehensive for pupils aged 11-16, situated in London, close to Finsbury Park, part of the London Borough of Islington. The school is part of a Creative Partnerships project for Arts and Media and successfully gained the Artsmark (Gold) Award in 2002. Currently, the school is over-subscribed in all years. Pupils come from a four-mile catchment area, much of which is economically and socially disadvantaged. Overall, unemployment in the area is average. There are currently 865 pupils on roll, making it a smaller than average sized secondary school. The proportion of boys (533) is much greater than girls (332). About three-quarters of the pupils come from minority ethnic groups, a very much higher proportion than average, and about 10 per cent are at the early stages of acquiring the English language. Over 37 different languages are spoken in school. There are 50 refugees and a significant number of pupils in local care. About 50 per cent of the pupils receive free school meals and this proportion is very much higher than the national average. Pupils' attainment on entry is well below average. About 30 per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, of whom 35 have a statement. These proportions are high when compared with other secondary schools. A high proportion of pupils do not start or complete their secondary education in this school and the turnover is as high as 10 per cent each year. This high level of pupil mobility is a significant barrier to raising standards. The school has the benefit of many new buildings that provide a safe and stimulating environment for staff and pupils.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1695	Brian Rowe	Lead inspector	
10173	Catherine Hinds	Lay inspector	
31643	Joe Walsh	Team inspector	English
14776	Phil Waite	Team inspector	Mathematics
30433	Chris Corp	Team inspector	Science
32216	Annie McCabe	Team inspector	Art Design and technology
31578	Peter Cummings	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
4317	Ken Madrell	Team inspector	Geography Religious education
18076	Howard Dodd	Team inspector	Information and communication technology
24056	Barbara Lawson	Team inspector	Music
18888	Jan Boulton	Team inspector	Physical education
33173	Malcolm Doolin	Team inspector	History
19026	Brian Downes	Team inspector	Citizenship Special educational needs English as an additional language

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Islington Arts and Media School is an effective and rapidly improving school that provides a good quality of education and good value for money. The headteacher, who is very well supported by the governors and senior leadership group, provides outstanding leadership that is raising the aspirations and expectations of staff and pupils. Despite operating in extremely challenging circumstances, the overall good quality of teaching and learning ensures that pupils achieve well. Leadership and management are good and ensure that the school supports the pupils very well.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The headteacher's exceptional and inspirational leadership ensures all staff share a common vision for the future.
- In a harmonious, multicultural ethos all pupils are valued and very well supported.
- Inconsistent implementation of strategies to improve language and literacy in subjects remains the most significant barrier to raising pupils' achievement.
- Good teaching helps pupils to achieve well, especially in Years 10 and 11.
- The very good governance of the school has made a positive impact on the school.
- Departmental self-evaluation is not sufficiently rigorous in all subjects.
- The use of assessment data is insufficiently embedded in department practice, though improving.
- An innovative approach to learning through the arts and media curriculum is raising pupils' aspirations, confidence and pride in their school.
- A dramatic improvement in pupils' attendance is due to the very effective strategies employed by the school.
- The provision for citizenship is unsatisfactory.

Overall, improvement since the last inspection is good and the school is in a strong position to continue to make substantial improvements. The issues identified in the previous inspection have been successfully addressed, but there are still some weaknesses in teaching that remain areas for further development. Although the quality of school assemblies has improved, the school still does not fully meet requirements to provide a daily act of collective worship. The school has been extremely successful in raising standards and in 2003 was placed 28th in England for achieving the most improved examination results.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 11 results

Performance in GCSE/GNVQ examinations at the end of Year 11, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
	E	E*	E	C

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E - very low
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 9.*

A high proportion of pupils start school with very low standards of literacy and numeracy. Many start with a very limited experience of the English language. During the last few years, the results from national tests at the end of Year 9 indicate that standards have been well below the national average. Current standards show that pupils are making good progress overall and achieve well compared with those in similar schools. Results in GCSE examinations have shown considerable improvement since the last inspection, while remaining well below the national average. GCSE results are good when compared with schools with a similar prior attainment. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 make good progress and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language achieve as well as their peers. Pupils' levels of literacy and numeracy as well as their competence in using information and communication technology (ICT) are below average.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, throughout the school is good. However, pupils in Years 7 and 8 have not yet developed the self-

discipline seen in the older pupils in Years 9 to 11. Attendance has dramatically improved and now equates to the national average, but many pupils' punctuality to school is unsatisfactory. Pupils have good attitudes to school. They behave well and develop positive relationships with each other and with the staff.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching is strongest in Years 10 and 11. It is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 where there is a small element of unsatisfactory teaching. The assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory overall, but is better in Years 10 and 11. Teaching, learning and the arrangements for assessment are improving because of management initiatives and very effective staff training. There are examples of good teaching to be found in most departments, but teaching and learning in mathematics, ICT, history and performing arts are especially strong. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in citizenship. Progress is slower for the younger pupils because they have underdeveloped learning and social skills. They have difficulty working by themselves or in groups when teaching does not engage and motivate them.

Several aspects of the educational provision are strengths of the school. These include: the innovative curriculum, particularly the use of arts and media; the very good care given to all pupils; the constructive links with the community that enrich pupils' education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality and effectiveness of leadership and management throughout the school are good. The quality of governance is very good. A significant strength is the excellent leadership, commitment and vision of the headteacher to give all pupils the best education possible. The strong senior management team takes a leading role in driving the school forward. Procedures for senior managers' monitoring and evaluating strengths and areas for development are good, but these are applied less rigorously and consistently by subject department and pastoral managers.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils have positive views of the school and applaud recent improvements. The school's image in the local community is also rapidly improving. Pupils value their good working relationships with staff. They recognise that teachers expect them to work hard and do their best. They say that there is a safe environment where everyone is respected and treated fairly. A few parents and pupils comment that some pupils behave badly, but concede that the school manages these pupils well so that learning is rarely disturbed. Inspection findings are that the school manages behaviour well.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- strengthen and apply the strategies to develop pupils' language and literacy skills;
- improve the rigour of departmental self-evaluation to ensure consistent high quality;
- ensure that good use of assessment information is common to all departments;
- improve the provision for citizenship;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- teach religious education to all pupils in Years 10 and 11;
- provide a daily act of collective worship.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

During the last few years, the results from national tests taken at the end of Year 9 indicate that standards have been **very low** when compared with the national average. Current standards show that compared with similar schools, pupils are making **good** progress overall and achieve **well**. Results in GCSE examinations have shown considerable improvement since the last inspection, although remaining **well below** the national average. GCSE results are **good** when compared with schools with a similar prior attainment. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 make **good** progress and achieve **well**. Pupils with special educational needs and those using English as an additional language achieve **well**.

Years 7 to 9

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although standards are well below average, the school has improved its results in line with the national trend in the past three years.
- Many pupils join the school with very low levels of literacy and numeracy, which significantly hinders their attainment, but they make good progress in most subjects.
- The good quality of teaching and learning has a positive impact on pupils' achievement.
- Pupils attain higher standards in mathematics and science than in English.

Commentary

1. A high proportion of the pupils start school with literacy and numeracy skills that are very low. Many start with a very limited experience of the English language. The table below indicates that pupils reach overall standards that are low compared with national results. However, given that many pupils have literacy and numeracy skills that are very low and many have other barriers to learning, pupils are achieving well in most subjects.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.7 (27.3)	33.4 (33.3)
Mathematics	30.9 (29.6)	35.4 (34.7)
Science	28.2 (27.2)	33.6 (33.3)

There were 135 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The school finds it difficult to raise standards overall, since a high proportion of the pupils are not in school from the start at Year 7 to the end of Year 9. The good progress often seen in individual lessons is not always sustained in national tests. Many pupils are successfully developing their use of English language, but are not so successful in test conditions. Despite these barriers to raising achievement, the school is making good progress in raising standards and the 2003 results confirm a steady improvement compared with previous years. The mathematics results in particular have improved due to good teaching, leadership and management of the department. Disappointing English results detracted from the overall improvement made. The school has made improving teaching and learning a priority in its development and recent initiatives are having a positive impact on pupils' learning and achievement. Pupils join school with underdeveloped learning and social skills and these are also significant barriers to raising achievement in Years 7 and 8.
3. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve well. In the majority of lessons they are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants. When pupils with special educational needs are taught by specialist teachers, they achieve very

well. Pupils who are new to English also achieve very well owing to the good support they receive. Pupils' levels of literacy and numeracy and their competence in ICT are below average.

