

INSPECTION REPORT

MOAT COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Leicester

LEA area: Leicester City

Unique reference number: 120292

Principal: Mrs Freda Hussain

Lead inspector: W Keast

Dates of inspection: 7th – 10th March 2005

Inspection number: 268421

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE COLLEGE

| | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school: | Comprehensive |
| School category: | Community |
| Age range of students: | 11 – 16 |
| Gender of students: | Mixed |
| Number on roll: | 1034 |
| College address: | Maidstone Road Leicester Leicestershire |
| Postcode: | LE2 0TU |
| Telephone number: | 01162 625705 |
| Fax number: | 01162 510653 |
| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mrs Jo Wilkinson |
| Date of previous inspection: | 22 nd April 1999 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COLLEGE

Moat Community College is an inner city school for children aged 11 to 16. It is of average size. Students come from areas of significant social and economic deprivation. The proportion entitled to a free school meal (over a third) is above average. Their attainment when they come to the college is well below average. The proportion of students who have special educational needs and the proportion of students who have a statement of these needs are both average. Their most frequent need is moderate learning difficulties. The proportion of students from ethnic minority backgrounds is very high with more than ninety per cent whose home language is not English. The most frequent home languages are Gujarati, Bengali and Somali. The proportion of students who are at an early stage of learning English is very high. The major ethnic group is Asian Indian. Other large groups are Black African and other Asian groups. A very small number of students come from a White background.

The college serves an area which is used by the local authority to house families coming to the city from abroad. As a consequence, the college receives new students every week and loses students whose families, once settled in the country, move to other parts of the city or county. The turbulence created by this movement is very high. The popularity of the college has developed over recent years and, for the first time, the number of students for whom the college is their first choice for entry in September 2005 exceeds the admission limit.

The college provides a wide range of well supported educational opportunities for the local community so that adults are on the site both during the day and in the evenings. The college has worked closely with its partner primary schools in an Education Action Zone and a sports co-ordinator programme to raise standards across the age range. The college also works closely with the nearby college of further education to provide a range of curriculum opportunities. The college gained an Achievement Award in 2000, a Healthy School's Award in 2001, Sportsmark in 2003, and Environment City Building award and The High Sheriff's award in 2004.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|--|
| 1522 | W Keast | Lead inspector | |
| 33735 | S Huard | Lay inspector | |
| 34521 | R Westbrook | Team inspector | English |
| 18072 | J Stephens | Team inspector | Mathematics |
| 34074 | E Orry | Team inspector | Science |
| 34661 | J Lewis | Team inspector | Information and communication technology; business studies |
| 2501 | R Allison-Smith | Team inspector | Art and design |
| 32590 | R Fenwick | Team inspector | Design and technology |
| 25073 | S Jordan | Team inspector | Geography; history |
| 34089 | R Gaff | Team inspector | French; Spanish |
| 34084 | M Davis | Team inspector | Music |
| 33002 | J Woodhouse | Team inspector | Physical education |
| 27226 | R Cribb | Team inspector | Religious education; special educational needs |
| 11623 | J Tanna | Team inspector | Gujarati; English as an additional language; citizenship |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Moat Community College is a very effective school. Attainment on entry is well below average but results at the end of Year 11 in 2004 were well above those of similar schools. The college deals well with the challenges presented by student mobility and the high numbers of students who are at an early stage of learning English. The leadership of the principal is outstanding. Teaching is good and examination results are rising more rapidly than the national trend. Teaching and non-teaching staff form a dedicated team. The college provides very good value for money.

The college's main strengths and weaknesses are

- The consistency of teaching across the school, except in music
- The very good care it takes of its students and the very good ethos of personal and academic development that is fostered
- The good range of effective support strategies to meet the many and varied needs of the students
- Some subjects do not place enough emphasis on developing literacy skills
- The very good provision made for work related learning and for students identified as gifted or talented
- The use of assessment data to monitor progress has been developed but requires greater rigour
- The poor provision in music

Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. Strengths have been maintained and standards have improved. All issues raised by that inspection have been tackled and improvements achieved. Some important issues have been resolved while in others, work is on-going. Educational links with further education have been developed and strengthened, and effective curriculum innovation undertaken. The college has gained several awards.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Performance in GCSE/GNVQ examinations at the end of Year 11, compared with: | all schools | | | similar schools |
|---|-------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2004 |
| | E | E | D | 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.*

Students achieve well. Results at the end of Year 9, in 2004, in English, mathematics and science were well below national averages but in line with those of similar schools. There was little difference between the performance of boys and girls. Current standards in Year 9 are below average in the three core subjects. They are above average in information and communication technology (ICT), average in art, design and technology, religious education and the modern foreign languages and well below average in music, history and geography. GCSE results, in 2004, were significantly below average in several subjects, including mathematics and English. However they were average in science and French, and significantly above average in art, design and technology, sociology, other languages and the new vocational courses. Students made much better progress than students in similar schools. Current standards in Year 11 are broadly average. They are well above average in art and design, above average in design and technology, ICT and religious education and below average in English, mathematics, geography and history. Students with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language and those identified as gifted and talented, achieve well. The gifted and talented achieve very well in Years 10 and 11 due the additional opportunities they have.

Students' personal qualities, including their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development are very good. The college provides very good opportunities for students' personal development. Students' attitudes and behaviour are good. Attendance is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The college provides a good quality of education. Teaching is good. It is good throughout the college and in all subjects except music. It is very good in ICT. Well planned lessons, clear explanations, good marking which gives guidance on how to improve, and the good attitudes of students lead to them learning and achieving well. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection, particularly in science. The curriculum meets the needs of students well and very well in Years 10 and 11 where there is very good support for learning outside the school day. Students are very well cared for and receive good support and guidance throughout the college. Links with other schools and colleges and with the community are very good and these make an important contribution to students' development and achievement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The principal is an inspirational and outstanding leader. Her excellent communications with local community leaders have provided a secure platform for establishing shared ambitions and high aspirations. Teamwork in the senior team and departments is strong, reflecting a commitment to equality and respect for students' differing and diverse needs. Leadership in some aspects of the college is very good. However, the measures for determining how successfully the college has achieved what it sets out to do in other aspects, are not spelt out in enough detail. Governance is satisfactory and governors are very committed and supportive of the college's aims. Not all statutory responsibilities are met.

PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE COLLEGE

Parents are positive about all aspects of the college. They are particularly satisfied about the standard of teaching and the fact that their children like the college. The expectations of teachers are high, and parents support this. Results have improved and standards are rising. Their only concerns are about discipline and the over-reliance on supply teachers in some subject areas. Students think it is a good college and say they are taught well. They expect to work hard and feel the college is well run. They are confident about approaching an adult if they have any problems and feel trusted and supported by staff. They do not think they behave as well as their parents and the inspection team consider that they do.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the college should do to improve are

- Manage the development of cross-curricular issues, particularly literacy, more effectively by more precisely identifying criteria for success and regularly checking progress
- Analyse assessment information more thoroughly to identify specific action and check progress
- Improve achievement and the quality of teaching and learning in music

and, to meet statutory requirements

- Citizenship
- A daily act of collective worship

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

Results, in 2004, in national examinations at the end of Year 9 were well below average and at the end of Year 11 were below average. GCSE results, in 2004, were well above those of similar schools. Standards in Years 9 are below average and in Year 11 are broadly average. All groups of students are achieving well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 11 students, in 2004, made much greater progress than students in similar schools
- Examination results were in line with those of similar schools at the end of Year 9
- Students are achieving well as a result of the quality of teaching they experience, the support they are given and their own hard work
- Students underachieve in music in Years 7 to 9 because teaching is unsatisfactory and students' below average literacy skills adversely affect their standards in some other subjects

