

INSPECTION REPORT

Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Language College

London

LEA area: Islington

Unique reference number: 100457

Headteacher: Jill Coughlan CBE

Lead inspector: Mike McLachlan

Dates of inspection: 17th - 20th January 2005

Inspection number: 268381

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:	Female
Number on roll:	1186
School address:	Risinghill Street off Penton Street London
Postcode:	N1 9QG
Telephone number:	020 7837 0739
Fax number:	020 7278 9764
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Ms Corinne Rechais
Date of previous inspection:	November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Elizabeth Garrett Anderson Language College is an above average size county comprehensive school of 1186 girls from 11 to 16 years in the London Borough of Islington, close to King's Cross railway station. Many students travel from neighbouring boroughs and recruitment is from as many as 70 primary schools. There is a high proportion of students joining or leaving the college other than in Year 7. Overall, there are high levels of social deprivation in the area and 52.4 per cent of students, well above the national average of 15.6 per cent, are entitled to free school meals. There is a wide ranging social and cultural mix in the area and this is reflected in the college population. The complex social mix brings significant challenges. The percentage of students from ethnic minority groups at 86 per cent is very high. There is a very wide range of ethnic and cultural groups. The largest groups represented are from Bangladesh, Africa and the Caribbean. Around 60 per cent of students, a very high proportion, are from homes where English is not the first language. Over 50 different languages are spoken in the college although the most often used are Bengali, Turkish and Arabic in addition to English. Around 20 per cent of the students are from families which are refugee or asylum seekers. Students' attainment on entry to the college is well below average with a significant proportion with very low attainment. Given the circumstances, not surprisingly, literacy skills are the weakest. 23.4 per cent of students are on the special needs register, an above average proportion and of these only 1.1 per cent have full Statements, a below average figure. The most common disability is moderate difficulty in learning with much smaller numbers of students with social and behavioural difficulties or dyslexia. Over 87 per cent of students, a very high proportion, continue into further education with a further 3 per cent involved in employment or training after leaving the college. There have been a number of significant and transformational changes to the college since the previous inspection. Because of the high levels of social deprivation the college is part of an Education Action Zone. The college has achieved language college status, the Artsmark Gold, and recently full service extended school status which requires the college formally to provide a wider range of services to its students and the community. The headteacher's contribution to education has been recognised within the National Honours system. As part of its aim to raise standards by involving the community, the college has amassed considerable external funding to build a state of the art, technological, community and school centre called Platform 1 complete with crèche facilities, to support families returning to learning. Parental and student satisfaction with the college is very high.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
3654	Mike McLachlan	Lead inspector	
9614	Carolyn Webb	Lay inspector	
6044	Roger Perkins	Team inspector	Mathematics
33653	Sally Robson	Team inspector	English
33527	Keith Brown	Team inspector	Science
32196	Maggie Fenwick	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Work-related learning
33368	Val Greatrex	Team inspector	Design and technology
12331	Vera Grigg	Team inspector	Art and design Special educational needs English as an additional language
15576	David Nebesnuick	Team inspector	Citizenship Geography
4317	Ken Madrell	Team inspector	History Religious education
1258	Helen Silverstone	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
24026	Celia Holland	Team inspector	Music
32350	Ann-Marie Latham	Team inspector	Physical education
7636	Anil Sinha	Team inspector	Community languages
30818	Martin Pope	Team inspector	

The inspection contractor was:

ALTECQ INSPECTIONS LTD
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Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL53 7JX

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an excellent college with many outstanding features. Overall standards at the end of Year 11 are **average**. This represents very good achievement by Year 9, excellent achievement by Year 11 and **excellent** achievement overall. The college has an **excellent** ethos. The quality of teaching is **very good**. Overall, the quality of education is **excellent**. Leadership and management of the college are **excellent**. The governing body provides very good support and challenge to the college. The college gives excellent value for money.

The college's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The college community, at all levels, provides a shining example of high expectations, developing self esteem and racial harmony in which the respect for and celebration of the similarities and differences evident in a rich and diverse cultural community are at the heart of all its work.
- The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding. She has excellent support from her senior leadership team and the middle managers responsible for subjects and pastoral support.
- Consistently good and very good teaching means that students' achievement is excellent and this combined with the very good systems of monitoring and individual target setting leads to the vast majority of students from all ethnic origins making excellent progress.
- The wide range of activity arising from becoming a language college and the complementary focus on arts provision have contributed significantly to raising achievement and aspiration across the college and promoted excellent links with the local partner primary schools.
- The college leadership, with the support of the very good governing body, have rightly identified working in and with the community as the next important stage in raising achievement further. To this end, they have worked tirelessly to seek additional funding to provide the excellent community resources now available through Platform 1 and other provision.
- The pathways programme for supporting students in danger of disengaging with school is excellent and results in substantial improvements in attendance and nearly all students achieving recognised qualifications particularly in English and mathematics.
- A very high proportion of students leave the college for further education or training and subsequently higher education or employment.
- The college has invested well in the newer technologies but some departments still have insufficient access to or are making insufficient use of what is available.
- The senior leadership team has very successfully empowered middle managers to assume full responsibility for the work of their teams, however, further work is needed to ensure the effective practice particularly in assessment is quickly and consistently adapted for use in all areas.
- Teachers and support staff work very successfully to ensure that the dated and drab, and in some subjects unsatisfactory, accommodation does not unduly affect students' learning.

Improvement since the previous inspection has been **excellent**. There have been transformational changes to the quality of education provided. The curriculum is now well matched to the needs of all students. Issues arising from the previous inspection have been addressed very thoroughly. Provision for students with special educational needs is excellent and is identified as a leading department in the local area. Monitoring and evaluating teaching and tracking students' performance and the use of data to support this monitoring by senior and middle managers is now very well established. Standards are rising by the end of Year 9 and particularly in GCSE by the end of Year 11. Provision for the local community, located in a state of the art new building called Platform 1, is now excellent. The college has gained national recognition, particularly as a Language College and a Full Service Extended School and has achieved the prestigious Artsmark Gold award. These changes in status and national awards are not easily gained and are a testimony to the overall excellent provision.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Overall, attainment on entry to the college is well below average and for a significant proportion of students is very low and very few start with above average attainment. Over 50 languages are spoken, a very high proportion of students have English as a second language and over half are entitled to free school meals. Student mobility is very high. In 2004 one in five pupils who left in Year 11 did not start in Year 7 and one in ten of these pupils joined the college after Year 9.

Standards reached by the end of Year 9 are below average, however, given the well below average standards on entry, students achieve very well. In 2004 standards reached in English are in line with national averages but well below in mathematics and science. Compared with schools in similar social contexts standards were very high in English and well above average in mathematics and science. The trend of improvement is faster than the national average. Standards of work seen during the inspection across almost all subjects reflect this improving picture.

Performance in GCSE/GNVQ examinations at the end of Year 11, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
	C	C	C	A

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

Despite the well below average starting point, overall standards in the examinations in Year 11 reach national averages so that the achievement of students is outstanding. The school is in the top 5 per cent of all schools nationally, when students' progress through Years 10 and 11 is compared with their attainment in Year 9. Standards are improving at a faster rate than the national trend and this improving picture was reflected in the work seen during the inspection. The overall achievement of students with special educational needs and from the many different ethnic minority groups is excellent. Challenging targets agreed with the college and for all ethnic minority groups were exceeded in 2004.

Students' attitudes, values and personal development are **excellent**. The vast majority of students show excellent attitudes to learning and to each other. Overall behaviour is very good although teachers have to work very hard to maintain this. Attendance has improved and is now very good. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **excellent** overall. The college provides an oasis of racial harmony where young women are empowered to become caring, confident and responsible citizens and where each individual is valued and the beliefs and cultures of all are respected and celebrated.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education is **excellent**. The quality of teaching and learning are **very good**. Because of the rich mix of students from many ethnic groups and the wide ability and socio economic circumstances of the students, teachers work very hard to very successfully plan lessons that meet the needs of the individual students in their care, consequently, learning is very good. Overall, students are keen, well motivated and respond very well to this high level of support and challenge. The curriculum is excellent, particularly in Years 10 and 11 and there is an excellent range of extra curricular activities. Pastoral care is excellent and the college's procedures for students' welfare, guidance and support are very good overall. Consultation with students is excellent and they are involved fully in the life of the college. The college's procedures to involve parents and to support them are very good. Links with the local community, particularly through the Platform 1 community programme and other schools and colleges are excellent.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is **excellent** and although they have brought about many significant improvements since the previous inspection, there is no air of complacency and the drive to improve further is very evident. The result is a school community where it is safe to make mistakes, innovation is encouraged, diversity is celebrated and leadership is nurtured in staff

and students. The leadership of the headteacher is outstanding. Overall leadership and management of senior and middle managers are excellent. The quality of governance is very good although the college is not fully compliant with the requirements to provide a daily act of collective worship and for the teaching of art and design in Years 7 to 9. The chair of governors provides very good leadership and governors are very committed to the college. They are well aware of the strengths of the college and have been instrumental in the drive to improve standards and community provision but they are also fully aware of what needs to be done to bring about further improvement.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The vast majority of parents are very satisfied with the college. They are confident that their daughters like school and are making good progress. The students have very similar views. They feel they are made to work hard but are trusted, fully involved in decision making and receive very good challenging teaching and sensitive support care and guidance. Their main dissatisfaction lies in the condition of the social areas and toilets. They are very proud to be part of such a diverse and culturally rich school. Students spoke eloquently of how the many different cultures represented in the college not only enabled them to value highly their own culture but also to celebrate the similarities and differences each brought to the college.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The college is highly effective but nevertheless has clearly identified a number of key areas it wishes to improve. The inspection confirms these judgements so that the most important things the college should do to improve are:

- Ensure all departments have access to and use the newer technologies to enhance learning and raise standards.
- Ensure the current excellent work and best practice particularly in teaching, learning and assessment is quickly and consistently adapted for use in all subjects.
- Improve the dated, drab and, in some subjects and social areas, unsatisfactory, accommodation as soon as is practicable.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Comply fully with the requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship and the National Curriculum requirements for art and design in Years 7 to 9.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement overall is **excellent**. Achievement is **very good** by the end of Year 9 and **excellent** by the end of Year 11. Overall standards achieved are **average**. Standards achieved by the end of Year 9 are **below average** and by the end of Year 11 are **average**. Standards of work seen reflect this picture. There is an improving trend and standards are rising faster than the national average. Achievement of all ethnic groups, who represent the vast majority of students, is excellent and overall their standards are average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Given the very low attainment on entry to the college achievement by the end of Year 11 is excellent.
- Students' progress through the upper school places the school in the top 5 per cent of all schools nationally.
- Standards in English are well above average – a remarkable achievement given the very high numbers of students who have English as an additional language.
- Students on the Pathways programme who are in danger of disengaging with school achieve very well because of the quality of education provided and the care, guidance and monitoring they receive.
- Despite the low attainment on entry, very good teaching leads to overall standards that are near national averages by the end of Year 11 and that are exceeded in some subjects.
- Standards are improving faster than the national average.
- Overall, the challenging targets set in 2004 for the college by the governors and for the different ethnic minority groups were exceeded.

Commentary

1. Attainment on entry to the college is well below average and for a significant proportion is very low. A very high proportion of students, around 60 per cent, have English as an additional language. Student mobility is very high so that in 2004 one in five students who left in Year 11 did not start at the college in Year 7 and one in ten of these students joined the college after Year 9. There are well below national average numbers of students starting at the college with above average test results, and in the main these students have only just reached this level.

Key Stage 3

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 9 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	32.6 (30.3)	33.3 (33.4)
Mathematics	32.2 (31.4)	35.5 (35.4)
Science	30.8 (29.6)	33.1 (33.6)

There were 237 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. Given the students' attainment when entering the college, achievement by the end of Year 9 is very good and by the time students leave college in Year 11 is excellent. The results for the Year 9 tests in English, mathematics and science have yet to be finally validated but provisional figures suggest that standards achieved overall in the Year 9 tests are below average. In English they were in line with national averages but well below in mathematics and science. Compared with schools in similar social contexts standards were very high in English and well above average in mathematics and science. Compared with schools with similar attainment on entry the results were well above average in English and average in

mathematics and science. However, these figures do not adequately take into account the substantial challenges facing the college and the students given the high numbers with English as an additional language and the high numbers of students starting after Year 7. Consequently overall achievement by the end of Year 9 is very good. The trend of improvement is above the national average.

- Standards of work seen during the inspection, across all other subjects, reflect this mixed but improving picture. Standards seen were well above average in community languages and drama, average in European languages, information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology, religious education, art and design and dance, and below average in history, geography, music and physical education. Given students' prior attainment and the challenging context faced by the college this represents very good achievement in drama, history, design and technology, art and design and music, good achievement in dance, religious education, geography, and European and community languages, and satisfactory achievement in physical education and ICT.