Years 10 and 11

Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE results have improved considerably in recent years, but remain below the national average.
- Pupils' achievement in their GCSE courses is above that of schools with a similar prior attainment.
- The proportion of students gaining 5 or more A*-C grades is much higher than their prior attainment at the end of Year 9 would indicate.
- Pupils' underdeveloped language and literacy skills are a significant barrier to learning and to raising attainment.
- Pupils achieve well in most subjects, but in citizenship their progress is unsatisfactory and standards too low.
- Standards in GNVQ performing arts are above average and pupils achieve very well.

Commentary

4. The table below indicates that pupils reach standards that are well below the national average. However, pupils' achievement is good and standards are above those expected given their low prior attainment at the end of Year 9. The school adds much value to pupils' learning.

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	34 (20)	52.0 (50)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	79 (50)	91.0 (91)
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	83 (68)	96.0 (96)
Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects)	29 (17.2)	39.8 (n/a)

There were 99 pupils in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

5. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 10 and 11 and the number gaining A*-C grades is well above average compared with those in similar schools. The school has improved its results at a faster rate than the national trend over the last three years. Considering the underdeveloped literacy skills of many pupils and the many other barriers to their learning, these results represent good achievement by the end of Year 11. In recent years, the standard of boys' work has been below that of girls, but the gap is now less marked, as a direct result of initiatives by the school. The school sets itself ambitious academic targets and is mostly successful in achieving them. Continuous attention in lessons from the language support teachers and teaching assistants enables pupils with special educational needs and having English as an additional language to follow examination courses and achieve well.
6. The school has been extremely successful in raising standards in Years 10 and 11. In 2003 it was placed 28th in England for achieving the most improved examination results.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Attendance is **satisfactory**. Pupils have **good** attitudes to school. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good**. Pupils' behaviour is **satisfactory** overall, but **good** in Years 10 and 11.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has achieved a dramatic improvement in attendance so that figures are now at the national average.
- Pupils like coming to school, have good attitudes to lessons and so they work hard.
- Pupils behave well, although a few, mainly boys in Years 7 and 8, lack self-discipline and are disruptive if they are not managed well in lessons.
- The school has very good arrangements for supporting pupils who behave badly.
- Pupils' motivation to succeed is increasing and their aspirations are rising because the school promotes their personal development well.
- Relationships are good throughout school and pupils respect each other's values and traditions.
- Too many pupils arrive late in the morning.

Commentary

7. Pupils have good attitudes to their work and to school life. All pupils, including those who have recently arrived at the school from other countries, are proud to be attending an Arts and Media school. They talk enthusiastically about the activities that the school energetically promotes and the good facilities provided. Pupils are keen to learn and approach their lessons with enthusiasm. A few younger pupils, mainly but not exclusively boys, and mostly in Years 7 and 8, lack concentration when teachers do not manage them well, and disrupt a minority of lessons. The majority remain on task and concentrate well. This helps the pupils to achieve well in their lessons. They accept increasing levels of responsibility as they move up through the school. By the time they are in Year 11 they are confident and mature, so that they approach the next stage of their education eagerly.
8. Good support systems ensure that pupils with special educational needs make good progress, especially when their targets involve improvements in behaviour and attitudes to learning. Pupils who are new to or in the earlier stages of learning English show very good attitudes to learning the language. This is a strong factor in the very good progress they make.

Attendance

9. Pupils' attendance is now ten percentage points better than it was three years ago. This improvement has greatly increased pupils' chances of achieving good test and examination results. The school has worked tenaciously to promote regular attendance. Constant communication with parents has harnessed parents' commitment, except in a small minority of cases. The school has therefore reduced substantially the level of unauthorised absence. Current figures are at the national average. However, those reported nationally, and therefore in the table below, were incorrect due to difficulties experienced with the electronic registration system. The system now works very effectively and the school monitors attendance very closely on a day-by-day basis. Up to 100 pupils arrive each morning after school has begun. Most of these pupils are only a few minutes late but their arrival interrupts the tutor periods. These interruptions prevent a purposeful start to the school day.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	4.0
National data	7.2

Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.5
National data	1.1

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

10. The school carefully co-ordinates an extensive range of support from specialist agencies. It is innovative in developing support that is exceptionally sensitive to the needs of individual pupils

and their families. The use of learning mentors, the learning support centre and the inclusion centre are particularly valuable strategies. The education welfare officer is extremely thorough and provides very valuable support by working closely with the school. Most pupils report that they have not encountered any bullying, although the school is quick to act if there are any incidents.

11. Pupils' personal development is good because the staff carefully nurture pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Levels of mutual respect are high. All pupils are valued, whatever their background. Pupils celebrate each other's cultures and show a very good understanding of the implications of different beliefs and values. The school community genuinely revels in its multi-cultural population. Pupils work well together in many lessons and often help each other spontaneously. Year 7 pupils show fewer social skills as they have not yet completely absorbed the school's positive ethos. They take less responsibility for their own lives and work than older pupils.
12. Pupils insist that behaviour is much better now and that there is a safe environment where everyone is treated fairly. They feel the school listens to their views and acts upon their ideas so they increasingly relate to the school's vision for its future. They welcome the school's emphasis on rewards and celebration of achievement. Pupils show good levels of curiosity and wonder. Staff nurture these characteristics carefully through the very good relationships they establish with pupils. In lessons staff often help pupils to ponder, reflect and observe their own lives and achievements, as well as those of others,. However, the lack of a daily assembly restricts pupils' opportunities to do this collectively and personally.

Exclusions

13. Pupils behave well in all areas of the school. Behaviour is good in Years 10 and 11 but it is not as good in Years 7 and 8 because pupils acquire increasingly good social skills as they move up through the school. When pupils' behaviour is unacceptable, they accept the school's sanctions. Very few pupils who are excluded for short periods require a second exclusion. The school monitors exclusions very carefully. It is aware of the greater incidence of exclusion amongst particular ethnic groupings. Staff research different strategies and make useful contacts so as to access specialist help and support effectively. The school has reduced exclusions by 12 per cent by creating very good arrangements for supporting pupils who misbehave.

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll 954	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	184	11	1
White – any other White background	172	4	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	58	4	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	36	8	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	41	1	0
Black or Black British - Caribbean	153	14	0
Black or Black British – African	99	7	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	19	1	0
Any other ethnic group	61	8	0

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education provided by the school is **good**.

Teaching and learning

The overall quality of teaching and learning is **good**. Teaching, learning and assessment are **good** in Years 10 and 11 and **satisfactory** in Years 7 to 9.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective teaching promotes positive attitudes and personal development in pupils.
- Teaching is particularly effective in Years 10 and 11 where assessment is used well to motivate pupils and support them in achieving well.
- The promotion of learning through an arts and media approach is making a positive impact.
- Insufficient attention is given in some subjects to encouraging pupils to work by themselves.
- Some teachers require a greater range of teaching strategies to improve pupils' behaviour and learning, especially in Years 7 and 8.
- Regular school reviews ensure that senior staff are aware of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning.

Commentary

14. The quality of teaching was judged satisfactory in the last inspection, but concluded that some teachers experienced difficulties in managing pupils with behavioural or learning difficulties. Teaching has improved considerably and is now good overall, as 60 per cent of lessons are good or better and 22 per cent are very good. During the last few years, important strategic decisions have improved teaching and raised pupils' achievement. Improving teaching and learning has been a major focus for staff development and school improvement. Effective management has ensured that improvement to teaching and learning has been accomplished in many subjects and examination courses. The pupils are positive about the school and the teaching they receive. Due to effective teaching and a focus on using the arts as a stimulus for learning, pupils are mostly well behaved and have positive attitudes to their work. However, there is a marked contrast in the degree of effectiveness of teaching in Years 7 and 8 and that in the examination courses in Years 10 and 11. A minority of teachers experience difficulty in developing pupils' learning skills as well as in ensuring that they behave well and stay on task in lessons. Good teaching and positive relationships between staff and pupils make a positive contribution to their personal development.
15. Inspectors judge the quality of teaching and learning from a wide range of evidence that includes observing lessons, an analysis of past test and examination results, a scrutiny of pupils' work, talking to pupils about their work and analysing school data and documentation. During the inspection 115 lessons were observed. A summary of the teaching is shown in the table below. Learning is more effective in Years 10 and 11 owing to pupils' motivation to do well in examinations and their mature personal development.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 115 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2 (1.5%)	22 (19%)	42 (37%)	39 (34%)	10 (8.5%)	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.

16. The above table indicates a high proportion of good and very good teaching, but still a significant proportion of unsatisfactory teaching, which occurs mostly in Years 7 and 8. Considering the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and the significant barriers to learning that exist in school, this is a positive profile of teaching. Some of the unsatisfactory teaching was related to teachers who were new to the school or new to teaching. During the

inspection there were no significant differences in the quality of teaching and learning between boys and girls or pupils from various backgrounds.