Commentary

1. Students' attainment, on entry to the college, is well below the national average. During the year new students are enrolled on an almost weekly basis. Most of these students are newly arrived in the country and have no previous experience of the English education system. Many are at an early stage of learning English. As a result, only two-thirds of the students who were examined at the end of Year 9, in 2004, had been at the college from the beginning of Year 7.
2. At the end of Year 9, in 2004, students' overall results and in each of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, were well below the national averages. However, these results are in line with the average of results for similar schools¹. The trend in results over the last five years has been broadly in line with the slowly rising national trend. There is little difference between boys' and girls' performance with both being similarly below the national averages for boys and girls.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 29.7 (29.2) | n/a (33.5) |
| Mathematics | 30.6 (31.6) | n/a (35.4) |
| Science | 28.4 (29.9) | n/a (33.6) |

There were 209 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Standards in the current Year 9 are below average in the core subjects. They are above average in information and communication technology (ICT) and are average in art, design and technology, religious education and the modern foreign languages. They are below average in physical education, and well below average in music, geography and history. Students achieve well overall in relation to their attainment at the beginning of Year 7, and in most subjects. They achieve very well in ICT. Their achievement in design and technology and geography is satisfactory but they underachieve in music where teaching has been unsatisfactory.
4. Results in 2004, based upon students' average total point score at the end of Year 11 show that, overall, students do much better at GCSE than those in similar schools² even though results in terms of 5 A* to C grades are below the national average. When the point score for students' best eight results are considered, the school does as well as most schools' nationally. The only area where students do not do as well as either the national average or similar schools, is in the category of 5 or more A* to G grades including passes in both English and mathematics. This reflects the low

¹ Schools whose students had an average point score, at the end of Year 6 in 2001, of at least 24 but less than 25

² Schools whose students had an average point score, at the end of Year 9 in 2002, of at least 30 but less than 31

pass rates in these subjects. College results at this stage have been rising more rapidly than the results nationally.

5. In 2004, a wider range of qualifications was included in national results and point score equivalents were altered to enable this. Consequently, in the following table, the current average point score does not directly equate with that for the previous year.

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

| | College results | National results |
|---|-----------------|------------------|
| Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grades | 43 (30) | 52 (52) |
| Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades | 75 (86) | 89 (88) |
| Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades | 98 (95) | 96 (96) |
| Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects) | 272.5 (29.6) | 282.8 (34.7) |

There were 204 pupils in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

6. National information now allows students' progress from either the beginning of Year 7 or the end of Year 9, to the end of Year 11 to be identified. So, although only two-thirds of students who were examined at the end of Year 11 had started their secondary education at Moat College, information is available on the progress of three-quarters of these students from Year 7 and 90 per cent of these students from Year 9. Comparing the progress made by its students, on a student by student basis, with the progress made nationally by students with similar starting points, gives an indication of the *value added* by the college. On this basis, student progress from Year 7 to Year 11 was broadly average but well above average for similar schools. Progress for Year 9 to Year 11 was very high, both nationally and in comparison with similar schools.
7. Results in English and mathematics were well below average and well below those of similar schools. Results in science were average and well above those of similar schools. Results in French were broadly average and those in design and technology, art and design, ICT, Gujarati, religious education and sociology were above average. In other subjects, results were significantly below the national average. Girls did better than boys in science and boys did better than girls in design and technology. However, while there is little difference, overall, between the performance of boys and girls - the difference between their average point scores, subject by subject, and the national figures are similar – girls outperform boys in the proportion gaining the higher grades A* to C.
8. Current standards in Year 11 are broadly average. They are well above average in art and design, above average in design and technology, ICT and religious education and below average in English, mathematics, geography and history. In relation to their starting levels in Year 10, students are achieving well overall and in most of their subjects. They are achieving very well in science and ICT and their achievement is satisfactory in mathematics and geography.
9. Students' competence in ICT is average. Their competence in mathematics is below average in Years 7 to 9 but is broadly average in Years 10 and 11. Overall, students' competence in English language and their literacy skills are below average throughout the college. This has an adverse impact on the standards they achieve in those subjects which rely heavily on written responses, such as English, geography and history, or on understanding the written question before being able to respond appropriately, such as in mathematics.
10. Students with special educational needs achieve well. Good baseline assessment on entry to the college identifies students' needs well. Teachers with responsibility for these students write detailed individual education plans that are well used in supporting each individual. Good use is made of information, from subject lessons and additional testing, to monitor progress and identify areas where difficulties are evident. Data is very well used in monitoring the progress of students within the inclusion unit and after they graduate from it.
11. Since 2000, the number of students gaining 3 or more A* or A grades in GCSE examinations has risen significantly. Gifted and talented students are identified on entry to the college, through a series of tests and criteria, with approximately ten per cent of each year group being so identified. These students are achieving well in Years 7 to 9, and very well in Years 10 and 11. In 2003, the

college's students' results were recognized as representing the highest value added in Leicester. Recent successes in the national Experience Pakistan contest, the Letts Challenge and victory in the year long share competition run by The Independent are testimony to the high level achievement of the college's students when competing at a national level with other gifted and talented students and adults.

12. The achievement of students for whom English is an additional language (EAL) is good. Four out of five targeted students in Year 7 have improved their performance in English by at least one Level, and over a quarter by two Levels. In Year 8, two-thirds of the targeted students improved by at least one Level in English.

Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The college provides very good opportunities for personal development for all students. Students' attitudes and behaviour are good. Attendance is good and punctuality is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The college works hard and effectively to widen students' experience, their self-awareness and understanding of others
- Behaviour in lessons and around the college is good although, on occasion, issues within the community are reflected in behaviour in college
- Students like their college, take full advantage of the range of activities available and want to learn
- Unauthorised absence is increased by the extended overseas visits made by students

Commentary

13. Students say they like coming to college and know that they are expected to work hard. They feel they are well taught and clearly respect their teachers. In this, they mirror the views of their parents. Students enjoy the range of extra-curricular activities and take full advantage of them. Opportunities, in Years 10 and 11, to convert short course into full course accreditation through additional study are particularly well attended. Students involve themselves very successfully in competitions in which they find themselves competing against selective schools and those with sixth form students.
14. Students' personal development is strongly encouraged by all that the college does, the recognition of the worth of the individual and atmosphere of learning that the college creates. Specific developments are supported through the personal, health and social education (PSHE) course in the lower part of the college and in the recently introduced citizenship programme. The topics covered are relevant to the local community and are taught in a positive and stimulating way by a highly committed group of teachers. Weekly assemblies provide good opportunities for moral and spiritual development. The assembly programme supports the different faith festivals, for example Diwali, Christmas and Eid, in a way which both celebrates the festival and is acceptable to those of other faiths. Students are not withdrawn by their parents, from assemblies. However, because they are not daily, the college is not meeting statutory requirements.
15. All students follow a religious education course which, in Years 10 and 11, leads to an accreditation. This course makes an important and very good contribution to students' spiritual development and their understanding of other faith's beliefs. Part of this programme, for example, is to visit other faith's places of worship.
16. The college strives hard to promote understanding and to widen students' somewhat limited experience. Through its community work and educational programmes, its placements on work experience and its very effective widening participation programme, the college demonstrates the opportunities available to everyone, beyond the close geographic confines of the local community. Staff work hard to ensure that both girls and boys from all ethnic groups, and their parents, are able take up these opportunities.
17. The two recently established college councils provide a very useful way of involving students in the democratic process and in the running of the college. For example, they have run a college fete and organised prayers on days other than Friday. Each council has its own small budget. Year 10 students apply to be college assistants and, this year, more suitable students have applied than there are posts to be filled.