Key Stage 4

Standards in GCSE/GNVQ examinations at the end of Year 11 in 2004 (2003)

	School results	National results
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	51(47)	52(52)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	88(88)	89 (88)
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	98(89)	96 (96)
Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects)	*34.2(32.9) **280.6	34.9 (34.7) **282.8

There were 234 pupils in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year (2003).

**. The average point scores for 2004 and 2003 based on the old point score system of GCSE/GNVQs only.*

***The 2004 average point scores based on a new point scoring system devised by Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) to enable contributions by other approved qualifications to be counted.*

- Achievement in Years 10 and 11 is excellent. Despite the low starting point, overall standards achieved in the examinations in Year 11 are in line with national averages. The proportion of students achieving five grades A*-C was just below the national average and below that for girls. The proportion of students achieving five passes was in line with the national average. Given the numbers of students with English as an additional language a remarkable 98 per cent of students achieved at least one pass and nearly all students passed both English and mathematics, which well exceeds the national picture of around 89 per cent passing both subjects. When these results are compared with schools with similar levels of social deprivation or with schools with students with similar standards in Year 9 standards are well above average. Students make excellent progress in the last two years and when compared with all schools the progress made places the school in the top 5 per cent of all schools nationally, again, given the challenging circumstances faced by the college this is an outstanding achievement. Standards of work seen reflect this improving picture. Well above average standards were seen in English and standards seen in mathematics and science were average. This demonstrates excellent achievement in English and very good achievement in mathematics and science. The college is improving at a faster rate than the national trend and this picture was reflected in the work seen during the inspection.

5. Standards seen in other subjects were very high in drama, well above average in community languages, sociology, design and technology, and art and design, above average in vocational courses and dance, average in ICT, history, geography, religious education and music and below average in physical education. Again given the high mobility, attainment on entry and wide ethnic mix this demonstrates excellent achievement in drama and art and design, very good achievement in history, geography, design technology, music and dance, and good achievement in community and European languages, ICT, physical education, religious education, and vocational courses.
6. The college sets challenging targets for all students and has excellent systems for monitoring these both for the individual student and for the different ethnic minority groups where numbers are sufficiently large to make such monitoring significant for measuring trends in performance. Challenging targets are set statutorily by governors for the college and by the college for all ethnic minority groups. Careful monitoring had identified underperformance by Turkish and the white students. As a result of the careful tracking of progress and intervention where necessary as part of the excellent provision, all targets for the college and for the ethnic minority groups were exceeded in 2004. Students with special educational needs and English as an additional language make excellent progress with the support of the teachers and the assistants. The special needs co-ordinator uses a very wide variety of assessments to identify students' specific needs and those who initially do not make sufficient gains towards the set targets are given additional support, so that overall they also make excellent progress. The achievement of able and talented students match the college as a whole and they are particularly well challenged in mathematics with access to early advanced courses, and in dance, drama, music and art and design.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Students' attitudes to learning are **excellent** and overall their behaviour is **very good**. Their attendance is also **very good**. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **excellent** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The college is an oasis of racial and cultural harmony in which each individual is valued and the beliefs and cultures of all are respected and celebrated.
- Students are inspired to do their best by the very high expectations set by the college.
- The vast majority of students are very well motivated and ambitious.
- Students and staff enjoy mutual trust and respect.
- Students' personal development is excellent.
- Punctuality in the mornings is good.

Commentary

7. Students are tremendously proud of their college and very keen to talk about its values and what these mean to them. The vast majority of students feel the rich, diverse cultural mix and harmony within the college, which values all whatever their creed or nationality, enhances their education and environment. Their appreciation of this contributes to their excellent cultural and social development. Students enjoy their lessons and work hard and none wish to disappoint. The headteacher and her staff build students' self-esteem through mutual respect and trust, instilling confidence that students can achieve and inspire in them great ambition. The college is an exhilarating place in which to learn, with a 'buzz' in the air, and students respond enthusiastically to challenge. Delighted with the tangible benefits brought by the language college status and the new technology available through the community building, they take full advantage of these, for instance, using whenever they can the excellent new facilities in Platform 1 and the library.
8. The majority of students arrive promptly, despite at the time of the inspection, extensive local road works, and their attendance is now in line with the national average. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection although improving attendance still rightly

remains a college priority. Attendance is well monitored by vigilant office staff, who telephone home if students are not in college on time. They are encouraged to aim for their 100 per cent attendance certificates. The college takes a tough stance on unauthorised absence and does not authorise absence lightly. The education welfare officer is quickly made aware of any problems and because of the frequency of visits, is effectively involved in supporting students to return to school. Attendance by those students involved in the Pathways programme, an extensive individualised programme of offsite work with college or training providers, is rigorously monitored. Because of this and the quality of the programmes available to these initially less well-motivated students, their attendance, attitudes and self-confidence have seen substantial and sometimes remarkable improvements.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (2003/2004) (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	6.0	School data:	2.1
National data:	7.2	National data:	1.1

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

9. The college is largely a self-disciplining community. The college appoints no monitors or prefects as the very high expectations and consistent behaviour management results in students who display very good behaviour not only in lessons but also around the college. Students are allowed into college and classes at any time and respond exceptionally well to this trust. Very few older students abuse the freedom they are allowed at lunchtime when they can leave college premises. Rewards are valued and sanctions respected. Exclusions are used judiciously to deal with inappropriate behaviour. Fifty-two girls were involved in 65 exclusions for fixed periods over the past 12 months. Excellent support and curriculum provision has resulted in no permanent exclusions.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	143	9	0
White – Irish	5	2	0
White – any other White background	137	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	36	4	0
Mixed – White and Black African	13	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	4	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	39	2	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	22	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	15	0	0

Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	224	5	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	4	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	102	12	0
Black or Black British – African	230	22	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	17	0	0
Chinese	22	1	0
Any other ethnic group	133	5	0
No ethnic group recorded	40	3	0

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

10. Students' personal development is excellent. In this culturally diverse and inclusive college society, all students are extremely well integrated and warmly welcomed at whatever stage they arrive. Students support each other very well indeed, helping those with problems and ever ready to give comfort or congratulation when this is needed or due – one very good example is the Year 9/Year 7 'buddy' scheme. As a result of their deepening understanding of the wider world brought about through thought-provoking assemblies, personal, social and health education lessons and visits, for example, to the Anne Frank exhibition, students are aware of their duties and responsibilities as citizens, to each other and to their own and others' environment. Their moral and social development is excellent, and the 'Get up and Go' Year 10 residential weekend and 'Year 11 week' play an important part in this. Students develop very good spiritual awareness. Elements of this are evident in discussion and many of their lessons, in particular English, drama, dance, art and design, religious education and music, when this added dimension enhances their enjoyment and learning.
11. Students with special educational needs, and those who have English as an additional language, have very positive attitudes to school and to learning. They all attend well, and stated that they would like more time in school so that they could learn more. The students with special educational needs take advantage of booster and revision classes, and spend much of their time, outside the taught day, in the learning resource area or library. Those with English as an additional language show a remarkable determination to become fluent in English, and they use time at home to read English books and to converse. The progress that some of the students have made is exceptional, which reflects not only the support that they have received, but also their total commitment to learning English.

Example of outstanding practice

Students who enter the college with special educational needs or English as an additional language make excellent progress, due to the personalised support that they receive.

Detailed use of assessment, teaching that is aimed to meet students' specific needs in subjects and an approach which recognises and values the wider achievements of the each individual are a key factors to students with special educational needs or who have English as an additional language making excellent progress. Excellent co-ordination of special educational needs provision, ensures very good teaching and pastoral care that results in raising students' self-esteem and gives them the determination to learn. Excellent special classes are provided where they discover that they love to learn and this carries through to their other lessons.

Students that enter the college with English as an additional language, often after Year 7, are quickly made to feel welcome and given every possible support in their learning. Their home language is valued, which is a crucial factor in the rapid progress they make in learning to communicate in English. This is initially through 'welcome' packs, in their own language, daily intensive sessions in learning English and support from trained assistants and all teachers in all subjects. Consequently these students quickly develop confidence and a determined desire to learn. They work extremely hard at this, love the college, take every opportunity to take part and therefore make progress which, given their initial circumstances, is often exceptional.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Overall the quality of education provided by the college is **excellent**. The cumulative effects of all aspects of provision result in the students achieving exceptionally well.

Teaching and learning

Overall teaching is **very good** and learning is **very good**. They are both very good in Years 7 to 9 and in Years 10 and 11. The use of assessment is **good** with many strengths.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers show very good command of their subjects and use a wide variety of techniques make lessons interesting.
- Teachers' planning is very good as careful consideration is given to ensuring lessons meet the needs of the wide ability range and many different cultures and ethnic groups represented in the college.
- The support given to students with English as an additional language is very good and often excellent.
- Students attitudes to learning and their ability to discuss and debate new topics are a direct results of the very good quality of teaching and the promotion of self confidence and maturity as the students progress through the college
- Teachers work very hard and effectively to manage and involve the students who are very lively and the few, but significant number of students, who sometimes find it very difficult to became fully involved in lessons and college life.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 121 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
12(10%)	43 (35%)	47(39%)	19(16%)	0(0%)	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.

12. The overall quality of teaching is very good. It is very good in Years 7 to 9 and in Years 10 and 11. Of the lessons seen nearly half were very good or better and one in ten was excellent. Over eight in ten lessons seen were good and there was no unsatisfactory or poor teaching. The excellent or very good teaching was seen in a very wide range of subjects including mathematics, English, science, art and design, dance, drama, design and technology, community and European languages, geography, history, music and sociology. The overall judgement on the quality of teaching in subjects based on the lessons seen, the scrutiny of work and in discussion with students, show that teaching is judged to be good or better in all subjects and very good overall in English, European and community languages, science, history, design and technology, art and design, music and drama.
13. In the excellent lessons seen teaching is engaging, entertaining highly structured and adventurous and the pace of the lessons is fast moving but the learning of all students is checked through probing and challenging questioning that make students think and think again. The very good and good teaching is characterised by expert subject knowledge, meticulous planning to meet the needs of the wide ability and in particular the needs of students whose first language is not English. Great care is given to ensuring the specialist vocabulary for the subject is used persistently and consistently by staff and students in order to reinforce speaking and listening skills. Resources such as coloured coded cards or partially completed examples are use very well to support students with special educational needs or those who are at the early stage of English language acquisition. Teachers insist on and achieve the highest standards of behaviour. Students are very well managed by teachers, the pace of learning is well matched to the needs of the students, searching and challenging questioning encourage a high level of participation and students are consistently challenged to improve upon their previous best. There is a strong emphasis on using a range of resources that reflect the richness of cultural diversity in the college. Where teaching seen was satisfactory, teachers were not always fully meeting the needs of the wide ability range in their class, activities planned were sound but not inspiring, or the behaviour of the particular group needed to be regularly managed so that gains in learning, though satisfactory, were not as rapid as they should have been for some students.
14. The very good teaching leads to very good learning overall. Students acquire skills knowledge and understanding well or very well in all subjects. In lessons seen they were able to work independently and co-operatively and in the main work very productively. However, given the complex make up of the student population, this is not an easy school to teach in and the teachers work hard and in some classes, particularly in Years 7 to 9, very hard to ensure students keep working throughout the lesson. Learning is very good because of the consistent approach taken across the college, for example, in English and art and design. In other subjects a strong feature of all lessons is the way that learning objectives are shared at the beginning and tested at the end of lessons so that all are clear what is to be learned and what has been learned. In European and community languages lively presentations, mostly in the language being studied, result in good acquisition of vocabulary. In ICT and business education good use is made of ICT for independent research. In citizenship, mathematics, English art and design and drama and many other subjects there is a strong emphasis on using a range of resources to support the richness of cultural diversity in the college so that students feel valued and are keen to become involved in their own learning.
15. Students with special educational needs are taught very well either by withdrawal into small groups, in small classes, or with support by the class teacher. The quality of teaching in the small groups is very good. Tasks are challenging but attainable, and they are kept short, so that students stay focused and therefore learn. Relationships are very good, and with an emphasis on building up students' self-confidence, they try very hard. Teaching assistants are very well used to assist students' learning and teachers set well planned, accessible tasks and targets for these students, which build their self-confidence. Students at an early stage of learning English have intensive language tuition once a day and partnership lessons take place where there are a high number of these students. These are considered

extremely effective by the students. In other lessons, teachers support these students by ensuring that they have the necessary language and understanding to make progress.