17. In many subjects there is insufficient internal review of the quality of teaching and learning which might lead to strategies for improvement, but in a few this is a strong management feature. In many subjects pupils are given insufficient opportunities to complete their own research and work independently of the teacher. There are examples of good teaching to be found in most departments, but teaching and learning in mathematics, ICT, history and performing arts are especially strong. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in citizenship
18. Most pupils have positive attitudes towards their work and conform to school rules and conventions. Many pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are well below expectations for their age. Consequently, without carefully planned support by teachers their progress is too limited and a significant number achieve standards that are below expectations.
19. Teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are good. However, several teachers pay insufficient attention to pupils' needs outlined in individual education plans. Where pupils are taught by specialist teachers, either for special educational needs or for ethnic minority achievement, the teaching is usually very good. There are good assessment procedures, both for special educational needs and for ethnic minority achievement. Teaching assistants provide very effective support. The in-class support is effective and the support received in withdrawal groups is also very good.

Assessment

The quality of assessing pupils' work and the use made of assessment data are **satisfactory** overall.

Commentary

20. The school has worked hard to put in place effective systems for assessing and tracking pupils' progress and for setting them challenging target grades. This strategy gives pupils specific targets in each subject and pupils in Years 10 and 11 have a good understanding of where and how they can improve their work. However, the information gained from assessment procedures and from day-to-day assessment is not consistently used in all subjects to inform planning and teaching. Many departments use descriptions of National Curriculum levels and GCSE grades to show pupils what they need to do to improve but this practice is not always clearly linked to the marking of pupils' work.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum to meet the needs of pupils in Years 7 to 11 is **good**. The opportunity for enrichment, including out-of-school activities, is **good**. The quality and quantity of accommodation and resources to meet the needs of the curriculum are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curricular provision is broad and provides a good range of activities for all pupils.
- The school is very innovative in meeting pupils' needs and aspirations.
- Pupils with English as an additional language have full access to the curriculum and are very well supported.
- Pupils with special educational needs are supported well with their learning.
- There is a good range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities particularly in the area of performing arts.
- The school is not meeting statutory requirements in citizenship, or for religious education in Years 10 and 11.
- There is no daily act of collective worship for all pupils.

Commentary

21. Curricular provision for all pupils is broad and includes a growing range of vocational courses. This range of courses and modifications in assessment procedures contribute positively to pupils' increasingly good achievement by the end of the Year 11. However the curriculum does not comply with the statutory requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship for all pupils. At present, citizenship is not sufficiently taught as a separate subject or through contributions from other subjects. This has been recognised and plans are already in place to address these issues. The school manages the curriculum well and has been very innovative in its arts and media approach to learning. Specific performing arts or media courses have been very successful in meeting the interests and predominant learning styles of the pupils. Arts and media methodology is becoming embedded in the curriculum through cross-curricular work with professional arts partners organised through Creative Partnerships.
22. Provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. It is an integral feature of a number of subjects. The arts and media aspects of the school's curriculum make a positive contribution to pupils' personal development and their ability to play a positive role in school life. The sex and drug education programmes give good guidance on facts, decision-making and relationships. Statutory curriculum requirements are fully met.
23. The accelerated Key Stage 3 pilot in Year 7 is offering an increased challenge for the more able pupil intake and enables teachers to raise their expectations of all pupils. The introduction of GNVQ and work-related learning, both on and off-site, meet the needs of less academic learners well. They provide good links into the 16-19 programmes offered at local colleges and support the development of a coherent 14-19 curriculum strategy. Pupils with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language have access to the same curriculum as other pupils and to all the school's activities.
24. Enrichment through extra-curricular provision is currently good, with a range of about 15 activities available, most directly after school. Subjects include sports, self-defence, boys' dance, video club, music ensembles, choir, youth theatre, a media workshop and a computer club. Important curriculum access support is offered through the reading club and a Year 8 Arsenal F.C. literacy course. These activities were particularly strong on performing arts, using media equipment and exploring community culture. Pupils are very positive about the opportunities the school gives them. Levels of disaffection have been greatly reduced by increased participation in extra-curricular activities and well-matched curriculum support.
25. Staffing is good, with a well-qualified team of specialist teachers who meet the needs of the curriculum well. Support staff also make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. In ICT, design and technology, science and art, well-qualified teams of technicians ensure that departments run smoothly. The school employs a large number of teaching assistants who provide very good support for pupils with special educational needs or whose first language is not English.

Accommodation and resources

26. Overall the school's good accommodation and resources allow the school to teach its planned curriculum well. There have been significant improvements in accommodation and resources in recent years, partly because the school has been successful in gaining grants through successful bids for additional funding. The overall quality of accommodation is good. The buildings and site are well respected by the pupils and there is little evidence of graffiti or litter. The good condition of the building is maintained very well by an effective team of premises staff. The new design and technology block is excellent and there is very good accommodation for music and dance. Some areas, such as the English and modern foreign languages rooms, are in need of refurbishment. The school has had funding approved to provide an all-weather outdoor pitch designed to improve the outdoor facilities for physical education. The resources for teaching the curriculum are satisfactory overall. The quality of equipment and resources available in design and technology, ICT, music, history and drama are good.

Creative Partnerships

27. A major part of the school's innovative approach to the curriculum is taught through its involvement as a pilot school in Creative Partnerships. This exciting partnership is enabling pupils to work closely with a wide range of recognised artists and performers. It enriches the arts curriculum and is progressively influencing all subjects in the school. Arts specialists support jointly planned cross-curricular projects. For example, in mathematics and art pupils explore the work of Escher with artist Jago Brown, so as to develop tessellations using ICT. The arts-based approach to learning helps teachers to extend their teaching strategies and understanding of how pupils learn. Early evidence indicates that this partnership is making a very positive contribution to the whole school ethos. For many pupils, whose interest is stimulated by their involvement in the wide range of activities provided, the effect of this approach to learning is to raise their self-esteem and aspirations.
28. As part of the project, all Year 7 pupils have had their preferred learning styles identified. This information, supported by extensive staff training, is provided to teachers as part of the data concerning pupils which informs their lesson planning. There is evidence that more innovative learning strategies are developing as the project impacts positively on the effectiveness of teaching. However, systematic monitoring and evaluation are at early stages of development.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes **very good** care of its pupils. It has **good** arrangements for health and safety and for supporting and guiding them and involving them in the life and work of the school through seeing, valuing and acting on their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff promote very good working relationships with pupils so they feel secure and valued.
- The school is very good at identifying and meeting the needs of individual pupils.
- Very good induction procedures help pupils settle successfully and confidently on entry.
- Most departments track pupils' achievements carefully but a few do not let pupils know exactly what they need to do to improve.
- The time that teachers spend with their form groups is not always valued by the pupils.

Commentary

29. Despite significant growth in recent years the school maintains a caring ethos and provides very good support for all its pupils. Teachers are alert to any changes in pupils' work and demeanour. They take prompt action to arrest further deterioration and to help pupils get back on track. Pupils with any form of particular need know that specialist staff provide sensitive and well considered help. All staff support pupils with special educational needs and those from minority ethnic groups very well. The school has very comprehensive arrangements for child protection. Very good communication both within the school and with a wide range of external agencies is a particularly strong feature of this provision. Staff promote a safe and healthy environment. Departments have suitable risk assessment policies, which are used sensibly. Risk assessment procedures are not, however, evaluated regularly enough to ensure that staff consider the health and safety implications of every school activity.
30. Pupils' personal and academic well-being is, nevertheless, a priority for staff. The school arranges very good induction for new pupils so that pupils manage the transfer confidently. Exercises in team building form part of the programme for Year 6 pupils intending to enrol at the school. All Year 7 pupils can participate in a week's course at a residential and environmental adventure training centre within their first two weeks at the school. These activities help new pupils to feel part of the school community and inspire a sense of loyalty to the school. Pupils arriving from other countries are well supported by staff and by the other pupils. Pupils get good advice about course options in Years 10 and 11 and future career choices. They are happy with their chosen subjects and are confident as they approach the move to post-16 education, training and work.

31. Teachers track pupils' progress carefully and most give good advice on how to improve. In a few departments assessment and its use are only satisfactory. Marking and specific guidance about improvement are less helpful in modern foreign languages, design and technology and music than in other subjects. Tutors support their pupils carefully and develop very good working relationships with them. Most tutors make good use of tutor periods to support pupils but sessions are invariably disturbed by the late arrival of many pupils. Activities are often interrupted and this reduces the good effect of the work being undertaken, such as checking homework diaries.
32. Pupils are regularly consulted about their views through the school council. The school encourages them to think of ways of improving its routines and facilities. Pupils appraise their own work and their progress twice annually. They recognise that this system encourages them to take responsibility for their own work and respond to it well.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **very good** links with the local community and **good** links with parents and other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very constructive links with local organisations and people successfully enrich pupils' education.
- The school is increasingly effective in involving parents in their child's education
- Information for parents about pupils' progress is inadequate.
- Strong links with local schools ensure that pupils' transition from primary schools is smooth.