18. Behaviour in lessons is good although, on occasion, a few teachers have more difficulty in maintaining control of students when work is not well matched to their needs. In large groups, such as assemblies, behaviour is particularly good. Behaviour around the college is very good considering the narrowness of the corridors. Students move in a calm, self-controlled way and are patient when congestion slows movement. The college provides a calm working environment in which students can learn and achieve. Behaviour around the college site, at break times and the lunch period, is good.
19. In their questionnaire responses, students specifically mentioned the wide cultural diversity of student body as being a strength of the college. Within college, students of all ethnic backgrounds work well together. In its termly reporting of racial incidents, required by the local council, the college has submitted nil returns for the last two years. Assemblies are one of the opportunities the college regularly takes to celebrate cultural and religious diversity. Discussions with students clarified that the bullying indicated in their questionnaire responses was not as widespread as suggested. Bullying was not considered to be an issue by students and they were convinced that the college did, and would, respond effectively to any reported incident. Nevertheless, some tension between different ethnic groups exists within the local community and, on occasion, this can be brought into college. Such incidents, if they occur, are dealt with swiftly and effectively by senior managers. The college is working hard, helped by its community provision, to promote understanding and relationships within the community.
20. Exclusion rates for an inner city school are low. The college works, through its inclusion unit, the *MOVE* group and its team of mentors, to identify and tackle successfully students' behavioural problems and low self-esteem. The number of permanent exclusions is very low. Those excluded for a fixed period include both a hard core of persistent offenders as well as those who, having being excluded once, are successfully re-integrated and do not reach this stage again.

Ethnic background of students

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 | 16 | 9 | 0 |
| White – any other White background | 17 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Asian | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – any other mixed background | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – Indian | 578 | 12 | 1 |
| Asian or Asian British – Pakistani | 55 | 1 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi | 80 | 3 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background | 93 | 1 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – Caribbean | 21 | 4 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – African | 143 | 1 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – any other Black background | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Any other ethnic group | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| No ethnic group recorded | 6 | 0 | 0 |

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

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| College data | 4.7 | College data | 2.7 |
| National data | 6.9 | National data | 1.1 |

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

21. Attendance at college has shown an improving trend for the last five years and, in the last full year, was better than the national figures. The college is proactive in continually reinforcing the need for good attendance to improve students' achievement. Attendance is closely monitored and unexpected absences are quickly followed up through parental contact. The background of many students is such that parents arrange and take extended foreign visits, often of eight or more weeks, during term time and with little regard for examination times or deadlines. Unauthorised absence, therefore, is above average. The college has led the way amongst local schools in successfully operating a policy of warning parents that exceeding any approved extended holidays will lead to the student being removed from the college roll and the need to reapply for admission. Consistent application of this strategy has contributed to reducing this absence. Nevertheless, this parental attitude remains an issue and is a barrier to improving attendance and raising achievement further. Late arrival to lessons had been identified as a contributing factor to the disruption to students' learning. Punctuality at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions and at the start of each lesson is closely monitored by tutors and appropriate action taken for persistent offenders.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE COLLEGE

The quality of education is good. Teaching and the opportunities for learning within the curriculum are good. The college takes very good care of its students who are well supported in their learning and development.

Teaching and learning

Students are well taught and, as a result, learn well. The teaching observed in Years 10 and 11 was slightly better than that in Years 7 to 9. Assessment is good with most students clear about what they need to do to improve. Students with special educational needs, those identified as talented and gifted and those for whom English is an additional language, are all taught well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have good subject knowledge which they use to provide students with well planned, purposeful lessons
- Students' good attitudes contribute to their effective learning
- Subject teaching is consistently good or very good
- Good relationships that lead to an effective learning environment
- On occasion, weak behaviour management and lack of challenge lead to insufficient progress

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 123 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|--------|-----------|
| 6 (5%) | 26 (21%) | 59 (48%) | 30 (24%) | 3 (2%) | 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.

22. Teaching across the college is good and has improved since the last inspection. This good teaching results in students learning and achieving well. Nine out of every ten parents and students felt that teaching was good. The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching has fallen and the proportion which was good or better has increased from just over half to nearly three-quarters. Teaching was previously reported as being least effective in science and mathematics in Years 7 to 9. This teaching is now good. It was reported as being least effective in science in Years 10 and 11. This teaching is now very good. Within most subjects, teaching is good throughout the college. It is

satisfactory in geography in Years 7 to 9, and in mathematics in Years 10 and 11. Teaching is very good in ICT and, additionally, in science, business studies and art in Years 10 and 11. Teaching in music is poor.

23. Teaching has continued to improve as a result of the college initiative, *improving classroom practice*. Regular monitoring has been taking place with the support from local authority personnel. Identified weaker teachers have received a programme of focused support which, in nearly all cases, has been effective. Many teachers use ICT well to support their teaching although there are some departments who do not use it as much as they could. The planned use of ICT by students to support their learning is more variable with several subject areas offering few opportunities because they are unable to gain ready access to whole-class facilities.
24. Teachers have a good grasp of their subject which allows them to give clear explanations of new ideas and concepts, to provide relevant examples to illustrate a point and to re-phrase an explanation if students are having difficulty in understanding something. In many instances, teachers use probing questioning techniques both to involve all students in the work and to encourage students to explain or extend their initial answers so that their depth of understanding can be assessed. Teachers use their knowledge of examination syllabuses to plan work which builds upon what students have already learned and which helps them move forward in their understanding. They use their good knowledge of examination requirements to teach students how to gain as many marks as possible.
25. The use of recommendations from the National Key Stage 3 strategy is apparent in most lessons, not just in Years 7 to 9 but throughout the college. Teachers start lessons by explaining clearly to students what they will be learning. These learning outcomes are used during the lesson, and particularly at the end, to help students recognise when and what they are learning. They also help the teacher to evaluate how successful learning has been and if there is a need to re-visit or clarify a teaching point. The lesson structure gives a stimulus to help capture students' imagination at the start of lessons and provides a good link to the main learning activities.
26. Teachers manage students well. The good relationships between teachers and students provide a calm atmosphere within which students can learn. In the classroom, students volunteer answers which may not be correct, confident that their errors will not invite ridicule. Teachers actively encourage those who are less confident to respond and become involved in the lesson and in learning. Students, and their parents, know that they are expected to work hard. They are helped in this by their own positive attitudes to learning, through interesting and brisk lessons and through being clear about what they have to do and what they are expected to learn.
27. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, it was because students did not achieve sufficiently during the lesson. Students did not achieve well enough when poor behaviour management led to too much off-task chatter, or where the learning outcomes, if they had been determined, provided little challenge or were not clearly explained, so that in all cases students did too little work and learned little.
28. Gifted and talented students are generally well taught and the regular scrutiny of their work is an extremely thorough quality check on what they experience in their classrooms. They are encouraged to evaluate their own experiences and do this very well. Their frank comments about the teaching they experience and how they learn best, help their teachers to develop work that is better matched to their needs. These reviews also identify quickly where there are difficulties. Many now write their own individual education plans (IEP). This excellent idea greatly emphasises independence and encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning. However, although most teachers plan work to extend these students effectively, for example in business education, several occasions were observed during the inspection where the work was not sufficiently matched to their needs.
29. The teaching of students with special educational needs is good. Teachers are generally well aware of the needs of individuals because of their detailed IEPs. Where students are given classroom support, their activities are usually well planned because of the joint planning between support staff and teacher. In the best lessons, a range of good support strategies ensures that these students are fully involved in their learning and make good progress. The planning and strategies are particularly very good in business education and work related learning. The skilled teaching in an excellent role

play lesson on employment tribunals focused the work on the individual needs of each student. This enabled the students to learn through individual challenges to which they responded enthusiastically. Consequently learning was excellent and the students with special educational needs achieved very well. However, the quality of planning work for these students varies from subject to subject and is least effective when work is not sufficiently adapted to address the students' individual needs.