16. The quality of assessment has much improved since the previous inspection. There are now very good arrangements for the production, analysis and sharing of a wide range of performance data with all departments and this is well used by teachers to develop a good knowledge of the needs of the many different ability and ethnic groups of students. Departments very effectively review their GCSE performance and develop improved strategies to raise achievement further. This rigorous monitoring of performance has been very successful and underpins the steadily improving standards.
17. The thoroughness of the procedures in assessing students' work in lessons is good overall. It is now very good in English, mathematics, Bengali, Turkish, design and technology, history, art and design, music, business education and drama. It is satisfactory in ICT, physical education and citizenship with all other subjects being good. Most marking contains useful comments and good information on how to improve is given during and at the end of many lessons. A well developed marking policy has recently been introduced which emphasises "close the gap" marking to move students more quickly from where they are to where they should be. Students' understanding of how to improve their own work is rightly targeted for further improvement and in several departments, self review by the students is being carefully introduced and more students are now aware of their own strengths and weaknesses. These very good procedures are being developed in particular subjects as part of a whole school policy to improve assessment and are intended to be shared more fully across departments. While this measured approach is part of the school's overall improvement strategy, department practice would be further improved if the pace of sharing good practice was accelerated.

The curriculum

The college provides an **excellent** curriculum overall. It is **very good** for students in Years 7 to 9 and **excellent** for those in Years 10 and 11. There is an **excellent** range of opportunities for enrichment. There is a **good** match of teachers and the level of support staffing is **satisfactory**. Accommodation and resources are **good** overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum meets the needs of students exceptionally well especially in Years 10 and 11.
- The institution's status as a language college has enhanced its curriculum significantly
- The provision for students' enrichment by hard working staff is excellent.
- The quality and quantity of staffing and resources for learning are good.
- There are weaknesses in citizenship, physical education and art and design in Years 7 to 9.
- The facilities in Platform 1 are excellent but the fabric of the other buildings are dated and drab, and the accommodation in music and the dining area is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

18. The curriculum in Years 7 to 9 is very good and caters very effectively for the interests and requirements of all students but notably for the study of European and community

languages. In Years 7 to 9 students can study two languages, including community languages and discrete dance and drama. The college has made a major contribution to a national training video on early stage bilingual learning. The implementation of the national strategy is regarded as a model for other schools in the local education authority. The curriculum is particularly strong in English, mathematics, languages, history, music and drama. It is satisfactory in ICT and design and technology although the time available to this subject reduces the opportunity for students to study in depth all aspects of the design and technology curriculum. The curriculum just meets statutory requirements in citizenship in respect of the college's current plans, however, the curriculum does not meet statutory requirements for art and design in the cultural aspect for Years 7 to 9.

Example of outstanding practice

The Pathways programme, a tailor made curriculum provided for pupils in danger of disengaging with school in Years 10 and 11, is excellent and results in significant improvements in attendance and achievement.

The Pathways programme is followed by around 50 students in Years 10 and 11 who for a variety of reasons are in danger of not attending school or achieving well. This programme of tailor made offsite courses combined with a European language, English and mathematics GCSE on-site is very well established. The programme is delivered in conjunction with a wide range of very committed partners including local colleges, training providers and employers. The head of this programme has a clear vision of success breeding success, the importance of achieving national accreditation, particularly in GCSE English and mathematics, and how this, above all, raises students' self-confidence and esteem. This inclusive ethos is manifest in all that is done for these vulnerable students. The high expectations of academic success combined with relentless but immensely caring support, guidance and monitoring of achievement and attendance ensures that the vast majority, if not all of these students thrive and become self confident young adults equipped to succeed alongside their peers.

19. Overall the curriculum in Years 10 and 11 is outstanding, especially in languages, music and drama. All students study at least one modern foreign language to GCSE and have scope to study community languages also. The curriculum is very strong in English, mathematics, science, history and art and design. Arts courses have been awarded the prestigious Artsmark Gold award. Curriculum programmes for students aged 14 to 19 years are excellent. For example, the Pathways programme for more vulnerable students requiring individually designed programmes is very well established. Students gain a range of qualifications and wide vocational and educational experience from the course. The Pathways model has gained national and international award and recognition. The college has worked hard to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum, both during the taught day, and those outside it, are available to students with special educational needs, and those who have English as an additional language.
20. Opportunities for enrichment are excellent. There is a wealth of clubs at lunch-time and after school that cover a very wide range of sporting, music and cultural activities. For example, the Asian dance club is open to all and is very popular, as are the art, drama and origami mathematics clubs. Visits and performances are undertaken in the locality. Subjects such as English, science, mathematics, history and design and technology provide 'catch up' clubs for homework and coursework. Students can learn a variety of languages after school. Students travel abroad on trips, participate in outward-bound activities and visit theatres and cinemas.
21. The college has a good selection of specialist teachers to teach the curriculum. The provision of support staff and technicians is satisfactory overall although, due to budget constraints, there are too few to fully support all curriculum needs. There is excellent staffing in history and it is very good in science, languages and drama. The teaching staff and the

assistants, who have responsibility for students with special educational needs and for those who have English as an additional language, are very experienced and qualified although there are too few assistants to fully meet the diverse needs of all the students within the classroom. The accommodation is satisfactory overall with excellent provision in Platform 1 and very good provision in drama, dance and the library. The accommodation available for those responsible for special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language, are adequate for their needs. The classrooms are small for the numbers of students, but there are separate offices, necessary for confidentiality. The general appearance of the college is worn and shabby and there is unsatisfactory accommodation in music and social areas such as toilets and the dining area. The resources provided are good in most subjects but are unsatisfactory in music technology. There are good resources to support students who have special educational needs, and those who have English as an additional language. There are dictionaries in the many first languages that students have and good resources, such as bi-lingual books, in the library. There are also relevant programmes on computers in the support areas that assist students in their learning.

Care, guidance and support

Pastoral care and procedures for health and safety is **excellent** and the college's procedures for students' welfare, guidance and support are **very good** overall. Consultation with students is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Child protection procedures are excellent.
- Excellent pastoral care results in excellent relationships that are evident throughout the school community.
- Staff knowledge and understanding of the many different backgrounds of students is very good.
- Procedures to seek students' views are very good indeed.
- Students are given many opportunities to play their full part in making decisions about the college.
- The canteen is cramped and difficult to keep clean.
- Disabled access is not possible in many parts of the buildings.

Commentary

22. The health and safety of the whole college community are high priorities for staff and governors and under constant review. The very good security is as a result of regular risk assessments. The college procedures for child protection are excellent, all staff know what to do and liaison with local agencies is very good. Trained personnel administer first aid well when needed but students have no private area in which to wait for attention, treatment or collection when unwell. Inspectors agree with students' views that the canteen is cramped and that toilets need attention and this reduces the overall satisfaction that students have with what otherwise they feel is a very good school.
23. Pastoral care, headed by one of the deputy headteachers, is excellent, the tutorial system works very well for all and support and guidance for students in all years is very good. Staff have a very good knowledge of students' many different cultural backgrounds and traditions, and know individuals very well. As a result of this and the excellent relationships, all have an adult to turn to, confident that their views and problems are taken seriously. Some seek the advice of the college counsellor and others are pleased to have the support of mentors from a national newspaper. Peer mentors from two ethnic groups have just finished their training and are looking forward to their new role, eager to help all members of the school community. Outside agencies are used very well to support students with particular difficulties, representatives attend the student support panel meetings, and the safer schools officer is soon to make the college her main base.

24. The support provided for pupils in danger of disengaging with school is excellent. High expectations of academic success combined with relentless but immensely caring support, guidance and monitoring ensures that the vast majority of, if not all, students thrive and become self-confident young adults equipped to succeed alongside their peers. The care and guidance of students who have special educational needs and also for those who have English as an additional language, is very good. These students are assessed on entry to the college, provided with a 'welcome' pack in their home language wherever possible, and then quickly put into the mainstream classes. They are placed with other students who speak their home language wherever possible, and the unit provides individual support. The buzz of activities in the learning support area, and the numbers that gravitate towards it, shows that students welcome the opportunity to use it for support outside the school day. The staff are always there to talk, to listen, and to support.
25. The progress of each student as an individual is at the heart of the colleges' work. Effective systems enable students to know their academic targets for GCSE examinations or for core subjects in the lower years and the students are involved well in setting and reviewing these. The college has efficient and effective means of measuring progress of individuals and specific ethnic minority groups and the amount of value added by each subject at the end of Year 9 and as students progress through Years 10 and 11. Consequently, students understand how to improve their work and to what level they should aspire and this information is shared with their parents. On-going self-evaluation is an effective and important part of the process. Students value the support, motivation and encouragement they receive both in college and through the many and varied extra-curricular clubs and activities. The heads of each key stage, year heads, and form tutors as well as teachers, effectively monitor students' progress, school and homework. This meticulous monitoring of all students ensures the vast majority progress well towards individual targets and the school's statutory targets for the end of Year 9 and in the GCSE examinations. The overall quality of target setting is strong with mathematics and history being particularly effective. The school has had whole school in service training this year to develop this theme. An evaluation of the college's procedures for careers advice and guidance is in the report on work-related learning.
26. The college's consultation procedures, both formal and informal, are very effective indeed. Students' views are sought on all aspects of their education and life at college, and they articulate these very well indeed, knowing that staff listen to them. Year councils meet weekly to discuss the suggestions and concerns of their peers, and school councillors once a month, these representatives easily identified by their distinctive ties. School councillors form an important part of college management, for example, they produce an annual action and improvement plan that is included in the school improvement plan, alongside the improvement plans from departments and other teachers. They are very proud of changes made to the school canteen menu, just one example of their successful representations. They liaise very effectively with teaching staff and governors and are consulted on major decisions. They have also taken an active part in the Islington Pupil Parliament.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The college's procedures to involve parents and to support them are **very** good. Links with the local community and other schools and colleges are **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The college has a very high and respected profile in the community.
- Parents' support for the college is very strong.
- Parents receive very good information.
- Information and support for parents of children with special educational needs and for those who speak English as an additional language, is very good indeed.
- Community provision and community involvement in and with the college is excellent.
- Links with local primary schools and local sixth form colleges are excellent.

- Excellent achievement, advice, support and partnerships results in high aspirations so that a very large number of students carrying on to further education and later into higher education.

Commentary

27. The college is constantly seeking to improve on the already very good relationship enjoyed with parents and to support them in their own lives – the prospectus states that ‘parents are central to the successful education of our children’ and the school strives very hard to make them so. Links with parents are very good, and their approval of what the college stands for and is doing for their children was overwhelmingly demonstrated through response to the Ofsted questionnaire and at the parents’ meeting. The college has tried many times though unsuccessfully to start a parent teacher association but parents are delighted to attend productions, celebrating their child’s performance, and respond very well to the fund-raising events organised.
28. Parents are formally consulted through surveys every three years, and the results carefully analysed before action is taken. Through the prospectus and regular newsletters they receive very good information about the curriculum, events and students’ progress. In Years 7, 8 and 9 they accompany their children to academic review days and in Years 10 and 11 are invited to the parents’ evening following students’ attendance at these. Annual reports give clear indications of the level at which students are working and to what they should aspire. Parents are also told of their effort and success in subjects, and a useful comment from their tutor appears in front of their profiles. Information and support for parents of those with special education or other needs and for parents speaking English as an additional language are very good indeed. All attend the annual reviews, which indicates the extent to which they seriously consider the students’ needs. The parents and carers of those students who have English as an additional language are made very welcome and every effort is made to communicate with them in their home language.
29. The partnership between college and community is an outstanding example of what can be achieved, and is constantly improving. Local groups involved with the college include the Education Action Zone (King’s Cross Excellence in Cities) in which the college has played a significant and pro-active role, the 14-19 partnership, film/video workshop, ECI communications project and the Hanover crèche to name but a few. Adults learn alongside students in some lessons and many from all ethnic groups take advantage of the opportunities to learn and extend their ICT and other skills at the state of the art community provision aptly called Platform 1. Adult ICT classes are always full and all from the local community are encouraged to use the e-mail stations and other resources. Through Platform 1 and the Full Service Extended School programme community provision and use are planned, initiated, reviewed and continue to improve.
30. Students have many opportunities to take part in community events and have participated in the King’s Cross Festivals held on site and helped Year 2 students to do the same. Students enjoy the annual European Day of Languages event, to which many refer with enthusiasm and affection. They have opportunities to perform in and out of school, for instance, at the Barbican and Mansion House, and dance students have worked with professionals at Sadler’s Wells and the Ballet Rambert. The very attractive global garden, shaped as an open hand and designed by a student, was completed with help from a local branch of a national company and is another example of college and community partnership.
31. Excellent links with local primary schools ensure very easy transition. Staff from these and the college exchange useful information to ensure curriculum continuity. College equipment and facilities are used for primary basketball competitions and athletics training. Staff and students from the college give modern foreign languages and physical education lessons in some local schools, which result in primary students knowing many teachers and students at their new school on arrival. They also enjoy the facilities at the college and in Platform 1 prior to the start of their secondary education, as do those from a local special school.