Commentary

33. All pupils benefit from the very good support of many local organisations and individuals. Pupils experience different business, social, sporting and cultural situations at first hand, through the involvement of local people in a good variety of aspects of the curriculum. Arts and media links are particularly strong because the school regularly employs local artists and performers to work with its pupils. Frequent, high quality outside visits enrich curricular provision.
34. The school has made good efforts to develop its relationships with parents and encourages discussion about their children's educational achievement. For instance, it advertises through regular and very informative newsletters details of when heads of year are available to talk with parents.
35. There are very good formal and informal links with parents of pupils who have special educational needs. Parents and pupils are involved in the review process where this applies. The school has an outstanding link with Arsenal F.C. that helps considerably to improve the literacy skills of a number of less able pupils. The school also has very good contacts with the communities of the minority ethnic groups in the school.
36. Staff, including learning mentors, maintain very regular contact with parents of those pupils who experience difficulty with their learning or their life in school. The school arranges very effective support from a wide range of agencies and ensures that parents are partners in this collaboration. Parents are therefore confident that the school meets their child's individual needs. The school communicates very effectively with parents unfamiliar with English, through adults who speak community languages. The school also ensures that all parents are included in their child's very effective induction into the school. Parents increasingly involve themselves in the life and work of the school. Staff deal with any parental concerns very effectively. This improving partnership inspires parents' confidence in the school and their involvement in their child's education.
37. However, annual reports are too brief and lack detail about individual pupils' progress in specific subjects. This leaves parents unclear about the progress their children make. The school is already reviewing its procedures so as to improve the quality of information it provides. It has recently re-designed its homework diaries in an effort to promote their

increased usefulness to parents and pupils. This helps pupils to take increased responsibility for their learning at home, and encourages parents to support this constructively.

38. Good links with other schools and colleges strengthen the school's curriculum. Many pupils in Years 10 and 11 benefit from the good range of vocational courses and other activities that the school energetically promotes. These links also enable the staff to share and extend their expertise with other schools. Regular dialogue with local primary schools ensures that the transfer of information about pupils is timely and efficient. The school shares its facilities very readily with other schools, and primary schools in particular. Pupils increasingly choose Islington Arts and Media School to continue their education because they are already familiar with and are comfortable in the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management throughout the school is **good**. The headteacher is providing **excellent** leadership. Other key staff with responsibility provide **good** leadership. The quality of governance is **very good**. The school has many significant barriers to learning and raising achievement but has developed **good** strategies to overcome most of them.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The commitment, energy and vision of the headteacher that pupils should receive the best education possible.
- The governors are very aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and challenge the senior managers rigorously.
- A strong senior management team takes a leading role in driving the school forward.
- Management at department level is good, but does not consistently monitor or evaluate teaching, learning or pupils' achievement.
- Effectiveness of recruitment and retention has resulted in the school being very well staffed.
- Good financial management ensures that the school utilises its budget very effectively.
- The governors do not fulfil all of their statutory requirements.

Commentary

Leadership

39. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and has a relentless drive to improve standards. Since his appointment he has recruited very experienced, high quality teachers and has built a new senior management team, which shares his clarity of vision and high aspirations. The headteacher has a very visible presence around the school and is very approachable for parents, pupils and staff. He has clearly identified and improved major areas of school life. The senior management team is robust and their strengths complement one another, while matching their allocated responsibilities well. The headteacher and the senior management team have a shared and strong commitment to providing the best possible education for all pupils. The majority of the heads of departments and heads of year are effective leaders, but are not yet consistently and rigorously monitoring and evaluating the work of their teams.

Management

40. The management of the school is good overall. The senior management team works very closely with the headteacher to drive forward school improvement. Procedures for analysing data and evaluating school performance to identify strengths and weaknesses are good. The school development plan focuses on priorities identified at the last inspection so as to raise achievement and standards. The effectiveness of middle managers is improving, but the rigour of department self-evaluation is not sufficiently developed in all departments and faculties. The quality of teaching, learning and the impact of the curriculum is not sufficiently monitored and reviewed by all department and pastoral managers to ensure that outcomes are as effective as they should be. Subject action plans clearly indicate a focus on raising standards and are linked closely to the whole school plan.

41. The co-ordinator for special educational needs has shown very good leadership of the implementation of the Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs and in training staff for it. She has also shown very good management in setting up procedures and administration for special educational needs. Leadership and management for ethnic minority achievement are very good. There are clear identification procedures, well-established priorities and very good support for pupils. The department is now looking to improve provision further by appointing another specialist teacher.
42. The support given to teachers through performance management is well established. The school provides very good access to professional development for all staff. It supports teachers who are new to the school very effectively. In addition, it gives newly qualified teachers sufficient non-contact time and monitoring to enable them to make a successful start in their teaching career. The school also makes a very good contribution to the initial training of teachers. During recent years the school has produced a number of very effective teachers through the Graduate Teacher Programme. Working under difficult circumstances, considerable effort has been made to recruit and retain high quality staff successfully, resulting in a teaching team made up of loyal and enthusiastic subject specialists.
43. Financial management of the school is good. Educational expenditure is carefully planned and debated. Priorities are clear and focused on raising achievement and standards. The governing body has drawn up a robust recovery plan to address a significant inherited deficit budget and in the current financial year has exceeded the agreed repayment level. Expenditure per pupil is relatively high, but is offset by a range of additional grants received by the school. These are well spent and have improved the quality of education. The school applies the principles of best value well in its spending.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	3,313,243.90	Balance from previous year	-682,978.63
Total expenditure	3,996,222.53	Balance carried forward to the next	-413,978.63
Expenditure per student	5,644.38		

Value for money

44. Taking into account:
- how much is spent per pupil;
 - the good achievement of pupils throughout the school;
 - the good quality of leadership and management;
 - the overall effectiveness of teaching and learning;
 - the breadth of the curriculum and good range of extra-curriculum opportunities;
 - the good quality of accommodation and resources;

the school provides good value for money.

Governance

45. The governing body is led very effectively by an experienced and knowledgeable chairperson who fully shares the headteacher's vision for the school. Governors bring a valuable range of expertise to the school. They know very well the strengths and weaknesses and are effectively involved in shaping the direction of the school. There are appropriate committees with delegated powers and governors visit the school regularly. Decisions about curriculum developments, for example applying for specialist arts college status, reflect their desire to get the very best for the pupils in terms of facilities and funding. Governors do not fulfil their legal obligations to ensure that the school holds a daily act of collective worship or religious education is taught in Years 10 and 11.

Aids and barriers to raising achievement

46. There are many significant barriers to learning in school that make it difficult to raise standards. These include:
- the high proportion of pupils who do not start and finish their education at the school;
 - the high proportion of pupils starting and joining school with levels of literacy and numeracy well below average;
 - the high proportion of pupils who have learning and behavioural difficulties;
 - the high proportion of pupils who use English as an additional language;
 - the many pupils who have low self-esteem and aspirations;
 - the high proportion of pupils who have had significant breaks in their education, either as refugees, asylum seekers or being excluded from other schools;
 - the difficulties of recruiting and retaining staff in an area of expensive housing.
47. Many initiatives have been put in place in order to overcome these barriers. The school knows its pupils very well and works hard so that every pupil receives targeted support to ensure they receive a relevant curriculum and make progress. The school is part of a Creative Partnerships initiative and seeks to raise standards through developing an arts and media approach to learning. The school has also been successful to become a pilot school to pioneer changes in the Years 7 to 9 curriculum.
48. Staff turnover has been high in the past, but successful support and development programmes are addressing this problem well. All staff have opportunities for their own professional development, and there is a very successful and well organised in-service training programme.
49. The school has a very effective pastoral system to provide care and support for pupils and is rapidly improving attendance and helping to raise both academic standards and promote pupils' personal development. The school is successful at overcoming its barriers to learning.