30. The quality of teaching support for students who have English as an additional language (EAL) is good. In order to support the needs of the large number of these students, the college has created groups, in each year, which include most of the students targeted for language support. Specialist EAL and mainstream staff teach these groups in partnership. Partnership teaching is a very strong feature of support where both teachers have carefully planned together to highlight particular aspects of language development. This was seen working very well in a Year 11 English lesson and a Year 9 humanities lesson when the two teachers taught the class in tandem, each taking the lead in turn. The particular language aspects were emphasised with appropriate meaning and paraphrasing when discussing child slavery in a Year 9 lesson and *Of Mice and Men* in Year 11.
31. Students' work is generally marked regularly and accurately. In most cases, this marking is closely related to the relevant National Curriculum level or the GCSE examination grade. Students' work is generally well annotated so that they know why the assessment has been made and they are generally clear about what they need to do next in order to improve the quality of their work or to raise their standard. When questioning students in a lesson, or discussing work with individual students, teachers readily adapted their questioning, their challenge or the task they asked a student to complete in response to the information they were gaining.
32. College analysis of students' previous attainment, as indicated by national test results or the use of commercial tests, is provided to all teachers for each group they teach. This allows the determination of subject targets for every student. Students know their targets and subsequent assessments of their work helps teachers to monitor their progress and to give guidance on how to improve.

The curriculum

The college provides a worthwhile range of learning opportunities for its students, particularly in Years 10 and 11. Students' learning is supported well by additional opportunities and enhanced by the range of extracurricular activities. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources meet the needs of the curriculum well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a very good match between the college's curriculum and the needs of its students in Years 10 and 11
- The recent development of vocationally based courses has proved successful in raising achievement
- The college makes particularly good provision for gifted and talented students
- Students are well prepared for the world of work and for further learning
- Citizenship does not yet meet statutory requirements
- The college is very strongly committed to promoting equality of opportunity
- Accommodation for athletics and games is unsatisfactory

Commentary

33. The college has resolved the problem of split classes highlighted in the last inspection report. The curriculum meets the statutory requirements in most respects but does not provide a daily collective act of worship and it does not assess or report on students' attainment in citizenship in Years 7 to 9. The college keeps its curriculum under constant review and has responded well to national initiatives. For example, a core skills course has been introduced in Year 7 covering literacy, numeracy and thinking skills, and the range of vocational courses in Years 10 and 11 is being increased. These latter courses, most notably in design and technology and art and design, allow students to benefit from the facilities and expertise of the nearby Leicester College. The college makes every attempt to ensure that students' achievement, in whatever area, is accredited. For example, although students are unable to study more than one modern foreign language, the

college enables them to take examinations, where appropriate, in their home languages, including Dutch, Urdu and Bengali. Students' work experience and their involvement in work related programmes can also be accredited. Where a GCSE examination is inappropriate, students work towards certificates of accreditation.

34. The context of the college is such that students may be admitted at any time during the year, even late in Year 11. Many of these students, new to the country, are at an early stage of learning English. Wherever possible their needs are effectively met within the college but, in some instances, by attendance at Leicester College. Many students spend several hours a day, after college, at local faith schools and the college is seeking ways in which achievement here might also be accredited.
35. Art, music and design and technology in Year 7, and art, ICT and design and technology in Years 8 and 9, are taught in a carousel arrangement. This has an adverse impact on students' experience in design and technology because students are not guaranteed a common experience and, for some students, the gap between units of work in the same material area, for example food, is too long.
36. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. The curriculum is challenging and well taught: issues are relevant to students and are presented in a positive way. Students are well prepared for continuing their education or the world of work. Work related learning, reported later, is a strength of the college. Good, clear and un-biased careers education and advice helps students choose the right course and progression for them. Close links with Leicester College raise students' awareness of opportunities, raise their self-confidence and help them access courses at an appropriate level. The *widening participation* programme effectively raises students' aspirations and leads to continuing education at local colleges with sixth form provision and then into further or higher education.
37. Students with special educational needs have good access to a curriculum appropriate to their needs. In the learning support unit and the inclusion unit, students are withdrawn from mainstream classes for well structured support sessions involving individual or group work. The learning support unit works mainly on basic literacy and number skills work. The programme within the inclusion unit helps students cope with their behaviour and manage their anger. Both programmes are very successful in supporting students and developing their self-esteem and confidence.
38. Provision and planning for gifted and talented students is very good and use of Excellence in Cities and Education Action Zone (EAZ) funding has provided a highly successful programme that has flourished and grown over the last five years. A regular newsletter keeps all informed and rightly celebrates their achievements. Most subjects provide a wide ranging programme of extension work. The provision of extra-curricular opportunities for these students is exceptionally good. Many activities interest and challenge these students, both in college and through external providers. Membership for some students of the National Academy for the Gifted and Talented Youth (NAGTY) has led to summer colleges and university linked opportunities. Talented students have benefited from involvement in activities such as art courses and the Junior Sports Leader Award (JSLA).
39. Students are offered a good range of extra-curricular activities although there is no provision, at present, for music. They have good opportunities to go on trips and visits, within and outside of the UK. However, participation has been limited by the reluctance of some parents to allow their children, particularly girls, to travel outside the local area. Students are encouraged to take part in national competitions, and have enjoyed some notable successes. The college provides very good support for learning outside the normal college day. Year 9 students are encouraged to attend "booster" classes in English, mathematics and science, and students in Years 9, 10 and 11 can take part in Easter revision classes in a number of subjects, including religious education, business studies and French. The college has also organized successful 'family learning days' attended by more than a thousand people. In Years 10 and 11, many students choose to take opportunities for additional study to upgrade their short course to full GCSE accreditation in religious education and a number of the design and technology programmes, or AS level in ICT.
40. Staffing to meet the needs of the curriculum is good. It is very good in science, ICT, art and business studies and unsatisfactory in music. However, staff absence and long-term illness has led to a succession of supply teachers that both parents and students feel disrupts their learning. The college has been pro-active in employing two members of staff, on a full-time basis, to cover

lessons for absent colleagues. Support staff form an effective and efficient team. Overall, teaching and learning resources are good and supplemented by curriculum links with Leicester College, for example in providing the facilities for computer-aided design and manufacture and art. In no area are resources less than satisfactory, most departments produce materials of a very good standard.

41. Accommodation is good and in some areas is of a high quality. Rooms and corridors are enhanced by the attractive display of students' work and teaching resources. However, facilities for games and athletics are unsatisfactory because curriculum time is lost as pupils are transported by coach and, being open to public use, constitute a health and safety issue. A number of deficiencies identified in the previous report have been overcome. The library has been refurbished and is a very good resource, used extensively for both lessons and private study. Spaces for mentoring have been provided and teachers now have access to ICT for data handling and in support of their teaching. A recent initiative has seen the lecture theatre transformed into a much safer and more useful teaching space. Effective measures have been taken to ameliorate the health and safety risks associated with the narrow corridors. Small classrooms used for ICT limit the size of teaching groups across the curriculum and the seating does not fit the purpose intended. The standard of cleaning and maintenance in all areas is exemplary.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for the care and welfare of all students is very good. The provision of support and guidance is good. Students are involved well in the development of the college.