32. The number of students going on to further education is unusually high, indicative not only of the motivation engendered in their students by the college but also of the excellent relationship enjoyed with colleges and institutes of further education and in particular with the local sixth form college. Support for students' education not only while the students are at the college but also when they have moved on into education or training is at the heart of the school's philosophy – students learn to 'reach for the stars'.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality of leadership and management is **excellent**. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is **excellent** and the quality of management is **excellent**. The quality of governance is **very good**. The college is not fully compliant with the requirements to provide a daily act of collective worship and for the teaching of art and design at Key Stage 3.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The outstanding vision and effectiveness of the headteacher and key senior staff ensure that the quality of provision and the breadth of opportunity that the college offers are excellent.
- The governing body is very well led and has a clear understanding of the challenges facing the college.
- The commitment of the headteacher to the creation of a culture of empowerment and middle managers taking full responsibility for their actions leads to the development of outstanding practice in leadership and management.
- The excellent management of senior staff and key post holders ensures that the school's vision and aims are realised despite the very challenging context.
- The commitment of the headteacher and senior leadership team to working in partnership with the local community has led to the removal of barriers to learning and the raising of attainment.
- The systems of sharing outstanding practice in order to accelerate the development of all middle managers are not sufficiently formalised.

Commentary

33. The headteacher has worked tirelessly to realise a vision for raising achievement in a school that faces many challenges. Her determination, flair and empowering leadership have led to excellent improvements and the establishment of the school's excellent reputation locally and nationally. She has inspired staff and students and is very well respected throughout the community. Consequently she has been awarded the CBE in the 2004 New Years Honours list for her work in education. Her high aspirations for the students and her relentless drive to add value to the lives of each individual are reflected in the school's successes and in its inclusive culture. The headteacher is very well supported by an outstanding senior leadership team. The entire team is committed to the school's ethos of inclusion and its role as an extended school. The experienced deputy headteachers provide excellent support and offer complementary skills to the headteacher. The team is well balanced and the headteacher has ensured that opportunities for developing leadership potential have been seized in creative ways within the school. For example, leaders within a number of faculties have been empowered to develop their skills to an outstanding level and they offer training to colleagues in other schools. The student council is extremely well run and promotes full and active participation in school leadership amongst the students as well as developing their political awareness and active engagement.

Example of outstanding practice

The vision and leadership of an outstanding headteacher have empowered the school community.

The determination and commitment of the headteacher to remove barriers to success and to raise aspirations have driven this school community forward in a remarkable way. Within a school of considerable deprivation and with 53 languages spoken, students' achievement

is excellent. The headteacher has had the vision and the courage to seize opportunities in order to challenge low expectations and to promote the inclusion of each individual. Her empowering leadership style, underpinned by her deeply held philosophy of education, has enabled staff, students and the local community to grow and to develop. The embracing of a myriad of community languages within its work as a language college has been skilfully synthesised with community provision in Platform 1 and through the Full Service Extended School plan. The result is a school community where it is safe to make mistakes, innovation is encouraged, diversity is celebrated and leadership is nurtured at all levels. The school is an oasis of racial harmony where young women are empowered to become caring, confident and responsible citizens. The school is now helping to raise the achievement of other pupils and pupils from particular ethnic minority backgrounds in other schools through its partnership programme as a Leading Edge School.

34. The school improvement plan underpins the school's recent improvements and developments. The current plan covers 2003-06 and is based on three priority areas of learning, community and teaching. The school strives to be consistently in the top 100 schools nationally for value added at both key stages and is successful in this aim. The plan is very well conceived and has arisen from the analysis and consideration of governors, staff and students. The plan provides an ambitious and clear framework for improvement and all teams within the college have their own section with rigorous targets and accountability. The college has well developed review and evaluation processes in place and monitoring by heads of faculty and team leaders is very good. The tracking of the achievements of students with special needs and of ethnic groups is very good.
35. The overall quality of management is excellent. A particular strength is the management of the senior leadership team and the key staff who direct aspects of the school's extended provision. Heads of year have been skilfully enabled to develop their roles so as to ensure that the support of external agencies and workers within the college is targeted intelligently and sensitively. The management of heads of faculty varies from being good to excellent. Although there is some sharing of outstanding practice within the college, the mechanism for matching faculties' strengths with areas for development in others is not sufficiently formalised to enable effective practice to be shared as quickly as it could be. The senior leadership team is fully committed to "dispersed leadership" whereby middle managers take full responsibility for developing their departments' response to whole school issues within the framework of whole school policies and guidance. This effective management development strategy has inevitably resulted in some inconsistency in practice and different rates in implementing the schools guidance so that best practice is not always shared or implemented as quickly as possible.
36. Leadership and management are clearly focussed on ensuring the college meets the needs of all students and particularly the most vulnerable or hard to involve. Leadership and management of these crucial aspects of the colleges' provision are excellent. The leadership and management of the area of special educational needs are excellent. The special educational needs co-ordinator has built up a high performing, well trained team very quickly, as half the assistants are recently appointed. She has a simple yet effective vision for the department, which is to successfully meet the needs of the students as they arise. For example, the 'Bubbles' classes have been created in order to raise the self-esteem of identified students. As there are few teaching assistants, she has successfully ensured that all departments take responsibility for meeting the needs of these students. Thorough training is provided in teaching methods, in tasks, and in materials. Through links with departments, the effectiveness of the support is closely monitored and the governor with responsibility for special educational needs is kept fully informed of this area of provision.
37. The leadership and management of the area of English as an additional language is excellent. The department makes every effort to meet the perceived needs of the students who are learning English. For example, 'write' notebooks are now provided, to encourage students to enter new words and phrases in order to consolidate their learning. All teachers

are made aware of the specific needs of these students as they progress in their acquisition of English. The college is fully aware of the need to provide access for those who are disabled, but the nature of the buildings makes this a difficult task. The leadership and management of the Pathways programme is also excellent. The quality of the programmes taught by the many providers is rigorously monitored, as is the attendance of students. The head of this programme has a clear vision of success breeding success, the importance of achieving national accreditation particularly in GCSE English and mathematics and how this, above all, raises students' self confidence and esteem, and this is manifest in all that is done for these vulnerable students.

38. Performance management of teaching staff is fully embedded in the college. The workforce reform framework has been implemented and all faculties have administration assistants in place. Tasks have been delegated to an excellent support staff team and there is a shared sense of purpose underpinned by clear systems and procedures. A comprehensive programme of in-service training is in place and the school is at the leading edge of a broad range of developments. New members of staff are offered a thorough induction programme and the school seizes opportunities to improve teaching and learning through a range of initiatives.
39. The school has a very committed and capable governing body. They are very well led by the chair of governors and they receive good support from CEA@Islington. The governors have clearly benefited from the guidance and leadership of the headteacher who is retiring in the near future and they are acutely aware of the need to appoint a suitable successor. Succession planning has been challenging but has also been a powerful force which has enabled the governors to develop their collective roles and responsibilities. They have carefully considered interim arrangements and the selection process needed to recruit a suitable new headteacher. The governors are not fulfilling their legal obligations to ensure that a daily act of collective worship is held and that the National Curriculum requirements for the teaching of art and design in Years 7 to 9 are met.

Financial Information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	6,215,802	Balance from previous year	28,535
Total expenditure	6,602,734	Balance carried forward to the next	-340,524
Expenditure per pupil	5,595		

40. The college has actively sought external funding to realise its aims. It has achieved outstanding success in this respect by adopting a dynamic networking approach with local businesses and a range of agencies. The headteacher has shown the courage to think big and to take the risks needed to realise such ambitious schemes as Platform 1 and language college status within an area of significant deprivation and challenge. The support of the governors and senior staff and the excellent work of the school's business manager have ensured that additional funds have been used to great effect and that the school always get very good value for the money it spends. The school's deficit was caused solely by external funding factors in 2003 as staffing costs rose and the school lost significant income from changes in the national Standards Fund grant. The governors and senior staff have implemented an effective recovery plan which has the full approval and support from the CEA@Islington.

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

Work-related learning

Provision for work-related learning is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of work related experiences are available to students.
- There is good preparation for work experience for all students.
- There is good use of work-related learning within some curriculum areas.
- There is no overall co-ordination of work-related activities.

Commentary

41. The school has ensured that all students undertake a two-week work experience for which they are well prepared and undertake a review of their experiences when they return to school. The work experience co-ordinator helpfully tries to match students on vocational courses to placements which will link with the coursework requirements. Other subjects, such as English, modern foreign languages, business studies, health and social care and citizenship incorporate work experience into their curriculum. The science department is working closely with the Health Service, through a Pathfinder project, to support the applied science course and to develop work pathways into health service employment. Through the Young Enterprise programme they are able to develop the skills for running their own business. The college has a range of work-related links which support curriculum development and the development of employability skills, particularly with the Guardian and the Barbican. These activities are not sufficiently co-ordinated to enable all students to be given a wide experience and make progressive gains in knowledge in order to raise their achievement in work-related learning.
42. The college thoroughly prepares its students for their next step in education, mainly into the local further education college. The careers advice students receive, beginning in Year 8 with 'part of the real game' and continued through Year 9 with options choices, is well planned and enhanced through the work-related agenda and their work experience placements in Year 10 as well as through the involvement of many in the local community. The college is an active participant in the Islington Career Development project. Students can access very good research resources in the careers and main libraries to help them decide on their future, and seek advice from the librarian, the Connexion Careers Enterprise staff and the Pathways co-ordinator, who are all very ready to assist them. The college organises the eagerly anticipated and very successful Careers Fair for those in Year 11 (Year 10 can attend after school) at which local colleges, training providers and employers are represented. Through the careers programme, the Careers Fair and the teaching in personal, social and health education they are very well prepared for their pathways post-16 and have the opportunity to consider a range of alternative routes.
43. Leadership is good as there is a good plan for the implementation of the statutory requirements for work-related learning to ensure that all the programme of study is covered and is clear about what actions need to be taken to fulfil these requirements. Management is satisfactory, a detailed audit of some subjects has been undertaken to establish where work-related learning activities are taking place although this is yet to be completed for all subjects. The college has good plans to build on its current practice and to co-ordinate the activities. They have not yet formalised these in to a policy to ensure all departments are aware of their responsibilities in providing work-related experiences for students.

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 **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are very good.
- Students achieve very well.
- The very positive, respectful and constructive relationships between students and teachers.
- The very effective assessment policy that supports students in their work.
- By the end of Year 9 standards are high.
- Opportunities for students to use ICT are limited by a lack of access to readily available computers.
- Library provision to support both reading and writing is very good.

Summary of key inspection judgements:

Judgement	Year 9	Year 11
Standards of work seen during the inspection	Above average	Well above average
Achievement: whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Very good	Excellent
Attitudes of students to their work	Very good	Excellent
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good
Quality of learning	Very good	Very good
Quality of curriculum leadership	Very good	
Management of the department	Very good	
Improvement since the previous inspection	Excellent	

Commentary

44. Students' standards when they join the college are very low particularly in writing. Their attainment in national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2003 was well below the average compared with all schools nationally. There had been a steady climb in results until then. In 2004 results improved markedly in the national tests with a substantial rise on the previous year and were in line with national averages. When compared to their standards on entry in Year 7, these results represent very good achievement. In Year 11, results in the 2004 GCSE English examination were slightly below the national average and for English literature the results were above the national average. The proportion of students being entered was well above that entered by most schools nationally and the very good teaching led to virtually all students achieving at least a pass grade. Students' progress accelerates in Years 10 and 11. By the end of Year 9, the standard seen in work is above average, and by the end of Year 11 it is well above average. This represents excellent achievement particularly when considering the high numbers of students for whom English is not their first language. The achievement of students with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and students from different ethnic minority groups is excellent and is a result both in English and in media studies of highly effective teaching strategies that produce excellent learning outcomes.
45. Teaching and learning are very good across all the years. Excellent lessons were observed in Year 10 and in Year 7. A feature of the very good teaching is the thorough planning underpinning every lesson. All lessons contain a range of activities that appeal to each student's differing needs and abilities. All teachers demonstrate very positive, respectful and constructive relationships. A range of strategies are used by teachers in each lesson including whole class work, group activities and individual learning, this means that all students are involved. Students are very well managed by teachers who insist on the highest standards of behaviour and who constantly challenge and inspire them. A strong feature of all lessons is the way that learning objectives are shared with all students. All students are confident in showing their reading skills to the whole class. Students are very confident when speaking and listening. They can present very sophisticated arguments but are also able to

receive ideas. Marking and assessment consistently support improvement for all students. The department has a very clear assessment policy that encourages all students to become involved in their learning. The use of sub levels against which students assess their work and that of each other focuses students on what they have achieved and what they need to do to improve.