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 **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Underdeveloped literacy skills restrict pupils' progress in all year groups.
- The department is well led, which is helping to raise standards.
- Teaching is good in Years 10 and 11, but there is insufficient challenge in Years 7 to 9.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning is not used effectively to share the best practice and improve what is less effective.
- ICT is insufficiently used to improve pupils' literacy and language skills

Commentary

50. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9, results were very low in comparison with the national average. GCSE results in English and in English literature were below the national average. However, in both subjects results have improved significantly over the past three years. Girls outperform boys in both Year 9 tests and GCSE examinations in English. Pupils achieve satisfactorily in all year groups, but underdeveloped literacy skills remain the most significant barrier to raising achievement for a large proportion of them.
51. When pupils enter the school their language and literacy skills are very low. Pupils develop good speaking and listening skills so that by the end of Year 9, they are able to work well in paired and group activities and contribute thoughtfully to class discussions. In a Year 7 class pupils made sensitive and perceptive comments in a class discussion about the poetry of William Blake. In writing, higher attaining pupils are able to write for different audiences and purposes, but the majority do not have this range and flexibility. Many pupils develop improved writing skills during Years 7 and 8 so that by Year 9, they are able to use complex sentences and vary sentence structure well. The work of many pupils still contains too many errors of spelling and punctuation, and standards of presentation are not high enough. Reading comprehension is improving and is now of an average standard for many pupils in Year 9. Overall, standards in Years 7 to 9 are too low, but they are improving.
52. In Years 10 and 11 pupils develop their writing skills well. Higher attaining pupils are able to paragraph their work effectively and they show a good understanding of the themes of the literature studied. A few examples of well-planned and carefully word-processed work were seen. However, the work of lower attaining pupils is frequently too brief and not grammatically correct.
53. Teaching and learning is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 and good in Years 10 and 11. When teaching is most effective, teachers' knowledge of the subject is secure and pupils have a clear idea of what they are expected to learn and do. In the best lessons pupils were expected to play a full and active part and a good range of activities engaged and interested them. A feature of the best lessons seen was teachers' demonstration of the skills which they then challenged the pupils to apply for themselves. For example, in a Year 10 class the teacher showed a sequence from Alfred Hitchcock's film *Psycho*, giving a commentary on how and why certain camera shots and angles had been used and explaining their effect on the viewer. Pupils were fully engaged and well challenged by the subsequent group activity to work on other film sequences.
54. Lessons are carefully planned and structured according to advice outlined in the national Key Stage 3 Strategy. This has led to a consistent approach in lessons across the department.

However, the range of strategies is not yet varied enough to motivate and engage all pupils. When teaching is less effective, the pace of the lesson is too slow, the work lacks variety or challenge and pupils are not given the opportunity to be active in their own learning. Not enough use is made of ICT in teaching, though there are plans to integrate its use into future units of work. Marking is generally done thoroughly and conscientiously, though a minority of marking is superficial and does not give pupils advice on how to improve.

55. Leadership of the subject is good. The head of department has worked hard to create coherent schemes of work and to establish agreed practices for planning. He has a clear focus on raising standards and is a good role model for others. Management is satisfactory, but the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning has not yet had the impact of sharing best practice and improving less effective practice. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

56. Standards of literacy across the curriculum are below expectations and restrict the learning for many pupils. The school has recognised the need to address this issue and has recently appointed a literacy co-ordinator. There is a good range of initiatives in place to support pupils who join the school with low literacy skills. However, these programmes are not yet effectively monitored and their impact is inconsistent. Many departments teach pupils subject specific vocabulary and use strategies to support the development of writing and spelling skills. However, there is not, as yet, a sufficiently consistent approach to the teaching of reading and writing skills across the curriculum and this remains a major barrier to raising pupils' attainment.

Modern foreign languages

French and Spanish

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils with special educational needs and pupils at the early stages of speaking English are effectively supported.
- Insufficient use is made of assessment information to show pupils how to improve their work.
- Leadership and management are good so the subject is becoming more popular.
- Higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged to achieve their best.
- Good relationships between teachers and pupils effectively promote learning.

Commentary

57. Teachers' assessments in 2003 judged pupils' attainment at the end of Year 9 to be below national expectations. In Years 7, 8 and 9, standards of work seen during the inspection were also below expectations, with a few examples of higher attaining pupils working close to the standard expected for their age. In 2003, a small number of pupils took a GCSE examination in a modern language, mostly in a language spoken in their family. Pupils attained particularly well in Turkish. Work seen during the inspection suggests that higher attaining pupils in the small groups currently studying French and Spanish in Years 10 and 11 will attain GCSE results that are close to average.

58. Achievement is satisfactory overall, taking into account many pupils' low levels of literacy on entry into the school. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils at the early stages of speaking English achieve well because teachers plan effective support and match work to their needs. The achievement of higher attaining pupils is not good enough because they are not sufficiently challenged to speak and write at length. By the end of Year 9, pupils pick out the main details in short passages and take part in simple conversations. Many have difficulty recalling language and are too reliant on prompts from the teacher. Higher attaining pupils write short paragraphs adapted from model text. In Years 10 and 11, pupils talk and write at greater length, with improved accuracy.

59. Teaching and learning are satisfactory throughout each year. Good relationships ensure that effective learning takes place in most lessons. The majority of pupils have positive attitudes to learning. Behaviour is generally well managed, but learning was unsatisfactory in a Year 8 lesson because the teacher did not intervene effectively to deal with poor behaviour. In the best lessons, teachers plan for the active involvement of pupils in tasks that enable them to practise the language. Learning is less effective when activities are limited to copying or using and understanding only single words and short phrases. Teachers do not use the National Curriculum levels regularly enough to plan the next steps in learning and make clear to pupils how to improve their work.
60. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader has a clear vision for the development of the subject and guides effectively a team committed to improving teaching and learning. Consequently, pupil take-up of GCSE courses in French and Spanish is increasing significantly in current Year 9 options. The subject's action plan identifies clear priorities for raising achievement, but the impact of strategies is not sufficiently monitored. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of this rapidly developing department is very effective.
- The high proportion of good teaching and learning is helping pupils achieve well.
- Good progress is made by pupils of all abilities and backgrounds.
- The whole department works together very well as a team.
- A minority of assessment lacks the detail needed to help to pupils wanting to improve.

Commentary

61. Standards in mathematics by the end of Year 9 are well below what is expected nationally. However, pupils have generally made good progress since they transferred from primary schools and are actually now performing well above the level of pupils in similar schools. The whole department deserves particular credit for this good achievement. Recent GCSE results have been significantly below the national average, but they also are steadily improving. Overall improvement is faster than the national trend. The results in mathematics are higher than most other subjects in the school.
62. Standards of work seen in all years were still below national averages, but not by much. This is another indication of the good progress and achievement of pupils. Their good achievement is directly attributable to the consistent good quality of teaching. This gradually encourages positive attitudes towards the subject and good behaviour in class. The department is particularly good in expecting serious effort and concentration in lessons. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds make good progress because of the well planned courses and the way they are supported in their learning. Those pupils who come from a background where English is not the first language benefit from careful concentration on developing literacy skills. They receive extra attention from well prepared teaching assistants, more visual approaches to teaching and learning and organised help from other pupils in the class. Pupils with special educational needs benefit similarly, often getting more individual attention in smaller groups. The best teaching involves firm control, but also the use of practical approaches to challenging mathematical tasks that develop pupils' self-confidence.
63. Teaching is good overall and much is very good. Most of the lessons are well organised and confident teachers ensure good levels of learning in well-controlled and stimulating classrooms. The teaching is significantly better when pupils become less passive recipients of mathematics and more actively involved in the process of developing their own understanding. In these cases they are more likely to be working at individually challenging tasks and so learning more effectively. Plans for lessons showed that investigative approaches are a part of normal

teaching and learning. The assessment records that are kept on the background and previous achievement of pupils are very thorough and used well to set targets for them to achieve.

64. Pupils also achieve well as a result of the very effective leadership and good management by the head of faculty. He has a clear vision of the department's strengths and where it is heading. There is a focus on raising academic achievement, so practical strategies are being effectively implemented. The process of sharing initiatives and checking progress is clearly communicated in an excellent, concise development plan, which is regularly annotated to show what steps have been completed and what remains to be done. Staffing is strong and stable and this is supporting the department's development. Resources are used well and the department is innovative in its use of interactive white boards and its provision for materials designed to challenge the most able pupils. Improvement since the last inspection has been good and the department is in a strong position to make further improvements.

Mathematics across the curriculum

65. Pupils' competence in mathematics, although improving, is below expectations and the picture is similar across the curriculum. The school's strategy for developing the numeracy of pupils in all subjects is imaginative and determined. It is starting to have an impact on graphical standards and measurement skills. Whole staff training initiatives have been strongly led from within the mathematics department. The basis for this was thorough auditing of current practice. This identified an immediate need for advice and collaboration on data handling, and also for attention to recent approaches to calculation and measurement. This has now been followed up by a numeracy staff handbook, training for teaching assistants and a series of posters around the school which has significantly improved the provision.
66. Since the last inspection standards in mathematics have been rising steadily. High quality leadership and teamwork has improved teaching across the curriculum. The provision has improved significantly.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership of the department is very good, providing very good support for staff.
- The inadequate literacy skills of the majority of pupils are their major barrier to learning.
- The achievement of pupils is good in Years 8 to 11.
- There is insufficient use of ICT in science.
- The lessons are well planned to follow common agreed procedures.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning is not sufficiently rigorous.