Main strengths

- Health and safety arrangements are comprehensive and students feel safe and secure while at college
- The wide range of students' needs is very well supported by the college
- Tutors play a good and pivotal role in monitoring their students academic and personal development and providing appropriate guidance and support
- Careers advice, and guidance when choosing options at each new stage of education are good
- All students are given a good opportunity to influence the running of the college, and through the college councils and questionnaires they are playing a part in the development of the college

Commentary

42. The expectation, effort and caring nature of staff and management combine to make the college a welcoming haven for all its students. The college is a secure building. Child protection procedures are in place, follow local authority guidelines and all staff have been recently trained. Induction arrangements are very good for students joining at age 11 and for the many who arrive during the college year. The college site is restricted and without its own playing fields. Health and safety concerns are taken very seriously by staff. All physical equipment and materials for design technology and science are regularly reviewed and appropriate procedures adopted. Travel arrangements for off-site physical education and trips are good and comprehensively documented. The college has to rely on an external body for the provision of playing fields. These were not well maintained at the time of the inspection.
43. Following the previous inspection, the college responded to criticism of its pastoral structure and created Year Achievement Co-ordinators (YAC) to bring together both pastoral care and the monitoring of achievement. This has led to improvement. Students appreciate the good support they get from their subject teachers and their tutors. YACs have developed and lead their teams of tutors well. Tutors know their students well and play a major role in maintaining records of students' progress, check on any problems and monitor effectively homework, attendance and punctuality. Good systems exist for informing parents of non-attendance and truancy sweeps are organised, periodically, through the college-based education welfare officer for the college. Since the previous inspection, the data from end of Year 6 national tests, nationally referenced testing carried out by the college when students enter and regular subject testing by the college, is collated and used more systematically. The information is used to set individual students' targets in Years 7 and 10. Students are aware of their targets and their progress towards meeting them is monitored by their tutors. Tutors are kept fully informed by regular analyses undertaken by senior managers.

44. Students with special educational needs are very well known by the teachers and support staff. A very well designed booklet on special needs and the use of the college intranet to publish individual education plans (IEP) helps teachers in providing support focused on meeting identified need. By encouraging a positive response from special needs students, the college builds their self-esteem very effectively, and nearly all are able to integrate fully into the day-to-day activities of the college. The links with feeder schools are well developed and provide good support for transfer into the college.
45. Good systems of behaviour management enable the teachers, support staff and mentors to help those with behavioural difficulties, enabling them to work effectively alongside their fellow students. A multi-disciplinary referral panel is effective in determining the most appropriate support strategy for individual students. The college inclusion unit provides a very good, structured programme to address an individual's needs and re-integrate them, successfully teaching them effective strategies to manage their own difficulties and emotions. Students return from fixed term exclusions through the inclusion unit and their re-integration is closely monitored and guided. The recently established *MOVE* group provides longer term nurturing support to a small number of students in danger of exclusion. The small group is taught separately from the main curriculum, working towards a staged re-integration.
46. The monitoring of gifted and talented students is excellent. The two main strands of this work are through regular work sampling and students' self-reviews. The former ensures students are appropriately challenged; know how they are doing and how they can do better. The latter enables students to record their successes and celebrate their achievements. Performance data from subject departments is used to analyse individual's progress against their targets. There is a drive to ensure that these students achieve their full potential and the tracking of their progress is rigorous. Each faculty has a teacher responsible for the development of programmes to challenge these students. When the reviews occasionally identify where students have concerns about their work in specific subjects, considerable effort is made to address these concerns and this support is very much appreciated by the students.
47. The language support department has made considerable progress in supporting the enhancement of literacy skills (speaking and listening) of EAL students across the curriculum, and continues to raise the language and literacy levels of identified students through specialist in-class and targeted withdrawal group support. The skills of subject teachers continue to be developed so they are more effective in supporting the language development of EAL students. The partnership teaching of identified groups of students is particularly effective.
48. Learning mentors are deployed well throughout the college and give individual support to tackle behaviour, attendance and self-esteem issues. In addition to their individual workload, each mentor has a useful oversight of different aspects of the college provision, for example gifted and talented students, Year 11 course work catch-up or the re-integration of excluded students. The close link the mentors have with linked primary schools, through the EAZ, helps the transition and induction of many students. The school has recently received a large number of Somali students who are new to English. Support for these students is well organised and effective. A recently appointed member of the mentoring team has developed strong home-school links and provides intensive small-group support for a short period. These groups have proved very popular with students and their parents and have been successful in raising the self-esteem and achievement of these students.
49. Students and parents receive good support when choosing their options for Year 10 and again when making choices for post 16 education. Work experience and work related learning are an integral part of the curriculum and the guidance process for all students. The college has become particularly involved with widening participation in higher education, developing close links with the two local universities and with Cambridge University. The programme has already started to succeed with students widening their aspirations beyond their immediate community.
50. The college is committed to involving students in all aspects of its work and is keen to know what students think. The recently established college councils are maturing rapidly and give those students elected as representatives, responsibility and accountability to their peers. Consideration by management and governors of a new college uniform has already included a questionnaire to all students. Although unresolved at the time of the inspection, there is clear support from several age groups and their views are being taken seriously.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are satisfactory. The college works very hard to develop these links but with limited response. Links with the community and with other schools and colleges are very good.

Main strengths

- The information that is provided to parents about the academic progress of students is good and parents are kept well informed
- Links with the wider community are very good including community groups and spiritual leaders
- The college has developed very good relationships with feeder primary schools as part of its strategic initiative to improve standards on entry
- The links with post 16 colleges and universities are increasing the number of students continuing into further and higher education

Commentary

51. The college brochure is an easily read and helpful document. Parents receive the required annual report as well as interim reports on their children's progress based upon the data from target setting and review. A regular newsletter keeps them well informed of planned college events and celebrations of success and student achievements. The college is always willing and ready to respond to parents and parents indicated in their questionnaire responses that they had no hesitation in approaching the college if they felt the need arose. Links with the parents of students with special educational needs are satisfactory. Parents are invited to review meetings. There are good links to the external agencies that work with these students. As far as possible, these students are fully included in extra-curricular activities and clubs. In the absence of a parent teacher association or other fund raising body, students recently organised a college fair and raised an encouraging amount of money for college funds. Parents have been consulted about the suggestion of a college uniform and further consultation is proposed due to the low overall level of response. The governors recognise this is an area where they need to make a continual effort. For the first time they have a full complement of parent governors.
52. Community links are very good with many examples of close cooperation between community leaders and the college promoting understanding and resolving tensions and difficulties. Relationships with the two local mosques are good with the college working consistently to ensure all students are able to take advantage of all the opportunities presented to them. Local and national competitions are increasing the horizons for students and the positive publicity received has changed the perception of the college. For the first time, the number who have expressed a first preference for entry to the college in September has exceeded capacity.
53. As a purpose built community college, one of the first in the city, it provides an impressive range of extended educational opportunities for parents and younger adults. These take place during the college day as well as in the evening and extend beyond language training and support. Courses are very well attended by members of the local community. Community groups make good use of college facilities. A crèche provides very good encouragement for young mothers, who otherwise would be isolated in their homes, to attend. Some of the many courses provided are in rapid response to locally identified needs or, for example, a short access to nursing course, access to the police and a planned access to the army course, provide potential routes to employment opportunities.
54. As part of its development strategy, the college used the opportunity of an Education Action Zone to work with its feeder primary schools. The college has worked effectively with these schools in a drive to raise standards. Parents of gifted and talented students in the feeder primary schools have been invited to meetings at the college. Current college students, involved in the school sports coordinator programme, are used in partnership with feeder primaries to host sports coaching events and competitions. As standards on entry improve and students enjoy the wide range of opportunities at the college and recognise the achievement they are making, it is anticipated that more students will stay to the end of Year 11 and fewer transfer to county schools at age 13. This would, in turn, reduce the availability of places for late entry and student mobility.