46. The English department are very well supported by the very well equipped learning resources centre in developing both reading and writing. There are many enrichment opportunities through homework and revision classes, theatre visits and reading clubs, although students have too few opportunities to use ICT to support their learning. Extensive use is made of texts to support the cultural diversity of the college.
47. Leadership and management are very good because the interim and previous leadership of the department has been clearly and successfully focussed on securing further improvements. Less experienced staff are provided with a range of professional development opportunities and are very well supported. Evaluation of all of the department's work by the leadership team is embedded in the department's practice and has done much to improve teaching and raise standards. There has been excellent improvement since the previous inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

48. Given the high proportion of students in the college who have English as an additional language and the large number of students who start at the college with very little skills in speaking and writing in English, the overall standards of literacy are above average. The national literacy framework is used well in English lessons. The college provides an excellent framework to support literacy development and has used the national strategy very well so that all departments contribute significantly to the development of language and literacy and this has helped raise standards across the college. Spelling and the development of writing skills is a high priority for all departments. Overall, students become fluent speakers, and many are able and very confident at presenting very sophisticated ideas and arguments to each other and their teachers.
49. Teachers have developed highly effective approaches to supporting language development. For example, teachers in all subjects consistently place a strong emphasis on the use of technical vocabulary and so students develop a very good subject related vocabulary and have to use words accurately. There is excellent use made of a word wall in dance and extensive use of writing frames in drama, music and science particularly in Years 10 and 11, to support student writing.

Modern foreign languages

Provision in modern foreign languages is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has attained language college status and this is reflected in the very good quality of teaching seen in all languages.
- Attainment in Turkish and Bengali is very high.
- Attainment in European languages in the 2004 national tests is below national averages although standards of work seen during the inspection were average.
- There is a wide range of languages available for all age groups and European and community languages are offered outside the school day and the take-up is good.
- The department has succeeded well in raising the awareness of languages and in celebrating multilingualism in both the college and the community.
- Students from a wide range of language groups have the opportunity to use and improve their home languages.
- Overall planning and assessment are very effective although in some lessons the work is not fully matched to the needs of the wide ability range in the class

Summary of the key inspection judgements:

Judgement	Year 9	Year 11
Standards of work seen during the inspection in Turkish and Bengali	Well above average	Well above average
Standards of work seen during the inspection in European languages	Average	Average
Achievement: whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Good	Good
Attitudes of students to their work	Very good	Very good
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good
Quality of learning	Good	Good
Quality of curriculum leadership	Very good	
Management of the department	Very good	
Improvement since the previous inspection	Very good	

Commentary

50. In 2000 the school became a language college, since when considerable work has been done to value and promote multilingualism. The provision of languages has been increased and students are helped to celebrate and to gain accreditation in their home languages. Excellent work has been done to help and support language learning in primary schools and to involve the wider community in learning languages alongside students during extra-curricular lessons.
51. In 2004 GCSE results in Turkish and Bengali were well above national averages whilst in French they were below and in Spanish they were significantly below. However, a much higher proportion of students took the examinations in European languages than was the case nationally. Standards of work seen during the examination in Years 10 and 11 were average in German and Spanish and very good in Turkish and Bengali. Because of the rolling programme of language provision, Year 11 students will not sit French as a curriculum subject this year. Some, however, who study the subject after school, may well take the examination. Standards in teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 last year were below expectations in European languages and very good in community languages where those who study these languages are from that particular background.
52. Given the limited experiences and attainment on entry to the college for many students, apart from the main community languages achievement is good in all languages studied. Students enter the college with low levels of literacy and oral competence in English. By the end of Year 11, approximately one third of them achieve a higher level GCSE in a European language. Smaller numbers of students attain very well in Turkish and Bengali but they already have some knowledge of these languages, albeit only in dialect form, on entry to the college. The good achievement of these students lies largely in becoming literate in spoken home languages.
53. Teaching is very good in all year groups and learning is good with some very good features. Very good relationships are a feature of almost all lessons and students' behaviour is always well managed. Most students are eager to learn and listen attentively. All teachers have a very good command of the languages they teach and many lessons are conducted almost entirely in the foreign language, which helps students to attain good accents. The best lessons involve lively presentations that involve all students and the materials and activities used are stimulating. Where learning is very good, students show curiosity and commitment and they concentrate and work well. Good learning is characterised by pupils' willingness to listen and take part in lessons and their ability to repeat and use the content of the lesson. However, the fact that they cannot always remember vocabulary and structures from earlier

lessons means they make less progress than they might. Teaching is always very well prepared although teachers occasionally miss opportunities to check on what students' have learned by the end of lessons as insufficient time is allocated for this activity. Learning objectives are helpfully shared at the start of some, but not all, lessons. In mixed ability lessons, much of the work is adapted to suit individual students' needs and abilities but this good practice could be consistently extended, as lower-attaining students in some groups sometimes struggle to complete work satisfactorily. Students' interests are often used very well by teachers to provide very good motivation. In the second language taught, one lesson out of three is delivered using ICT and teachers are very conversant with many useful programs, students appreciate these activities and enjoy these lessons. Teachers also use tape and video players very well to support learning. Assessment is very good, records are well kept and students effectively complete self-assessment forms at the end of each module of work. There is some good marking which helpfully informs students of what they need to do to improve although this is not consistent across the department.

54. Curriculum leadership is very good. The head of faculty is an efficient and caring organiser whose vision for the language college is excellent. She shares her aims and attitudes well with members of the department and there is a very good ethos overall. Leadership in the community provision of the language college is very good. The current standards are in part due to the previous less well resourced provision but the improved resources and increased time for languages are bringing about improvements and leading to higher standards for all. Management is very good, the department is very well organised and this is reflected in the way the department pulled together and coped very well during the inspection, in spite of the absence of two key members of staff. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good. Language college status has led to all students studying two languages in Years 7 to 9. Community languages are now offered as part of the curriculum and around a third of students now study at least two languages in Years 10 and 11. There is now no unsatisfactory teaching and ICT is used well to support learning. The good elements observed at the previous inspection have been retained.

Example of outstanding practice

Establishment of the language college has resulted in excellent practice in support for language teaching in partner primary schools where both language college teachers and Year 11 pupils are involved in teaching many young children.

A reception class was seen learning Spanish and deriving a great deal of enjoyment from it. The teacher had prepared very attractive resources, stuffed animal toys, which attached with velcro to a cloth. The pace was lively and the lesson was conducted entirely in Spanish. The young children had learned a song which involved actions and manipulation of the stuffed toys and they took part with evident enjoyment. The teacher had adapted her style and content admirably to enthuse these very young learners. Year 11 students were observed, teaching Turkish to pupils aged seven and eight. They had prepared the lesson themselves. They worked in groups of two or three and the whole lesson operated on a carousel so that the students each taught their little lesson three times. They were friendly and encouraging to the younger children who responded very well. One student was evidently delighted that a rather shy little Turkish boy was so proud of seeing his classmates learning his language that he clearly grew in self-esteem. The Year 11 students were enthusiastic and clearly touched by the response they elicited. Back in school, the students evaluate the quality of their teaching.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students' standards are very much higher than those in similar schools and are improving year on year.
- Students achieve well because teaching and learning are consistently good and their work is marked very effectively.
- Although most teaching is brisk a few lessons lack pace so that students lose interest and concentration.
- Leadership and management are very good especially in the way students' progress is tracked.
- The very wide range of enrichment activities improves standards and raises interest in mathematics.

Summary of key inspection judgements:

Judgement	Year 9	Year 11
Standards of work seen during the inspection	Below average	Average
Achievement: whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Good	Very Good
Attitudes of students to their work	Very good	Very good
Quality of teaching	Good	Good
Quality of learning	Good	Good
Quality of curriculum leadership	Very good	
Management of the department	Very good	
Improvement since the previous inspection	Very good	

Commentary

55. Students' results in the 2004 tests at the end of Year 9 were well below the average for all schools. However, their performance is well above average when compared with students in similar schools, based on free school meal entitlement. Both the Year 9 test results and GCSE results have improved each year since 1999. GCSE mathematics results for the higher grades were just below average overall in 2004, but taking into account the college's much higher entry percentage than all schools nationally the average point scores per student is just above the national figure. Nearly all students attain a GCSE grade and this represents very good achievement by lower attaining students in this stage of education. Test and examination results were largely confirmed by the standard of work seen in lessons and in students' work.
56. Students enter the college with well below average standards. They reach a below average level by the end of Year 9 and average standard by the end of Year 11. Achievement overall is good by the end of Year 9 and very good by the end of Year 11. Students achieve very well during their time in college because teaching and learning are consistently good. Students from ethnic minorities achieve very well. Those with English as an additional language are helped to make a prompt start in their studies after taking a well-judged entry test devised by the department. Students with special educational needs achieve well, especially when a support assistant is available to provide individual help in lessons. Gifted and talented students achieve very well. They have opportunities to participate in master classes, enter challenge competitions and embark on the GCE AS level course in Year 11. A teacher, funded by the Education Action Zone, helps extend high ability Year 7 and 8 students' knowledge and understanding.
57. Teaching and learning are consistently good overall with some very good features and this consistency leads to very good achievement overall by the end of Year 11. Teachers have very secure subject knowledge, plan lessons very effectively and fully involve students through questions and activities in lessons. This enables students to acquire new skills and improve their understanding steadily and effectively. Relationships are very good so, for example, in a very successful Year 7 lesson the teacher's very good rapport with students encouraged them to concentrate hard and make significant headway in plotting and interpreting co-ordinates in four quadrants. Teachers try hard to provide a range of tasks to

meet the needs of all students in the class. They are successful in most lessons but find it more difficult in mixed ability Year 8 classes. The pace of lessons is nearly always brisk and purposeful but, in a few cases, there is insufficient variety or challenge in the tasks set so that students' concentration dips towards the end. The assessment of students' work is very good. Each teacher keeps excellent, very detailed records of previous test results, targets for future tests, or examinations, and other relevant data for each student so that they can respond better to individual needs. Teachers are very conscientious in the way they mark students' work to give them a better understanding of the topic. There is very good provision of enrichment activities at lunch-time, and after school, to raise students' interest in mathematics and improve their test and examination performance. The display of students' work in mathematics is very good especially in its emphasis and celebration of the mathematics used by many different cultures.

58. Leadership of the department is very good. There is a very positive sense of purpose with very high aspirations aimed at raising students' achievement. The department has made significant curricular innovations to improve learning. Management is very good, particularly in monitoring data on students' performance in tests and examinations. The commitment to staff development is very strong and teachers' strengths are utilised effectively. There has been very good progress since the previous inspection. Standards are improving year on year, teaching and learning are much better and the national strategy has been fully implemented.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. Students' standards in applying mathematics in other subjects are average but with good features. Provision in mathematics is very good so that students have considerable scope to use their mathematical skills to enhance work in other subjects. In science students use and interpret graphs, tables and charts effectively. In geography they interpret rainfall and temperature graphs competently. In history students draw Venn diagrams and bar graphs. In music they calculate numbers of beats and bars successfully. In physical education students are confident in using stopwatches and tape measures. The numeracy co-ordinator has worked very effectively with colleagues to stimulate interest and widen opportunities for students to use and learn mathematics through other subjects, good examples include the analysis of weaving patterns in textiles, utilising grids to improve portrait drawing in art and design and using percentages to analyse data on the sinking of the Titanic in history.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is very good learning because of the very good teaching.
- Achievement is very good, reflecting students' very good attitudes to science.
- The department is very well led.
- The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 is very effective.
- There are too few planned opportunities to use ICT.
- Teachers have to work very hard to ensure that the dated and drab accommodation does not affect students' learning.