Commentary

67. In 2003 the attainment of pupils in national tests at the end of Year 9 was well below the national average. The trend has been upwards over the past few years. The proportion of pupils achieving Level 5 and above is in line with that in similar schools. In GCSE examinations the proportion of pupils gaining grades A*-C was well below the national average.
68. Standards are now below national expectations in Year 9, but are still well below national expectations in Year 11. Pupils' standards on entering the school in Year 7 are well below average and their achievement is good in Years 8 to 11. The achievement of Year 7 pupils is satisfactory but their attitudes to learning are not as good as the pupils in Years 9 to 11. The achievement of a few higher attaining pupils is very good and last year they obtained the higher grades at GCSE. The teachers know the pupils with special educational needs well and are able to provide good support. This enables these pupils to achieve well. The school has many pupils who have English as an additional language. The department has responded positively to their specific needs with strategies based around vocabulary and key words. These pupils achieve well, but their low literacy skills remain the biggest barrier to learning.

69. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The lessons are well planned, with teachers employing methods that ensure lessons have a good pace and follow set procedures. In the most successful lessons, effective planning ensures that the pupils are fully engaged and enjoy the subject while making good progress. The pupils' attitudes to science are good and they try hard. However, their literacy skills are low and this restricts their understanding and learning. The relationships between teachers and pupils are good, which enables teachers to concentrate on teaching and giving support to the pupils. A minority of teachers employ a narrow range of teaching and learning strategies with only a limited use of practical activities. There is insufficient use of computers in science for most pupils, especially in the area of data logging.
70. The leadership of the department is very good. The head of department leads and guides a team of well-qualified, enthusiastic teachers who are well supported by two effective technicians. The department shares a clear vision for the future and has, over the past two years, introduced effective changes in curriculum and lesson planning. The development plans focus on the continuation of these changes with proposals for the introduction of a more relevant examination course at GCSE. The management of the department is good. Pupils' achievement and progress are monitored in detail and the teachers know their pupils well. Overall, monitoring and evaluation of teaching, marking and target setting are not sufficiently rigorous. Improvement since the previous inspection is good. Standards are higher, teaching and learning are better and pupils' achievement has improved.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consistently good teaching has established positive relationships between pupils and teachers.
- Leadership of the department is very good, so staff work together productively.
- There is very good technical support for the department.
- ICT resources are good and teachers use them effectively to aid pupils' learning
- There is insufficient time allocated to the teaching of ICT in all years.
- Lower attaining pupils in Years 10 and 11 do not receive a qualification in ICT.

Commentary

71. The attainment of current pupils in Year 9 is below national expectations and confirms the 2003 teacher assessments. Standards at the end of Year 11 are also below the national average and less than half of the pupils achieved a pass award in the 2003 GNVQ course. However, in 2003, the proportion of pupils achieving at least a pass award was significantly higher in ICT than any other subject in the school. The standard of work observed in Year 11 lessons was broadly in line with national expectations.
72. The attainment in ICT of pupils on entry to the school in Year 7 is well below national expectations but by the end of Year 9 the standard of pupils' work is much closer to that expected. This indicates that good progress is being made in lessons, particularly given the minimal time allocation given to ICT throughout Years 7 to 9. Achievement in Years 10 and 11 is also good, with almost half of pupils entered reaching a standard equivalent to a GCSE grade C. The restricted time allocation for the GNVQ course will make it difficult to maintain current standards.
73. Teaching and learning are consistently good and much is very good. Very effective use was made of the interactive whiteboards, found in each of the ICT rooms, to make the work easier for pupils to understand. This, together with clear explanations from the teacher, enabled pupils to develop quickly a secure understanding of topics. Lessons are always thoroughly planned. Teachers possess very good subject knowledge, displaying genuine enthusiasm for the subject. Pupils like ICT and so make good progress in lessons. Good teaching leads to good motivation and pupils particularly enjoy using the computers for well-planned practical work. Pupils with

specific learning difficulties or whose first language is not English also make good progress and teachers show very good awareness of their difficulties and requirements. However, pupils commented that 'there are not enough ICT lessons and we have to do our ICT work at lunch or after school to complete our projects'. The teachers are extremely generous with their own time, giving pupils supervised access to the computer suites at lunchtime, after school and at weekends. Teachers and technicians work together as a very effective team, so the harmony of the department is immediately evident.

74. Under the current arrangements the lower attaining pupils who fail to obtain a pass in the GNVQ course leave with no formal qualification in ICT. This is unsatisfactory curriculum provision.
75. The leadership of the department is very good. The cross-curricular ICT co-ordinator also has a very clear vision for the future of the subject in school. Both work hard and demonstrate strong dedication to bringing about continuous improvement. They set an extremely good example to the rest of the department. Fresh innovations and improvements occur regularly. For example, having tried an expensive 'on-line' GNVQ ICT course, the department has chosen to write their own superior version, saving money and providing pupils with a better learning resource.
76. Work in ICT has very good technical support with two full-time technicians. They not only maintain and repair the hardware but also play a very useful role in lessons by acting as ICT instructors. They thoroughly enjoy this aspect of their work and significantly facilitate the smooth running of practical sessions.
77. The ICT department plays an important role in extra-curricular activities such as the 'homework club' offered to pupils every day after school. Pupils have access to the computer suites to do homework and complete coursework assignments under the supervision of the ICT teachers and technicians. The department also runs a community computer class for a variety of local people working in association with a nearby Greek school. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection. Standards have improved and the department is now fully composed of specialist teachers, so consistently good teaching and learning are now taking place. The assessment of pupils' progress is now better and there has been a very significant improvement in the accommodation and resources for ICT.

Information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum

78. Pupils are developing a wide range of ICT skills and attain standards that are just below national expectations. Most pupils show a satisfactory level of competence in the way they use ICT to support their work in other subjects, for example in their desktop publishing skills and their ability to research topics using the Internet. A cross-curricular ICT co-ordinator supports and promotes the use of ICT effectively so that it has a positive impact on learning in many subjects. Pupils also benefit from good use of ICT to improve learning in humanities, design and technology and mathematics. In the special educational needs department a well-chosen software package is used effectively to improve pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Some departments use ICT less effectively. In science, for example, pupils have insufficient experience of using data-loggers to take measurements.

HUMANITIES

The inspection focus was on history, geography and religious education.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good overall and very good in examination classes.
- GCSE results are below average,
- Standards are rising because target setting is very effective.
- Out of school enrichment activities are very good.
- Leadership is very good and management is good.
- The developing use of ICT is hampered by lack of access to computers.
- Detailed marking of pupils' work is not consistently applied by all teachers.

Commentary

79. Although recent GCSE results have been below the national average, there is clear evidence of pupils achieving well and standards are improving. The subject is now very popular in Years 10 and 11, reflecting pupils' interest and enjoyment of the good teaching and the teachers' own enthusiasm. Standards in the 2003 teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 were below national expectations, but pupils' achievement is satisfactory and improving. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection.
80. Teaching overall is good, and very good in examination classes because teachers have high aspirations for their pupils and provide challenging opportunities, using a variety of activities. They engage pupils in paired and group work as well as individual tasks, which results in much good oral, diagrammatical and written work. Pupils show a good grasp of historical issues, good subject knowledge and are developing good thinking skills. Good examples of pupils' research, including the use of ICT, were seen in all years. Lessons included clear aims at the start and a thorough review at the end to test what had been achieved. Pupils responded positively to teachers and actively participated in and enjoyed their lessons.
81. The head of department is relatively new, but shows very good leadership and good management skills. She has dealt well with issues from the previous inspection and put strategies in place to raise attainment. There are different materials and tasks for students with special educational needs, more able pupils and for pupils whose first language is not English. Marking is conscientious and useful comments often help pupils to improve, but these lack consistency among teachers. The new target setting arrangements in Years 10 and 11, involving pupils and their parents, are rigorous, informative and very effective. Homework is set regularly, building on the learning done in lessons.
82. Accommodation is good and the classrooms are welcoming with imaginative displays that support learning and reflect the high quality of pupils' work. Resources are good, well produced and well used. The use of ICT by both teachers and pupils is developing but is hampered by lack of access to computers. There is a very good range of enrichment activities including trips to the Imperial War Museum, the Nottingham Galleries of Justice and the London Museum. The department is currently planning trips to the Great War battlefields and to Berlin and Auschwitz concentration camp. These visits act as a strong motivation for pupils and significantly enhance their interest in history and learning.