55. Links with post 16 colleges in the area are very good and strongly contribute to students' development and achievement. The college has focused on the initiative to widen participation in higher education and this is showing early signs of success. Former students, now at local post 16 colleges and universities, return to the college to share their experiences with current students. A tracking scheme right through to post graduate level is being undertaken by one of the local universities and some of the college's students have taken part. Vocational provision is improving and many students have benefited from a design/manufacturing partnership with Leicester College.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership of the principal is outstanding. She is ably supported by the senior management team. Leadership by key staff is good and management is effective. Governance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The principal is an inspirational and outstanding leader
- Improvement since the last inspection is good
- The college is deeply committed to, and extremely successful in, removing the barriers that limit students' achievements and ambitions
- The analysis of data and monitoring of some whole-college developments is not sufficiently rigorous
- The induction and continuing development of staff are very good

Commentary

56. In the previous inspection, governance was reported as weak and not focused on educational standards and improvement. Since then much has improved. Governors have a clearer understanding of their responsibilities and play a more active and productive part in the life of the college.
57. Governors are very supportive and committed to the college's continued improvement and its application for specialist status. Their experience and commitment to raising achievement serves the college well. There are good professional working relationships and governors share a secure understanding of the challenges the college faces in meeting its obligations to staff, parents and the wider community. They provide very good support for the principal, standing firm if challenged, for example over the college's approach to attendance and exclusions. A number of governors have improved their own effectiveness through training programmes which have made them more acutely aware of their role and more confident about exercising their responsibilities. This growing confidence has enabled the governing body to question, clarify and understand why things are as they are, but not to play a big enough part in identifying college priorities or to be sufficiently proactive in their monitoring of improvements. They therefore tend to rely on the information they are given without challenging senior staff about their leadership and the outcomes of key priorities. Some less effective measures of organisation and management of the curriculum and timetable, in design and technology and humanities - both noted in the previous inspection report - remain unresolved. Governors have not ensured that the college fully meets all its statutory obligations.
58. The principal is an inspirational and outstanding leader. She is an active and highly skilled spokesperson who has helped the college gain the respect and recognition of communities locally and nationally. The college has a proven record of success, challenging low expectations where they exist, promoting students' achievements and generating pride amongst parents who are very pleased to be associated with a college that has such high ideals and goals. A key to the success of the college is the very constructive relationships that have been established with local community groups. They provide a very secure platform for dialogue, ensuring that ambitions and high aspirations are shared and the actions the college takes are understood, if not always agreed with. The college is highly regarded by the local community - being a centre for learning where community members, adults as well as children, come to learn and where parents and children can learn side-by-side in weekend and holiday courses. This reputation has gradually but surely led to the college being the preferred, first choice, of more parents than there are places available.

59. The principal has been very wise in her use of funds to restructure the senior team. There is a good balance of experience and expertise, and a judicious use of outside consultants to lead staff training sessions or work alongside individual staff. A good example of this is the rolling programme of classroom observations that have led to open and professional discussion and a willingness amongst staff to share, and learn from, effective classroom practice. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection.
60. The leadership roles of the senior team have been clarified and in most cases there are clear lines of accountability that include both the students' academic and personal developments. The areas where expectations and outcomes could be clarified and strengthened are those that cross year groups and subjects, or where several staff have a stake in the outcomes. The development and implementation of the National Strategy, ICT and the development of literacy skills across the curriculum underpin almost everything the college seeks to achieve and are vital to the continuation of improved standards. However, the measures for determining how successfully the college has achieved what it sets out to do, perhaps because they are so ingrained within the everyday routines, are not spelt out in enough detail. Whilst the improvement plan makes reference to these, the targets and success criteria are somewhat vague. As a consequence, governors will find it hard to determine for themselves how successfully the college is meeting its targets and whether the funding is being used to maximum effect. A further complication is in the quality and accuracy of college-wide data, examination results and teacher assessments. Inaccuracies, for example in Year 9 teacher assessments, make it hard for staff and governors to reach correct conclusions. Target setting is insufficiently related to the analysis of external data. With separate systems in the younger and older years, tasks of synthesising findings and coordinating effective action are inefficient.
61. Teamwork in the senior team, departments and across year achievement co-ordinators is very strong, reflecting an exceptional commitment to equality and respect for students' differing and diverse needs. Across the college as a whole, teachers and leaders inspire students and together instil a respect for learning and ambition. Leadership in some subjects and whole-college initiatives is very good. There are notable strengths in the implementation of, and in the steps to monitor the programmes for, gifted and talented students and the vocational courses for students in Years 10 and 11. A barrier to this otherwise positive picture of leadership is the prolonged absence of some senior members of staff who hold key responsibilities. In their absence, however, the principal has been proactive - training and encouraging less experienced members of the team to take on the challenges of greater responsibilities. This has been mutually constructive and a positive way forward in some cases. The principal's intervention and 'no nonsense' approach in these and similar circumstances, where progress is thought to be too slow, are proving very beneficial.
62. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, show a commitment to the college. The day-to-day routines are managed efficiently and allow the college to run smoothly. Many visitors come to the college on a daily basis and the college is very well supported by a team of staff who share responsibilities for administration, finance and adult learning. Their work enables teachers to remain focused in their efforts to raise standards.
63. The college is very committed to performance management as a means of developing teachers' expertise and personal development. The programme for professional development is very well organised and matched to the needs of individual teachers. A rolling programme, will as a matter of course, include all teaching assistants and non teaching staff in a review of their performance and an identification of their training needs.
64. The college is a very good place where new and aspiring teachers can learn their craft. A significant number of current teachers were trained in the college through the graduate teacher programme (GTP) or did part of their postgraduate training in the college. The college has excellent links with five universities so many students are placed in the college for part of their studies and following completion of their courses many make a positive choice to return by applying for vacant positions. Once appointed to the college, newly qualified and other staff receive very good support through the college's induction programme and through a network of partner schools and the LEA. Staff who have recently experienced the programme at first hand speak very positively about the level and the quality of the support that they experienced.

65. The impact of the professional development programme, on whole college improvements, has been influential in bringing about the good improvements of recent years. In particular, the training programme for middle and senior managers, *Leading from the middle*, and the participation in research into coaching and mentoring, linked to the National College for School Leadership, have proved to be very successful.
66. The college governors and senior team regularly test the views of students, parents and local community members on its future actions. These follow as part of its internal monitoring activities and its respect for the views and opinions of others who are most affected by its decisions. Whilst academic outcomes are compared with other similar centres and national benchmarks, this analysis is not as precise and sharp as it might be in relating the findings back to the allocated funding to establish their cost effectiveness.
67. The day-to-day and longer term financial systems are very securely managed - confirmed by the recent LEA audit - and the allocation of funding supports the college aims and ambitions very well. The college applies best value principles well.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

| Income and expenditure (£) | | Balances (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Total income | 3295799 | Balance from previous year | 564199 |
| Total expenditure | 3640375 | Balance carried forward to the next | 219623 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 3552 | | |

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

What is the effectiveness of work related learning?