Summary of key inspection judgements:

Judgement	Year 9	Year 11
Standards of work seen during the inspection	Below average	Average

Achievement: whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Very Good	Very Good
Attitudes of students to their work	Very Good	Very Good
Quality of teaching	Very Good	Very Good
Quality of learning	Very Good	Very Good
Quality of curriculum leadership	Very Good	
Management of the department	Very Good	
Improvement since the previous inspection	Very Good	

Commentary

60. Students start school with attainment in science that is well below average. In lessons seen and work analysed during the inspection, standards by the end of Year 9 are below average. The 2004 Year 9 National Curriculum test results are below national expectations. By Year 11, however, standards are satisfactory and the 2004 GCSE A*-C results matched the national average.
61. Given the overall low starting point when they join the college, all students, including those from different ethnic and social backgrounds, students of higher academic potential and those with special educational needs achieve very well in Years 7 to 9 and in Years 10 and 11. This is because the students' relationships with the teachers are very good and they respond positively to the very high expectations of science staff. Students tackle scientific investigations with keen interest and enthusiasm. One group of Year 10 students gained an excellent understanding of current electricity in a circuit by hypothesising, experimenting and discovering for themselves what affects resistance in a wire.
62. Teaching and learning throughout Years 7 to 11 are very good. Teachers' expert knowledge of the subject and syllabus, combined with very thorough planning and effective well targeted support from teaching assistants form the firm basis for all lessons. The pace of learning is well matched to the needs of the students and they are consistently challenged to improve upon their previous best. Satisfactory use is made of ICT to support teaching but the use of the newly installed interactive whiteboards is insufficiently planned for and problems with the department's data logging equipment have only recently been resolved. The age and unsatisfactory décor of the laboratories do not provide a stimulating learning environment. Assessment is good. Marking gives students clear advice on how to improve their work. The department uses assessment data well to focus sharply on students' progress.
63. Leadership and management are very good. The head of department has clarity of vision, high aspirations and fosters strong teamwork in improving students' achievements. Technical staff form an important part of the team, making a very good contribution to learning. The head of science regularly monitors lessons and takes steps to ensure that most teaching is very effective. The considerable amount of curriculum change introduced over the last two years has been very well managed. New initiatives, such as the Cognitive Acceleration through Science Education (CASE) project, have been established in Year 7. These have the potential to lead to an improvement in GCSE results as students who have experienced them work their way through the school. In Years 10 and 11 very innovative GCSE courses in applied science and science for the 21st century allow students to undertake work related to their ability and interests. The department has made very good improvement since the previous inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teachers have good subject knowledge.
- Overall teaching and learning are good leading to good achievement by the end of Year 11.
- Assessment in Years 10 and 11 is good. However, there is a lack of consistency and monitoring of assessment in Years 7 to 9.
- There is insufficient open-ended work to extend the thinking and learning of the more able students.

Summary of key inspection judgements:

Judgement	Year 9	Year 11
Standards of work seen during the inspection	Average	Average
Achievement: whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Satisfactory	Good
Attitudes of students to their work	Good	Good
Quality of teaching	Good	Good
Quality of learning	Good	Good
Quality of curriculum leadership	Good	
Management of the department	Good	
Improvement since the previous inspection	Satisfactory	

Commentary

64. Although the teacher assessments in 2004 were below the national average, the standards seen at the end of Year 9 are average. Overall, the attainment on entry to the college is below average, however, a significant proportion of students have an average understanding of ICT. Consequently, the overall achievement of students by the end of Year 9 is satisfactory. In Year 11 the standards seen are average but in national tests in 2004 they were below the national average. Given their prior attainment, achievement in Years 10 and 11 is good. All students, including those with special educational needs and those with English as additional language, achieve at least satisfactorily. The more able are currently not being provided with sufficient open-ended work to enable them to achieve very well at the higher levels.
65. The teaching and learning is good in all years. The teachers have good subject knowledge. They use a range of teaching approaches, make good use of interactive white boards and provide good support to the students. Overall planning is effective, but not enough account is taken of the previous experiences of students so that the work set for some students, particularly in Year 7, does not build sufficiently on what they already know. The students are keen to learn, confidently use a range of software and use the Internet for research. They review and modify their work, apply their skills to the tasks set and have begun to evaluate the outcomes. The students have undertaken a wide range of projects which are well set within a business context which enable them to develop their knowledge and understanding of ICT in society. The assessment of student work is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9. As part of the innovative language college provision, students in Year 7 are taught well by the modern foreign language department, however, there is insufficient monitoring of the consistency of assessment so that students in Years 7 to 9 are not always clear about what level they are working at or what they need to do to improve. In Years 10 and 11 assessment is good and teachers provide detailed and constructive comments on students' work.
66. The leadership and the management of the department are both good. The acting head of department is developing a well-informed view on the future direction of the department and has begun to implement plans to achieve this vision. He is creating new schemes of work, providing training for the language teachers and has produced a good range of teaching materials. However, in Years 10 and 11 there is insufficient monitoring to confirm that all

students are being taught the required programme of study. There has been satisfactory progress since the previous inspection as the department has responded well to national curriculum developments and implemented the national strategy well in Years 7 to 9.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

67. Students' competence in the use of ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory. There has been good progress since the previous inspection and most subjects have access to computers and are using a range of software well. There is good practice in modern foreign languages, business studies, English, geography and art and design. All the subjects are at least satisfactorily meeting the statutory requirements but ICT is not sufficiently used in science, design and technology, religious education, history and music. There is a lack of up-to-date technologies in some subjects, for example, digital cameras in physical education and readily accessible computers in music. Overall students' ICT skills are satisfactory. Most students can effectively use word processing, the Internet, presentation packages and spreadsheets. The computer clubs are used extensively by students for homework and coursework for other curriculum areas. The new ICT facilities provided by Platform 1 are contributing to the students' skills development and there is good use of interactive white boards by teachers to enhance teaching and learning.

HUMANITIES

History, geography, religious education and sociology are in the faculty of humanities. The leadership and management of the faculty are excellent. Sociology was not inspected in depth but it is a popular option subject in Years 10 and 11. Students achieve very well in this subject and by the end of Year 11 GCSE results are above average because of excellent teaching and students' enjoyment of the subject. In the lesson sampled, teaching was excellent and the students gained considerably in knowledge and understanding because of the engaging, entertaining, highly structured and adventurous teaching they received.

History

Provision in history is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The students have very good attitudes to the subject and achieve very well.
- There is excellent subject leadership.
- All members of the department have excellent subject knowledge.
- The very good curriculum successfully meets the needs of all learners.
- There is insufficient use of ICT to support learning.

Summary of key inspection judgements:

Judgement	Year 9	Year 11
Standards of work seen during the inspection	Below average	Average
Achievement: whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Very good	Very good
Attitudes of students to their work	Very good	Very good
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good
Quality of learning	Very good	Very good
Quality of curriculum leadership	Excellent	
Management of the department	Excellent	
Improvement since the previous inspection	Very good	

Commentary

68. In 2004, teacher assessments for students at the end of Year 9 showed standards below average. Standards of work seen in the current Year 9 are below average. Students have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the Middle Ages, the Tudors and Stuarts and the Industrial Revolution. They demonstrate satisfactory skills with the analysis and interpretation of sources. Students produce good quality extended writing on topics such as the Civil War and the factory system. Although the description of events is good, the explanation of cause and effect is weaker. In 2004, GCSE results compared to all schools were average. Compared to similar schools they are above average. They are consistent over recent years. Standards of work seen in the current Year 11 are average. Students have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter through their studies of Ireland and the American West. Written work is well presented and historical knowledge is used well to support their answers. Students have good skills in analysing and interpreting sources. Very good use of model GCSE answers is enabling students to develop better examination techniques but they have weaknesses with remembering factual information.
69. As students enter the college with standards that are well below average, the achievement of students in Years 7 to 9 and those who opt for the subject in Years 10 and 11 is very good. This is because of consistently very good teaching, the very positive attitudes they display to learning and the very clear direction for improvement provided by excellent leadership. The achievement of students with special educational needs is very good. Students of all abilities and of all ethnic backgrounds achieve equally well.
70. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge, are enthusiastic and committed and use a range of effective approaches in the classroom. Resources are used very effectively to make lessons interesting and to help students consolidate what they have learned. All members of the department establish high expectations for learning and behaviour and lessons are well structured. High quality features in lessons are teacher explanations, the use of challenging questions and the approaches used to meet the needs of all learners. Assessment procedures are very good, students' work is marked accurately and there is good guidance on what they need to do to improve. Relationships in the classroom are very good and students display very positive attitudes to their work.
71. The leadership and management of history are excellent. Detailed planning and high quality documentation is providing excellent direction for the subject. In the classroom all members of the department are excellent role model for students. Strong departmental teamwork is helping to improve teaching and learning. There are very good procedures in place to monitor and evaluate the work of the department. Very good analysis of performance data is used to track student progress and to review strategies used in the classroom. Teaching staff are very well qualified. Learning resources are of good quality and meet the needs of the curriculum well but there is insufficient use of ICT. The curriculum has been successfully developed to provide topics that are relevant and interesting to the students. A very good feature is the planning of the curriculum to meet the needs of all learners. Whilst in many year groups students' learning is effectively developed through educational visits or guest speakers, this practice does not extend across all years. Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good. The department has successfully implemented procedures to monitor and evaluate its work and introduced very good arrangements for the assessment of students.

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good attitudes of the students underpin the overall good achievement.
- The teachers' planning is very good and this results in good learning in the lessons.
- There are some inconsistencies in the setting of clear improvement targets for individual students.
- Extensive fieldwork provides very good opportunities for effective learning.
- Good collaborative arrangements with other departments provide additional opportunities for students to develop their geographical skills and understanding.

Summary of key inspection judgements:

Judgement	Year 9	Year 11
Standards of work seen during the inspection	Below average	Average
Achievement: whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Good	Very Good
Attitudes of students to their work	Very good	Very good
Quality of teaching	Good	Good
Quality of learning	Good	Good
Quality of curriculum leadership	Good	
Management of the department	Good	
Improvement since the previous inspection	Good	

Commentary

72. Teacher assessment in 2004 indicated that standards by the end of Year 9 were below average. Standards of work seen in Year 9 are below average, however, this reflects good achievement because most students are entering the subject in Year 7 from a well below average base. They make good progress over the three years and develop good skills in map work and in understanding the technical vocabulary of geography. The 2004 GCSE results were above average with all students who entered securing an A* to G grade. This indicates very good achievement for these students. Students are very enthusiastic about geography and in the last two years numbers opting for the subject have doubled. In the current Years 10 and 11, standards seen are at national expectations. Consequently students' current achievement is good and they are on track to achieve as well as the previous year group. The overall achievement of all year groups including gifted and talented, those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs is very good.
73. Teaching and learning are good throughout, within a range of very good to satisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers have very good subject knowledge and they plan their lessons very well. These lessons are characterised by insistence on very high standards of behaviour and the students respond very positively and work with considerable focus and enthusiasm. Searching and challenging questioning encourage a high level of participation. A challenging pace ensures good progress and this is supported by effective co-operation and the good sharing of ideas. The best marking ensures that students have clear improvement targets included at the end of their work. However, this good practice is not fully embedded across all staff. As a result, in some classes students have an incomplete understanding of what they need to do next.
74. The leadership and management of the subject are good. There is a strong sense of direction and the department is ambitious to raise achievement still further. There is a comprehensive and well-planned programme of monitoring both teaching and learning and teamwork is good. The curriculum is well thought out and matches the particular needs of the students very well. There are fieldwork experiences in each year and students are given many opportunities to develop a first hand understanding of their neighbourhood. This direct

experience ensures that the GCSE coursework is of a high standard. There is good collaboration with other departments, including the ICT climate work in Year 8 and the GCSE numeracy work in the decision making exercise paper. The schemes of work are very thorough and give good support to the teaching team. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good because teaching, leadership, behaviour and GCSE results have all improved. The issues highlighted in the previous report have all been addressed.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students enjoy the subject and display very good attitudes to learning.
- A new team of enthusiastic teachers make learning fun and purposeful.
- The subject supports students' personal development very well.
- There is insufficient use of ICT to support learning.
- There are too few planned programmes of educational visits and visiting speakers.

Summary of key inspection judgements:

Judgement	Year 9	Year 11
Standards of work seen during the inspection	Average	Average
Achievement: whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Good	Good
Attitudes of students to their work	Very good	Very good
Quality of teaching	Good	Good
Quality of learning	Good	Good
Quality of curriculum leadership	Good	
Management of the department	Good	
Improvement since the previous inspection	Good	

Commentary

75. Standards of work seen in Year 9 are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Students have a satisfactory knowledge of themes such as family life and ceremonies through their studies of the major world religions. They are developing satisfactory skills of research and evaluation. In Year 9 students have a good understanding of Jesus through the Christian, Islamic and Jewish faiths. In 2004 all students were entered for a short course GCSE. Results are average compared to all schools but good when compared with similar schools. The results are consistent over recent years. In Years 10 and 11 students develop a good knowledge and understanding of life and death and social harmony through the Christian and Islamic perspectives.
76. Students enter the college with standards that are below average so that achievement across Years 7 to 9 is good. Achievement in Years 10 and 11 is good because, although standards are in line with national averages, examination results are above those expected for similar schools. Students of all capabilities and of all ethnic backgrounds achieve equally as well. There is good achievement because of good teaching and the very good attitudes students display to the subject.
77. Teaching and learning are good. A new team of teachers enthusiastically and successfully engage students in their learning by making lessons fun but purposeful. Explanations are good and questions successfully challenge students. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use this well to provide a good range of activities and resources. There is insufficient use of ICT so opportunities for research and independent learning are reduced. Assessment is good. Marking provides students with a clear understanding of their strengths and weaknesses and how to improve. Students enjoy the subject, they behave well and

display very good attitudes to learning taking a keen interest in all they do. Across Years 7 to 11 students' learning in religious education makes a very good contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students develop a very good understanding of equality and respect for others.