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership and management are gradually raising standards.
- In Years 10 and 11 a very good focus on examination techniques is helping to improve results.
- Good use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning.
- In Years 7 to 9 many pupils have unsatisfactory skills in the use of maps and graphs.

Commentary

83. In 2003, teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 indicated that the standards pupils attained in geography were well below national expectations. GCSE results were also well below average. There was little difference between the performance of boys and girls. Pupils' work seen during the inspection showed that standards in the current Year 9 are below average. This represents satisfactory achievement for pupils in relation to when they entered the school in Year 7. Pupils of all abilities demonstrate increasing knowledge and understanding of the inter-relationships of the physical and human environments through their work on rivers and natural hazards. However, many pupils have unsatisfactory skills with the use of maps and with the interpretation and analysis of information from graphs.
84. Inspection findings indicate that standards in the current Year 11 are average. This represents good achievement by the pupils who opt for geography. In Years 10 and 11 there is a very good focus on examination techniques and this is helping to raise standards. Pupils are well supported with the accurate use of technical language and good guidance is helping to improve their written work, although their levels of literacy remain low and impede their learning.
85. The quality of teaching and learning in geography is satisfactory overall. In Years 10 and 11 teaching is good, since all members of the department establish high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour. However, in a few lessons in Years 7 and 8 a disproportionate amount of time is spent on the management of pupils' behaviour. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They are enthusiastic, committed and use a range of effective methods in the classroom. For example, good use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning. Innovative approaches are used to record work. For example in Year 9 pupils were observed making a stimulating visual record of tourism in the Gambia. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those using English as an additional language because teaching assistants provide good support in the classroom.
86. The leadership and management of geography are good. There are good procedures in place to monitor and evaluate the work of the department. The development plan has identified appropriate priorities for improving teaching and the curriculum. Good use is made of the local area to support pupils' learning, however, there are no opportunities for fieldwork in contrasting environments. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good overall, and specialist staff provide very good guidance on examination techniques.
- Leadership is unsatisfactory, because of the long-term absence of the head of department.
- Good use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning.
- Relationships are good and pupils respond well to their teachers.
- In Years 10 and 11 statutory requirements are not fully met.
- Many pupils' literacy skills are a barrier to their progress.

Commentary

87. Standards in the current Year 9 are below average. This represents satisfactory achievement for pupils considering their equally low standards when they started at the school in Year 7. By Year 9 pupils of all abilities have developed satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the origins, beliefs and practices of Christianity and the other principal religions of the world. Pupils studying the topic of crime show good understanding of moral issues. However, for many pupils literacy skills are a significant barrier to progress and restrict learning. Teachers work hard to support them with a range of approaches for recording their work and improving their writing.
88. Standards in the current Year 11 are average. This represents good achievement for all pupils who opt for the subject. In Year 11 pupils show a good understanding of the differences between the Christian and Islamic views on sex and marriage. They also have a good understanding of race relations and of life in a multi-ethnic society.
89. Teaching and learning are good. Although many lessons in Years 7 to 9 are taught by non-specialists, their experience and commitment are strengths of the department. Lessons are well structured with good starter activities that engage pupils in their learning. Good use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Teachers and teaching assistants plan well to meet their needs and provide good support in the classroom. In Years 10 and 11 subject specialist staff provide very good guidance on examination techniques. Relationships are good and pupils respond well when studying the subject. Throughout Years 7 to 11, religious education makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
90. Leadership of religious education is unsatisfactory because of the long-term absence of the head of department. This has resulted in unsatisfactory planning, so monitoring and evaluating the work of the department have not been properly implemented. Daily management by the head of faculty and the head of Year 11 is satisfactory. In the classroom, however, the head of Year 11 is a good role model for other staff and pupils. The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 is unsatisfactory, since statutory requirements are not fully met. In 2002-3 no pupils in Year 11 followed a GCSE course in religious education. Currently a few pupils opt for a full GCSE course in Years 10 and 11, but there is no provision for all pupils to study religious education. Despite the current disruption to department developments there has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.

TECHNOLOGY

The focus of the inspection was on all aspects of design and technology in Years 7 to 9 and graphics in Years 10 and 11, although other design and technology subjects were also sampled in Years 10 and 11.

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership has ensured good improvement in the department.
- Pupils' attitudes are positive so they achieve well in Years 7 to 9 and in GCSE graphics.
- GCSE results are well below average, but in graphics standards are improving significantly.
- Good teaching is not consistent enough in all the design and technology subjects.
- Although the accommodation is excellent, there are insufficient facilities and resources available to teach some specialist aspects of computer-aided design.

Commentary

91. Pupils start in Year 7 with standards that are well below national expectations but by the end of Year 9 they attain close to the nationally expected level. A broad, well planned curriculum is provided in Years 7 to 9 enabling all pupils to develop their knowledge and skills progressively across the full range of subject areas. This ensures that all pupils achieve well. GCSE

examination results have been well below the national average. However, standards of current work seen in lessons and pupils' folders in GCSE graphics are very close to nationally expected levels. Using assessment information from work completed by the current Year 11 the school predicts that forthcoming results should see a significant improvement on previous results. Pupils' achievement in the GCSE graphics course is good. In the other design and technology subjects sampled in Years 10 and 11 there is less consistency in pupils' achievement.

92. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9, but consistently good in graphics in Years 10 and 11. Pupils acquire a good range of skills. They are excited by the wide range of tools and materials they have to work with, and by the very good learning environment provided. This impacts very positively on their attitudes and aspirations and they feel valued by staff. The facilities and resources needed to enable staff to teach necessary aspects of computer-aided design and manufacture and systems control are, however, not in place.
93. Comprehensive information about pupils is used well to inform teaching and assessments at the end of projects track pupils' attainment effectively. The rotation of pupils ensures that staff teach within their specialism, but limits their use of assessment information to set pupils individual targets.
94. The head of faculty provides a good role model and shares his exciting vision and high expectations with the department. A full complement of specialist staff is now in place, a large proportion of whom are trainees or in the early stages of their teaching career. The systematic and rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching needed to ensure consistently good teaching across all specialist subjects is not yet in place. The department benefits greatly by high quality support from the technical assistants who work as part of the staff team. The excellent accommodation helps to provide a stimulating learning environment for pupils. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

GNVQ performing arts, art and design and music were the main focus of the inspection, but work in media studies was also sampled.

Media studies

95. Standards of attainment in media in Years 7 to 9 are average and in Years 10 and 11 they are above average. In Years 7 to 9 pupils undertake projects in print, audio and the moving image. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 and good in Years 10 and 11. Pupils work well in groups, particularly in Years 10 and 11, and show a good understanding of key media concepts. A good range of work was seen showing high standards of planning and collaboration. A number of extra-curricular opportunities are offered to pupils to develop their skills in areas such as digital editing, animation and radio. Leadership and management are good. Departmental documentation is sound and schemes of work promote good teaching and learning.

Performing arts

Provision in performing arts is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Years 10 and 11 are above average and pupils achieve very well.
- Very good teaching is characterised by a very high level of subject expertise.
- Pupils are totally committed to the subject and their attitudes are very positive.
- The drama hall is old, small and not suitable for final performances.

Commentary

96. The number of pupils who passed the course in 2003 was well below the national average and very few pupils attained a merit grade. Following these disappointing results the arts focus has been limited to dance, drama and music and a new temporary head of faculty has been appointed to raise standards. Present pupils in Years 10 and 11 are working to standards that are above average and their achievement is very good, considering their relatively low prior attainment at the start of the course. The school recently received unit results where pupils in Years 10 and 11 have attained standards that are higher than average. In practical lessons and assessments, pupils display good improvisation skills and most have the ability to sustain character roles in depth. Pupils are able to use music technology effectively to create backing tracks and to give live performances.
97. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers have excellent subject expertise and this gives pupils the opportunity to increase their understanding of music, dance and drama. Often more than one teacher is present in lessons, which is helpful and supportive and gives much individual help to pupils. In one particular assessment, many adults, including a parent, supported the performance. This gave pupils a sense of public performance and provided much high quality feedback. There are very good relationships between the teachers and pupils as well as between the pupils themselves. This gives rise to a co-operative working atmosphere.
98. Because of the very good leadership of the arts and media faculty teachers are now working closely together to ensure that course requirements are fully met. Pupils fully appreciate the opportunity they have been given to participate in this course and to study a programme that is very clearly linked to their career aspirations. There are several new, high quality dance and drama studios, but the main drama room is old, small and unsuitable for full performances.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership and management ensure an improving department and good achievement by the pupils.
- Teaching is good in Years 10 and 11, but inconsistent in Years 7 and 8.
- GCSE results are well below the national average, but standards are rising.
- Extensive curriculum enrichment that has a positive impact on raising pupils' achievement.
- The use of ICT is not developed sufficiently.