Provision in work related learning is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A successful and well managed nationally accredited programme of work related learning (WRAP)
- Strong links with Leicester College provide a good range of vocational programmes, expert tuition and specialist facilities
- A well organised programme of work experience for all students
- Very good careers advice provided by the college and the Connexions services so that students can make informed choices
- Not enough challenge on the WRAP course for more gifted students

Commentary

68. The college has a comprehensive system which provides students with very good opportunities to learn through work and about work. The college is piloting a national accredited system for work related learning. Many students do better than expected. Students with learning and language difficulties do well with a significant number achieving level 1 and level 2 through the Open College Network. Most students leave the college with some form of accreditation. From work seen and lessons observed, standards were in line with national expectations. Teaching is good and students achieve well. Lessons are taught by specialist staff and form tutors. WRAP provides many opportunities for students to continue their studies into colleges of further education.
69. Leadership and management of the course are very good. Leadership has a clear vision of how the course should develop further and the areas where improvements can be made. For example, the introduction of ICT based learning modules. Higher-attaining students are not challenged sufficiently by the current course but there are plans to introduce more demanding level 3 NVQ assessments in the near future.
70. Students attending courses in business studies, textiles, electronics and art and design at nearby Leicester College, benefit from professional tuition and specialist facilities. Regular attendance and punctuality is emphasised, with very good inter-college liaison ensuring prompt actions if these are breached. Students enjoy the courses provided which enable them to become more aware of the

wider community. A good number of students continue with higher level vocational courses after leaving the college.

71. All students participate in two weeks' work experience early in Year 11. This is extended for those students where it is considered to be beneficial. Students play a part in finding a suitable placement and are expected to evaluate the benefits of the experience on their return to the college. WEXAL (Work Experience Alliance for Leicester) helps to organise placements, finding places for disabled students and those that have recently arrived at the college. Assignments completed during the placement go towards students' WRAP qualification and other pieces of work contribute towards their assessment in English and business studies.
72. Careers advice is very good. A well planned programme is woven into WRAP and there is some careers advice provided in Years 8 and 9. The careers coordinator and the Connexions service help students make important decisions. Students with language difficulties are directed towards specially designed courses at two local sixth form colleges. The students have a great deal of choice between several further education colleges and the courses they provide. The college provides plenty of guidance so that students can make the appropriate decisions regarding their future.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 and 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is good.

| | Year 9 | Year 11 |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Standards | Below average | Below average |
| Achievement | Good | Good |
| Teaching and learning | Good | Good |

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Leadership | Very good |
| Management | Very good |
| Progress since the last inspection | Good |

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership and management of the department are having an impact on raising standards
- Good teaching and well planned lessons ensure that students achieve well
- Very positive attitudes to learning contribute to students' good achievement
- Assessment is effective, so students know what they have to do to improve
- Teaching is not always planned to meet the needs of different groups of students within a lesson

Commentary

Examination results

73. Results in Year 9 tests, in 2004, were well below the national average but broadly average for similar schools. GCSE results in 2004, in both language and literature, were significantly below the national average. Girls performed better than boys, particularly at the higher grades A* to C. That most students gained two GCSE passes or alternative accreditation in English, given their overall literacy and language levels on entry, was considerable achievement.

Standards and achievement

74. Students enter the college with standards which are well below average. The evidence of work seen during the inspection shows that, by the end of Year 9, standards have improved to be below average and students are achieving well. Evidence from the inspection shows that a range of strategies employed to raise the attainment of boys, in Years 10 and 11, is beginning to have an impact. Although the standard of work seen, in Year 11, in both language and literature was below average, it is an improvement from the well below average standards these students demonstrated at the end of Year 9. Students with English as an additional language make very good progress in English because of the additional support that they receive within the department. Students with special educational needs make good progress in English, again as a result of additional support and strategies which are used to meet their needs.

Teaching and Learning

75. There were examples of very good and excellent teaching. In all lessons, work is well structured, and expectations of work-rate and behaviour are clearly set by teachers. In the best lessons, a fast pace is well managed by teachers. Students respond very well to this and their attitudes to work and their behaviour in lessons are very good. Lower-attaining students benefit from a number of strategies which support them in developing their literacy and language skills. These students access the same curriculum but with a focus on developing literacy skills through that programme. Good use of targeted questioning stretches higher-attaining students but not all teachers are matching work to the different needs of groups within the class. Lessons are well resourced with a good range of materials which interests students and reflects the multicultural background of the college. Students show a willingness to work hard, achieve and improve. This is particularly evident amongst those students who are at an early stage of learning English. Students work well together

in most situations and speaking and listening skills are developing well when opportunities for collaborative work are provided. Not all teachers, however, plan opportunities for students to discuss their work in pairs or groups, and seating plans do not always support effective discussion between students.

76. The assessment of students' work is very good and helpful to students in showing how to make progress. Assessed pieces are carefully drafted and then re-worked, taking into account the thorough marking of the teacher. The grading system and student involvement in target-setting is understood by students.

Leadership and Management

77. Leadership has a clear vision for improvement based firmly on analysis of data. The development plan is sharply focused on tackling areas of underachievement within the department, including that of boys. The planning in schemes of work is extremely thorough. It matches the needs of different groups of students and takes full account of national initiatives. This planned work is beginning to raise standards, as are other strategies to promote reading and speaking and listening activities.
78. Systems and resources within the department are efficiently and effectively organised. Monitoring and evaluation of the department's work is supportive and staff development opportunities are focused on the raising of standards. The learning environment within the department is particularly stimulating. All classrooms and corridors contain bright, positive displays of students' work and information to help with various aspects of their courses. A good departmental reward system has been developed to encourage students to read more. The improvement in Year 9 results since the last inspection is good. Students' attitudes to their learning and the quality of teaching have both improved.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

79. In Year 7 students enter the college with standards of literacy which are well below average. By Year 9 standards are below average and are below average in Year 11. In most curriculum areas these below average standards hamper the progress which students make in their learning. For example, higher-attaining students in art lack the language to develop analytical and critical explanations. The college promotes literacy as part of its development of the National Strategy. Core skills lessons and groupings of Year 7 students based upon their literacy needs have made a positive impact on the raising of standards for those students who arrive in the college with attainment below National Curriculum Level 4. Teachers highlight key words and subject specific terminology in lessons, and in most lessons there is an effective focus on spelling. In humanities and technology subjects, a good focus on speaking and listening helps students meet the high expectations their teachers have of them in listening to each other. In science and design and technology there is very good practice of using creative writing to develop literacy skills. However, there is no whole-college policy and the impact of the literacy strategy across the college is not monitored closely by senior management. As a result there is inconsistency of practice across departments and teachers.

Modern foreign languages

In Year 7, all students choose one modern foreign language (French, Spanish or Gujarati), which they normally continue to study throughout the college. Currently, there is no Gujarati in Year 11. A small number of students take German in Years 10 and 11.

French and Spanish

Provision in French and Spanish is good.

| | Year 9 | Year 11 |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|
| Standards | Average | Average |
| Achievement | Good | Good |
| Teaching and learning | Good | Good |

| | |
|------------------------------------|------|
| Leadership | Good |
| Management | Good |
| Progress since the last inspection | Good |

Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE French results improved substantially in 2004
- Students' achievement is enhanced by their positive attitude to language learning
- Pace and challenge were less evident in a minority of lessons
- Students have insufficient opportunities to use ICT
- Leaders have a clear vision of the role of languages, and are aware of areas for development

Commentary

Examination results

80. The results of teacher assessments, at the end of Year 9 in recent years, for both French and Spanish have been below the average reported nationally, particularly for boys. However, standards of students' work in Year 9 and an analysis of how their written work has been assessed, indicate that these results may not truly represent the level of students' attainment. In Spanish, students have only been entered for GCSE in the last two years. Results have been well below average. In French, GCSE results in 2004 were in line with national average. Students' attainment in French, compared to their attainment in the other subjects they took, was significantly better than the picture nationally.