78. Leadership and management of religious education are good. The head of subject provides good documentation and guidance to her colleagues who are new to the college. The department plan identifies a good set of priorities for improvement. Teamwork is good and is successfully supporting planning, assessment and the review of students' work. There are good procedures for the monitoring and evaluation of work in the classroom and this is having a good impact on improving teaching and learning. However, students have insufficient opportunities to broaden their experiences or see other cultures and religions through educational visits or from visiting speakers. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. The department has successfully implemented procedures to monitor and evaluate its work and introduced good arrangements for the assessment of students.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The GCSE results are very good.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and this ensures students achieve very well.
- The assessment and monitoring of students' work is very good.
- Students do not have a full enough experience of all aspects of design and technology in Years 7 to 9
- The use of computer aided design and manufacture is not well planned for across all years.

Summary of key inspection judgements:

Judgement	Year 9	Year 11
Standards of work seen during the inspection	Average	Above average
Achievement: whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Very good	Very good
Attitudes of students to their work	Very good	Very good
Quality of teaching	Good	Good
Quality of learning	Good	Good
Quality of curriculum leadership	Good	
Management of the department	Very good	
Improvement since the previous inspection	Very good	

Commentary

79. Attainment on entry to the college in Year 7 is well below average and by the end of Year 9, teacher assessments indicate standards are average. This was confirmed by the work seen during the inspection and shows very good achievement by the end of Year 9. GCSE results in 2004 were well above national averages. Food technology students did exceptionally well with 100 per cent achieving A*-C and in both resistant materials and textiles technology students exceeded their targets. Standards of work seen were above average at the end of Year 11 which shows very good achievement overall. Students with special education needs achieve as well as other students because they are well supported by teachers and their needs are taken into account in lessons. Differently focussed worksheets are produced to assist all students to complete class and homework at their level of understanding. Students with English as an additional language and from different ethnic minority groups achieve as

well as other students because they receive good help with learning English from teachers and other students who help each other to integrate into this exciting multi-cultural environment. The achievement of gifted and talented students is very good because well-prepared and stimulating activities to aid learning are embedded in schemes of work for these students. Overall students achieve very well because teachers consistently plan lessons well and adapt them to the needs of all students.

80. Overall teaching is consistently good with some very good features and is characterised by very good subject knowledge, which is well used to provide challenging lessons where students are able to learn about a range of materials and tools and how to use them in a safe manner. Good behaviour management ensures students are able to learn well in a calm and receptive atmosphere. Well-planned lessons give a structure to the work in the classroom and good questioning by teachers finds out what the students have learnt. Teachers are good at giving clear instructions for tasks set. Students' learning is good because teachers are patient and helpful and give students group and individual tuition during lessons so that students are able to produce well-designed quality products. Students are able to plan their work using flowcharts, use sewing machines confidently, understand about healthy diets and evaluate their work. Students are able to use correct vocabulary for design and technology.
81. Leadership of the department is good. There is a clear determination for the department to continue to achieve well and much planning is evident to make this happen. The department works well as a team and the members support each other well. Subject evaluation is detailed, well managed and used to inform the subject's development plan, which is moving the subject forward. Management is very good. Assessment is used very well. Detailed records of students' progress are kept and the data collected is very well used for setting targets for improvement. Staff training is ongoing and lesson observations are undertaken by senior staff to support and inform teachers of areas for improvement. Exemplar products are used to inspire and guide students in their designing and to show the quality of finished products. The low allocation of time in design and technology for Years 7 to 9 results in students having insufficient experience in depth in some areas of design and technology. This limits their overall experience of the subject and the numbers choosing the subject for GCSE, which are below national averages. There is too little use made of the ICT and computer aided design and manufacturing facilities available in the department, and this is reducing the quality of some of the students work. Consequently, although there are many very good features, overall provision for this subject is good. The number of technicians is very good and they are well deployed to the benefit of the department. Extra-curricular activities add breadth to the learning offered within the department. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good and all issues mentioned in the previous report have been addressed apart from the insufficient use of ICT.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall standards by the end of Year 11 in 2004 were very high.
- Students are motivated to succeed and achievement is excellent.
- Teachers have very high expectations.
- Leadership and management are very good and teamwork is strong.
- Statutory requirements are not fully met.
- There is no art technician, which leads to an inefficient use of the teachers' time.

Summary of key inspection judgements:

Judgement	Year 9	Year 11
Standards of work seen during the inspection	Average	Well above average
Achievement: whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Very good	Excellent
Attitudes of students to their work	Very good	Very good
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good
Quality of learning	Very good	Very good
Quality of curriculum leadership	Very good	
Management of the department	Very good	
Improvement since the previous inspection	Very good	

Commentary

82. The 2004 GCSE examination results were very high and had improved considerably on previous years. These high standards were seen during the inspection. The improvement in results is due to very good teaching and changes in the scheme of work which challenge students to learn and attain high standards. The 2004 Year 9 teacher assessments showed standards were below national expectations. Standards seen at the end of Year 9 were average indicating an improving picture. The achievement of students of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language is very good in Years 7 to 9 and excellent in Years 10 and 11. Overall achievement is excellent as students enter the college with very low standards and they rapidly improve because of the cumulative effect of the very good teaching they receive, their very positive attitudes to the subject and the very good leadership and management of the subject. Students very quickly gain good drawing and painting skills in Year 7, and confidence and expertise in using other media.
83. The quality of teaching is consistently very good, underpinned by secure subject knowledge. All teachers have very high expectations that contribute to students' excellent achievement by the end of Year 11. In lessons, teachers take time at the beginning to ensure that students understand the task, so that great strides are made in gaining skills and knowledge. This is consolidated very effectively at the end of lessons. Questioning is very good. Students are asked to explain, and then explain further, so that they think and therefore learn. Tasks and questioning are very closely matched to their ability, which ensures that every student is well challenged. Relationships are very good, so that students want to achieve.
84. Leadership and management are very good as the two teachers who were recently appointed to the post share this joint responsibility very effectively. For example, very good new schemes of work have recently been written as a direct consequence of a thorough evaluation of examination and test results. The teachers in the department work very closely together, which contributes to the sense of a common purpose. Assessment is very good as teachers assess in detail the different elements of the lesson objectives. However, statutory requirements are not yet fully met as the cultural element of the National Curriculum is not yet covered in sufficient detail, although the department recognises that this area requires development and have plans in place to meet the requirements. Visits are undertaken in Years 7 to 9, but are not planned as an integral part of the schemes of work to ensure that maximum benefit is gained from them by students. There has been very good improvement since the time of the previous inspection.

Drama

Provision in drama is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The high quality teaching allows students with a wide range of needs to learn very effectively.
- The leadership of the department is inspirational.
- Students are constantly challenged to think and improve in lessons.
- Relationships between students and staff are very positive and respectful of each other.
- The use of assessment to improve standards is excellent in Years 10 and 11 but is not used as well in Years 7 and 8.

Summary of key inspection judgements:

Judgement	Year 9	Year 11
Standards of work seen during the inspection	Well above average	Well above average
Achievement: whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Very good	Excellent
Attitudes of students to their work	Very good	Excellent
Quality of teaching	Very good	Excellent
Quality of learning	Very good	Excellent
Quality of curriculum leadership	Excellent	
Management of the department	Excellent	
Improvement since the previous inspection	Excellent	

Commentary

85. Standards seen in lessons across all years are well above average and the results in the 2004 GCSE examination were very high. Students who take this course at the start of year 10 represent a very wide range of ability so that the achievement across Years 10 and 11 is excellent. Students are able to achieve this level of success due to the very good teaching that takes place in Years 7 to 9 which results in standards that are well above average and very good achievement by the end of Year 9.
86. Teaching and learning are excellent due to the planning that meets the needs of each individual student. There is outstanding teacher knowledge especially at GCSE that inspires students. Teachers set very high expectations, students are constantly challenged and consequently their response is very high. There is a strong emphasis on developing dramatic technique, understanding performance and using a range of resources to support the richness of cultural diversity in the college. Writing is of a very high standard in Years 10 and 11 due to the quality of the support provided. Relationships between staff and students are excellent and support the very high quality work that is produced. Detailed on going assessment supports students in knowing what they can do and what they need to do to improve further. This is outstanding in Year 10 as seen in a lesson around a scene in a *Midsummer Night's Dream* although this best practice is not as well developed in Years 7 and 8.
87. Leadership and management of the department are inspirational. Although recently appointed there is a clear vision for the department supporting the college's success with the prestigious Artsmark Gold award. There is a commitment to achieving the highest possible standards and the team is very well supported in this aim. Drama is used as an excellent vehicle to develop student confidence and self-esteem and the provision across the college is enhanced by the many opportunities for other activities such as clubs and theatre trips. Improvement since the previous inspection has been excellent.

Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good throughout all years.
- Teaching and learning are very good.
- Students enjoy their lessons and attitudes and behaviour are very good.
- Leadership and management are outstanding.
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory and there are insufficient resources for music technology.

Summary of key inspection judgements:

Judgement	Year 9	Year 11
Standards of work seen during the inspection	Below average	Average
Achievement: whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Very Good	Very Good
Attitudes of students to their work	Very Good	Very Good
Quality of teaching	Very Good	Very Good
Quality of learning	Very Good	Very Good
Quality of curriculum leadership	Excellent	
Management of the department	Excellent	
Improvement since the previous inspection	Very Good	

Commentary

88. Standards on entry to the college are well below the expected levels and basic practical skills are very under-developed. At the end of Year 9 teacher assessments report standards below national averages for most students with a small minority attaining the national average. Work seen in the inspection confirms these standards. At the end of Year 11 GCSE results were in line with national averages and above those of similar schools in 2004. These results have been achieved with groups that are twice the national average size. These standards have been maintained and group sizes are equally large. Standards in instrumental lessons provided by peripatetic staff are good and the college, as part of its excellent aim to involve all students, provides these lessons free of charge. Instrumental teachers also train some of the many extra-curricular groups. Standards here are very good and the senior choir is excellent. Given their prior attainment, achievement in all years for all pupils is very good.
89. This very good achievement is the result of consistently very good teaching and learning. All teaching and learning seen was good and 70 per cent was very good and excellent. Teachers are particularly skilled at ensuring that all students are fully involved and that their different needs are very well supported. Lessons are very well planned with a good variety of tasks which encourage students' interest and enthusiasm. Tasks build in level of difficulty leading to very good development of skills across all years. Pace of the lessons is fast moving but learning is always checked through very good use of inclusive questioning. Teachers have very good subject skills and support their clear explanations with good demonstrations. Teaching is always encouraging and relationships are very good. Students develop good independent learning skills and social skills as they work at their tasks. Attitudes and behaviour are very good. Students enjoy their music lessons and work with enthusiasm. Music is a very popular option and numbers opting to study music in Years 10 and 11 are twice the national average.
90. Leadership is outstanding. The subject leader has a very clear vision for the subject and has led the creative arts faculty to achieve the prestigious Artsmark Gold award. The department is regularly invited to perform at The Barbican and there are very good links with many other community groups. All the contributing teachers to the department work very effectively together. Management is also excellent. Monitoring is thorough and all areas of the department run smoothly and with purpose. The curriculum is very well managed and conceived and includes a good range of musical styles. The well-planned schemes of work

include tasks for all levels of ability, a progressive development of skills and a good balance of performing, composing and listening. There are many opportunities for enrichment and students have many opportunities to work with professional musicians. Assessment is very good and thorough. Students are clearly aware of how to improve their work and teacher comments are always very encouraging.