Commentary

99. Pupils enter school with standards well below expected levels of attainment. The coherent curriculum in Years 7 to 9 is increasingly effective in building the necessary knowledge and skills that enable pupils to attain expected standards. Standards of work are improving, but remain below national expectations. Pupils achieve well by the time they are in Year 9. However, the skills that pupils are now developing in the earlier years have yet to impact on GCSE results, which remain well below the national average. The recently introduced vocational GCSE course meets pupils' needs very well and standards of work are now close to the national expectation. Pupils currently taking the examination courses are achieving well in Years 10 and 11.
100. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 and good in Years 10 and 11. When teaching is most effective, teachers understand pupils' needs well. This informs their teaching and results in all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, making good progress. Assessment of pupils' learning is effective but the information gained is not well used to set pupils individual targets and raise their expectations of what they can achieve.
101. The curriculum is extensively enriched through the school's Creative Partnerships, which contribute positively to pupils' social development. They frequently work with nationally

recognised artists and are regularly involved in partnerships with galleries and other sponsors. For example, pupils in Year 9 working to develop portraits discussed with artist Mark Gilbert his paintings of people with facial disfigurements. Through this exchange they were challenged to examine and review their own preconceptions of beauty. Facilities for ICT are too limited, although pupils make good use of the Internet for research and of the digital camera for producing images. There is insufficient use of computer-aided art into the curriculum for all pupils to benefit from it.

102. Leadership and management are good. The head of department has made a very positive impact on the department in a relatively short period of time through her clear vision of improved standards and an effective strategy for subject improvement. As yet, there are not the rigorous and systematic systems needed to ensure that all teaching of the subject is of a consistently good level. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in music are above average in Years 10 and 11, but below average in Years 7 to 9.
- Teaching is good in Years 10 and 11 and this ensures pupils achieve well.
- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory, but the department is in a good position to improve.
- Creative Partnerships provide exciting workshops, concerts and performance opportunities for many pupils.
- Many pupils benefit from instrumental tuition, but extra-curricular musical activities are limited.
- Resources for learning are very good, but there is insufficient use of ICT to support composing.

Commentary

103. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is well below expectations. Standards of work by the end of Year 9 are below average, but higher attaining pupils reach levels in line with, or above, national expectations. In 2003, teacher assessment was over-generous since the levels awarded did not accurately reflect the standards of pupils' work. In the current Year 11, a pass grade is predicted for the majority of pupils taking music as part of the GNVQ performing arts course. Two pupils have the potential to achieve a distinction. The standard of work seen in Years 10 and 11 is above average and pupils are achieving well. Talented pupils are suitably challenged to achieve high standards, especially when they benefit from working with mentors from the Guildhall.
104. Teaching is satisfactory overall, and is so in Years 7 to 9. Teaching in Years 10 and 11 is good. However, the lack of computers and suitable music software is having a negative impact on standards. Music technicians provide good support for pupils, enabling them to create high quality backing tracks, using a well-equipped recording studio. There are good examples of both independent and collaborative work resulting in compositions and performances of a high standard; for example, '*Will I survive?*' was successfully performed with many pupils involved. Where teaching is very good, pupils make very good progress and maximum time is spent developing musical skills. This in turn leads to the whole class playing instruments such as xylophones, keyboards and drum kit, resulting in a performance of high quality. Where teaching is unsatisfactory in Years 7 to 9 more effort is spent trying to manage behaviour than on productive teaching and learning. Generally, assessment is not being used consistently to inform the next steps in lessons.
105. The large majority of pupils enjoy music. In a Year 7 class, pupils working with a visiting musician listened attentively to complex instructions to play *Groove and the Break*. Pupils worked with concentration and enthusiasm. Exciting workshops and performance opportunities provided by high profile events, such as the launch of 'Black History Month', raise the profile and status of music in the school, and have a positive impact on raising pupils' standards, motivation and aspirations.

106. The head of department is relatively inexperienced and has only been in post for a short time. Clarity of vision and aims for music have not yet been established. Many pupils, for example, benefit from generously subsidised instrumental tuition, but the impact of this work is neither monitored nor integrated into the curriculum. The provision for extra-curricular musical activities remains too limited. Assessment procedures at the end of Year 9 have not been well managed. Although leadership and management are currently unsatisfactory, there are signs that the department has the potential to improve. The quality of accommodation and resources is very good and they support pupils' learning and motivation well.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are below average, but more pupils are now meeting expected standards for their age.
- Most pupils have positive attitudes and very good relationships with their teachers.
- Pupils' poor literacy skills prevent them from reaching high standards in GCSE.
- The department is improving and the staffing situation is now stable.
- The new sports hall is an excellent facility that has a positive impact on pupils' learning.

Commentary

107. Pupils attain below average standards at the end of Years 9 and 11, but their achievement is satisfactory in all aspects of the curriculum. A minority of pupils in all years, mostly boys, reach average standards and their achievement is good. A group of pupils in Years 10 and 11 follow a junior sports leadership course and achieve well. Standards are improving throughout all years. The head of department and the new team of teachers deserve particular credit for this, given the difficulties caused by poor facilities and a lack of specialist staff in previous years.
108. Pupils have different experiences before joining the school, but most arrive with well below average levels of attainment, particularly in movement activities. Pupils in all years build up their knowledge of health and fitness because teachers insist on thorough warm-up activities at the start of every lesson. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, improve their games skills because teachers' demonstrations provide good visual images of the performance to be learnt. The analytical skills of pupils in Years 7 to 9 are not as good as their practical performance skills. The development of pupils' evaluation and analytical skills is not emphasised enough, either in lessons or in the schemes of work. Pupils benefit from participating in dance lessons and this helps to raise their confidence in all movement activities.
109. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 studying a recently started GCSE course attain standards that are below national expectations. Year 11 boys in a GCSE practical lesson showed high standards when taking part in climbing at the local sports centre, but their success and progress in GCSE is hindered by their poor literacy skills. Individual pupils take part with good success in district and London schools events in athletics, cricket and football. Their involvement in these activities, some of which are taught by outside coaches, helps to raise standards and provides good opportunities for talented pupils. The short lunch-time limits extra activities and has a negative impact on pupils' participation, particularly that of girls.
110. Pupils' overall satisfactory achievement in Years 7 to 11 is directly attributable to satisfactory teaching as well as to pupils' positive attitudes and their very good relationships with teachers. A minority of teaching is unsatisfactory. This is because time is wasted taking lengthy registrations, or there is too much teacher talk. Too often pupils are not given enough opportunity to learn independently or take more responsibility for their own learning.

111. The head of department provides satisfactory leadership and management for a new and mostly inexperienced team of teachers. Methods of assessing and recording pupils' progress are satisfactorily established. They are, however, not specific enough, nor is the information shared with pupils. Good improvements have been made since the previous inspection. The new sports hall is an excellent facility, but the small, dilapidated changing rooms and lack of outdoor accommodation considerably hinder learning.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

No courses in this curriculum area were inspected.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The focus of the inspection was on citizenship.

Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are lessons where citizenship is clearly planned and taught well.
- Standards of attainment are well below average.
- Teaching is unsatisfactory as there is not enough focus on the statutory requirements.
- The management of the subject is unsatisfactory, although the school is soon to appoint a co-ordinator.

Commentary

112. Standards are well below average at the end of Years 9 and 11. The low level of pupils' literacy skills significantly and adversely affects standards of work throughout the school. Pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. This is because teachers are not consistently raising pupils' levels of attainment through a planned scheme of work and regular contributions from all subjects. Pupils with special educational needs and from minority ethnic backgrounds do, however, achieve as well as other pupils.
113. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory because citizenship is not well enough identified in the planning of subjects or made clear enough to pupils during lessons. In a minority of lessons in Years 7 to 9 teaching is unsatisfactory because teachers do not control pupils well enough, so not enough learning takes place. There are only very limited assessment procedures in place for tracking pupils' attainment and progress. Where teaching is good, lessons are planned well to cover all three elements of citizenship. These are then clearly understood by pupils, which improves their factual knowledge and learning.
114. The school's leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory because only a limited amount has been done to develop its provision, so statutory requirements are not fully met. However, the school does have a clear view of what now needs to be done and the appointment of a co-ordinator for citizenship is a very good indicator of the school's willingness to improve provision significantly.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	5
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	4
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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