91. Accommodation is too small for this very successful department. One of the main rooms is small for practical work and there are not enough practice rooms for small group work. Lack of soundproofing was criticised in the previous inspection. This has been improved but there is still considerable noise overspill between the two main rooms. Resources for classroom instruments and listening are good. However, despite some improvements since the previous report, there are still not enough resources for music technology to effectively support composition. Nevertheless, given the high levels of achievement, the overall improvement since the previous inspection is very good.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall, teaching and learning is good.
- There are high levels of participation and very positive attitudes in Years 10 and 11.
- There are very good range of extra curricular activities and community links.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning are under developed.
- Curriculum organisation does not support progressive learning

Summary of key inspection judgements:

Judgement	Year 9	Year 11
Standards of work seen during the inspection	Below average	Below average
Achievement: whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Satisfactory	Good
Attitudes of students to their work	Good	Very Good
Quality of teaching	Good	Good
Quality of learning	Satisfactory	Good
Quality of curriculum leadership	Good	
Management of the department	Good	
Improvement since the previous inspection	Good	

Commentary

92. GCSE physical education results have fluctuated since the previous inspection. Results in 2004 were below the national average, but they were above the average for similar schools. Standards of work seen in the theoretical aspects of the GCSE optional course are below average. Because of timetable constraints, no practical GCSE physical education work was inspected. Students' standards on entry in Year 7 are well below those nationally, by Year 9 they are below the national average and this improvement represents satisfactory achievement. In Years 10 and 11 overall standards in the core physical education programme for all students are just below the national average although achievement is good due to the range of basic skills students acquire. However, as students follow a number of short programmes in a wide range of activities, the lack of continuity and consolidation within the core curriculum for all students at Year 11 inhibit students' further progress. Students with special educational needs and those from differing ethnic backgrounds, including those with English as an additional language are encouraged to take a full part in physical education, are integrated well into lessons and overall make good progress and achieve well.

93. Overall, teaching and learning in physical education are good. In Year 11, the good lessons involved the use of coaches to deliver a wide range of activities. The opportunity for the students to use community sport facilities is highly motivational and promotes very positive attitudes and attendance. While the use of coaches is very effective in enabling students to acquire skills, there is insufficient attention given to self and peer evaluation so these aspects of the National Curriculum are not fully developed. Teaching in Years 7 to 9 is good. In the best lessons students are challenged and there are high expectations of performance. The use of progressive tasks and questioning are used to engage students and consolidate learning. Student learning in Years 7 to 9, while sometimes good, is satisfactory overall because immature behaviour sometimes influences students' attitudes, the pace of lessons and progress made. In Years 7 to 9 the teaching of how to evaluate performance and health and fitness are not sufficiently covered to fully support students' learning. There is little opportunity for students to develop their learning through the use of ICT, for example, by recording their movements on digital cameras and analysing this to bring about improvement. Overall, assessment is satisfactory, with basic structures and procedures in place. Students are not always aware of their achievements and how to improve, as they do not engage sufficiently in self and peer evaluation. As with the teaching programmes, assessment does not reflect fully the National Curriculum as it only focuses on the physical performance aspects. At GCSE, student progress is monitored and used more effectively.
94. The extra curricular provision within physical education is very good and a real strength of the department. The wide range of activities and the strong links with the community help to maintain students' interest and participation and provides additional challenge for gifted and talented students who make good progress. The organisation of the timetable and curriculum lacks continuity and progression for those areas of activity, which operate on a two-weekly basis.
95. Leadership and management are good. The head of department has a high profile amongst staff and students and sets high standards within the physical education area. Effective teamwork between staff contributes to the consistent day-to-day running of the department. Monitoring of teaching and learning within the department is under developed as it does not provide sufficient evidence to further raise standards. There has been good improvement, particularly in relation to the structure of the curriculum for gymnastics, since the previous inspection and the high standards of participation and good provision have been maintained.

Dance

Provision in dance is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There were excellent GCSE examination results in 2004.
- Overall teaching and learning are very good.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- There is insufficient use of ICT to support self and peer evaluation.
- Assessment in Years 7 to 9 is not used to measure progress in all aspects of the National Curriculum

Summary of key inspection judgements:

Judgement	Year 9	Year 11
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Standards of work seen during the inspection	Average	Above
Achievement: whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Good	Very Good
Attitudes of students to their work	Very Good	Very Good
Quality of teaching	Good	Very Good
Quality of learning	Good	Very Good
Quality of curriculum leadership	Very Good	
Management of the department	Very good	
Improvement since the previous inspection	Very good	

Commentary

96. Students' standards in dance on entry to the college are well below those nationally. Standards of dance work seen in Year 9 during the inspection are in line with national expectations and in Years 10 and 11 they are above average. This represents very good achievement in dance overall. Students' technical and compositional skills are very good, which produces effective performance and compositional work. Particularly in Year 11 students have a very good understanding of safe practice when taking weight in dance and use technical vocabulary very well to discuss their work. Students with special educational needs and from ethnic minority groups, including those with English as an additional language were fully integrated and supported by the teacher, resulting in very good progress. Challenging lessons and the opportunity to access dance within the community enables gifted and talented students to make very good progress. The group of students who took GCSE dance in 2004 obtained outstanding results with all students gaining A*-C and over half achieving the highest grades A*-A.
97. Overall the quality of teaching and learning in dance are very good and the main contributory factor to student achievement. The teacher has excellent subject knowledge and used this effectively when providing technical information, demonstrations and individual feedback to students. The dance environment provides a positive and supportive learning experience where students are confident and motivated to succeed. A well structured assessment system in Years 10 and 11 is used effectively to support student learning and achievement. Within Years 7 to 9 the assessment structure does not fully measure standards and achievement in all aspects of the National Curriculum, particularly health and fitness. The use of ICT within the dance curriculum is insufficient as students are not provided with opportunities to engage in self and peer assessment using digital cameras as an effective method to record their performance so as to see what is needed to improve. In Years 7 to 9, the curriculum organisation of one lesson per fortnight for some groups in dance results in a lack of continuity and progress.
98. Leadership and management in dance are very good. There is a clear vision for the subject and a commitment to improvement and future developments. Effective policies and procedures are in place and have been thoroughly implemented and monitored. The head of department is an excellent role model who organises and manages an effective enrichment programme that supports the dance curriculum. Improvements in dance since the previous inspection are very good as the quality of the teaching promotes higher expectations and examination results have significantly improved.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

The vocational education programmes in Years 10 and 11 were sampled. Lessons were observed in business studies and health and social care. Vocational courses in ICT and science are reported under their respective subjects. Neither business studies nor health and social care were offered at the time of the previous inspection. The vocational course in leisure and tourism was not running at the time of the inspection.

Vocational courses

Provision in vocational courses is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teachers have good subject knowledge.
- The coursework is set well within a vocational context.
- There are well-planned schemes of work.
- There is a lack of consistency of assessment across the department.

Summary of key inspection judgements:

Judgement	Year 10	Year 11
Standards of work seen during the inspection	Average	Above average
Achievement: whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Good	Good
Attitudes of students to their work	Good	Good
Quality of teaching	Good	Good
Quality of learning	Good	Good
Quality of curriculum leadership	Good	
Management of the department	Good	
Improvement since the previous inspection	Good	

99. In business studies and health and social care the standards in examinations are below national averages. The standards seen were above average in business studies and average in health and social care and overall this represents good achievement for all students.
100. Teaching and learning is good with work set well in a variety of vocational contexts. Teachers provide a good breadth of tasks to suit the wide range of ability of the students and a good mix of whole class and group activities. In business studies, students were enthusiastic about the subject, encouraged to research tasks and undertook independent learning. In health and social care, the projects set were in a relevant care setting and students were provided with a varied range of tasks and were able to draw well on their own experiences when working on the assignments. As students have no prior experience in these subjects, the department offers a good induction programme, which introduces students to the requirements of the courses. The students use work experience well to enhance their coursework and students have a good opportunity to put their business skills into practice through the Young Enterprise programme. Assessment is good in business studies and satisfactory in health and social care. In business studies the work is thoroughly marked with constructive comments, the students are aware of the levels they are working towards and what they need to improve.
101. The leadership and management of the department is good and the head of department has a clear view of the future direction taking account of recent curriculum developments. He has developed good schemes of work which are clearly linked to the GCSE courses. They ensure that examination requirements are met and are well matched to the needs of the students. Resources are good and very good use is made of ICT. Progress since the previous inspection is good with the college introducing four vocational courses in science, business, leisure and tourism and health and social care.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

There is a very good programme for personal, social and health education which covers all statutory requirements and gives students a real opportunity to meet, discuss and consider issues concerning their personal and social developments and health related issues pertinent to young women growing up in a challenging environment. Due sensitivity is given to students ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds but all important issues are addressed. The programme is led and managed very well and is taught well by a dedicated small team of teachers. This ensures consistency in students' experience and in lesson planning and teaching. Students were able to talk, with authority, of topics recently covered in their lessons and felt well prepared for issues that faced them relevant to their age and experiences. The course encompasses citizenship and due to staff absences during the inspections the majority of lessons observed had a citizenship focus.

Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The students' achievement in the GCSE 2004 short course was excellent.
- There is strong encouragement and engagement of students by teachers, particularly in Years 10 and 11.
- There are very good relationships that encourage very good collaborative work.
- The recently improved curriculum for Years 7 to 9 is raising standards.
- While good assessment procedures are in place in Years 10 and 11, the procedures In Years 7 to 9 are undeveloped.

Summary of key inspection judgements:

Judgement	Year 9	Year 11
Standards of work seen during the inspection	Well below average	Average
Achievement: whether the standards students reach are as high as they should be	Satisfactory	Good
Attitudes of students to their work	Very good	Very good
Quality of teaching	Good	Good
Quality of learning	Good	Good
Quality of curriculum leadership	Good	
Management of the department	Satisfactory	
Improvement since the previous inspection	Not applicable	

Commentary

- 102 Present standards seen in Year 9 are well below average because until this term citizenship was delivered through other curriculum subjects and it was very difficult for students to gain an overall understanding of the subject and to make good progress. The delivery of citizenship has recently been improved and is now delivered through the personal, social and health education programme with some additional off-timetable days to cover the government and politics aspects of the programmes of study that are planned for but yet to be taught. Given students prior knowledge, achievement overall by the Year 9 is satisfactory and is improving because of the recent changes in curriculum delivery. Almost all students were entered for the GCSE short course in 2004. The results were well above the national average and this indicates excellent achievement for these students. In the current Years 10 and 11 standards are near national expectations, this is based upon the lessons seen and the written work available so that the overall achievement of all groups, including gifted and talented, those with special educational needs and those with English as a second language in Year 11 is good. Students achieve well because in addition to the taught lessons, there are many opportunities to experience and develop active citizenship within and beyond the school day. For example, there is a very active and influential school council, students act as interpreters at parents' evenings, they teach modern foreign languages to primary students

and they deliver effective presentations in wider venues such as the Deutsche Bank conference and the Youth Parliament.

- 103 Teaching and learning are good throughout, with some very good teaching. There is a well qualified and experienced team, including senior managers who introduce challenging and thought provoking themes such as HIV Aids and capital punishment both sensitively and effectively. They strongly encourage the students to discuss, to share their views and to reflect carefully upon the topics. Lesson planning is very effective and skilled and targeted support is given to a range of different ability and ethnic minority groups in the lessons. The students work enthusiastically, with considerable focus and pace and make good progress especially in Years 10 and 11. Relationships are very good and this is important because it enables the students to take part fully in lessons as much of the learning occurs through discussion, role-play and collaborative work. Students interviewed during the inspection were able to talk with confidence about political, social and community issues and demonstrated a good understanding of what was required to be a good and responsible citizen. This is ably demonstrated by the racial harmony and very good relationships demonstrated between the students and adults in the school and the community.
- 104 During the autumn term 2004 a timely and effective review of the delivery of Years 7 to 9 took place and it was decided, rightly, to change from an integrated approach to one where a dedicated team deliver the curriculum through the personal, social and health education programme with additional off timetable days. The change started in January 2005. Given the changes were very recent, understandably the scheme of work is incomplete with only one term fully rewritten. The previous curriculum model was very difficult to assess and there was no effective procedure to identify how students were doing. Good strategies are being developed to identify examples of active citizenship and to introduce more effective self evaluation strategies for the students to follow. In contrast to these early developments, in Years 10 and 11 there are good procedures which enable teachers to know how well students are progressing and provide effective moderation of coursework.
- 105 Leadership of the subject is good because there is a very clear vision of how the subject needs to develop. The GCSE short course provides many opportunities for students to develop both their knowledge and experience of the subject. There is also a strong desire to improve both the provision and the achievement in Years 7 to 9. Considerable progress has been made in a relatively short time. Management is satisfactory because several new and effective structures have been put in place to improve the delivery in Years 7 to 9. The assessment strategy is developing well and the schemes of work are being effectively revised and rewritten. It is not possible to judge improvement since the previous inspection as the subject was not formally taught at that time.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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