Standards and achievement

81. By the end of Year 9, students use a good range of expressions and of tenses, for example in describing their daily routine in French, with a fair degree of accuracy and at a level higher than that indicated by their teachers' assessments. In relation to their attainment on entry, students are achieving well. In Year 11, students communicate well in the language studied, for example in giving and justifying their opinions about college in Spanish, although their accuracy is variable. Most students take pride in their work: they take care over presentation of written work, and respond well to questioning in the classroom. They continue to achieve well as they increase their knowledge and improve their skills.

Teaching and learning

82. No lessons observed were less than satisfactory, and some very good practice was seen. Teachers' command of French and Spanish provides a good model for their students, although they do not always use them enough in the classroom to develop students' listening and speaking skills. The most successful lessons observed included a range of activities which enabled students of different abilities to achieve well. However, teachers do not always provide tasks that are stimulating enough to stretch higher-attaining students. The use of language games to develop vocabulary and to motivate younger students is good. In the best lesson seen, the teacher enabled Year 7 students to describe their homes in increasing detail in French, by giving them a series of models that developed both their speaking and their writing skills. In Years 10 and 11, teachers provide well-designed booklets which help students to prepare for the GCSE coursework and oral assessments. Although students use word-processing, for example in producing menus in Spanish, teachers do not make sufficient use of ICT either in teaching or for written assignments. Students' work is generally marked regularly and thoroughly. Some examples of Year 11 work in Spanish showed how teachers' detailed advice had helped students to raise their standard, but elsewhere teachers' comments were too brief to give students a clear picture of targets for improvement.

Leadership and management

83. Leaders are keen to develop provision in modern languages. They have begun to put in place a series of measures designed to improve standards, including participation in national initiatives. The departmental handbook provides a clear and concise account of priorities, policies and procedures. However, policies for assessment and the use of French and Spanish in lessons are not always adhered to. The negative impact on students' achievement of some supply teaching has been recognised but not resolved. The major issues raised in the last inspection report have been addressed. In particular, students now benefit from using up-to-date resources, and performance at GCSE has improved substantially.

Gujarati

Provision in Gujarati is good.

| | Year 9 | Year 10 |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------|
| Standards | Average | Average |
| Achievement | Good | Good |
| Teaching and learning | Good | Good |
| Leadership | Good | |
| Management | Good | |
| Progress since the last inspection | Good | |

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The results at GCSE are improving and are now broadly in line with national averages
- The good quality of planning is derived from well designed schemes of work
- Students display very positive attitudes, particularly in Year 7
- There are insufficient opportunities to practise speaking and listening in pairs and groups
- The opportunities to practise extended writing in Year 10 are limited

Commentary

Examination results

84. The results of teacher assessment, at the end of Year 9 in 2004, were below those reported nationally. GCSE results, in 2004, were broadly in line with national averages. The results attained by girls were higher than those attained by boys, reflecting the national trend.

Standards and achievement

85. In Year 7, students learn sounds of vowels and consonants and then put them together, phonetically, to form words appropriately. By the end of Year 9, they match pictures to descriptions and use short sentences correctly to describe modes of transport and items of clothing. They are beginning to write short letters. They respond to teachers' questions with improving confidence and their pronunciation and intonation are getting more accurate. By the end of Year 10, students write simple advertisements clearly, and debate their opinions about summer and winter leisure time activities sensibly. Students are developing a sound understanding of present, past and future tenses. Good teaching is raising standards and students are achieving well as they work hard, have good attitudes to learning and maintain pleasant relationships with their teachers.

Teaching and learning

86. Teachers are keen, enthusiastic and demonstrate a good command of the subject. Good planning maintains a good balance between the four language skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing, and draws on the experiences of the students. This helps students to develop the necessary techniques and skills to improve. Good use of resources, like language fonts in projector presentations and mini whiteboards to model good handwriting and accurate spelling, contributes well to learning. Pictorial prompt sheets and writing frames are used to good effect to structure and support language development. Students work well together, in pairs and groups, showing concentration and diligence. However, they do not get sufficient opportunities, in this paired and group work, to practise their speaking and listening skills. There is a purposeful atmosphere in

lessons and the occasional disruption is dealt with effectively. All students including those with special educational needs and those who are gifted and talented remain interested and focused. In Year 10, students do not get sufficient opportunities, during lessons or in homework, to practise extended writing in the language. However, the newsletter students produce, using desktop publishing software is impressive. Students' work is regularly marked but this does not include sufficient written comments to help students know what they need to do to improve. The subject makes a good contribution to the students' moral, social and cultural development.

Leadership and management

87. There are good systems in place for tracking and monitoring the progress made by students. The schemes of work and the departmental guidelines and handbook are very helpful. The resources for teaching Gujarati are excellent. The teaching room has good subject-related displays of key words and students' work. All these have a positive impact on the achievement of students. Since the last inspection, standards in speaking and listening have improved as a result of good teaching. Improved management has ensured that schemes of work are in place and incorporate National Curriculum requirements and the recommendations of the National Key Stage 3 Strategy. The quality of teaching and of resources have improved, leading to an improvement in results.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is satisfactory.

| | Year 9 | Year 11 |
|------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Standards | Below average | Below average |
| Achievement | Good | Satisfactory |
| Teaching and learning | Good | Satisfactory |
| Leadership | Satisfactory | |
| Management | Satisfactory | |
| Progress since the last inspection | Satisfactory | |

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The mathematics team is united in its aspirations for future development
- Good classroom relationships encourage students' learning
- Departmental policy documentation is insufficient
- Good lesson pace encourages students to achieve
- Target-setting and tracking of student progress are underdeveloped
- Student use of ICT to support their learning is limited

Commentary

Examination results

88. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 9, in 2004, were well below national average but were in line with the average for similar schools. GCSE results have fluctuated in recent years. In 2004, the results were well below the national average although the proportion of students obtaining A* to C grades was higher than the previous year. There were no A* or A grades. Students' performance in mathematics, compared to the other subjects they took, was significantly below the national picture.

Standards and achievement

89. Attainment on entry to the college is well below average. Teachers' knowledge of their subject and the demands of its assessment enables them to select, and use effectively, progressive learning resources which encourage student achievement and raise standards. Routine use of practices recommended by the National Strategy is having an impact on achievement, particularly in Years 7 to 9 where students are achieving well. Students of all abilities make similar progress. Lack of confidence and the literacy levels of some students inhibit their understanding of questions which are expressed in formal test/examination language. Students examinations results do not accurately reflect their mathematical ability. Outside of formal assessment, assistance by class teachers and

support teachers give students the opportunity to demonstrate higher standards. For example in a good Year 11 lesson, lower-attaining students were able to simplify expressions involving surds when the teacher clarified what was required.

Teaching and learning

90. All teaching observed during the inspection and evidenced in students' work was of at least satisfactory quality, and some was better. Some teachers are more confident with their younger students. Teachers know their students very well, which enables them to encourage their individual learning. In most classes, students respect their teachers and want to learn. In a minority, behaviour is difficult to manage, adversely affecting learning. Some teachers actively promote the learning of mental arithmetic strategies. Some are skilled in catering for different levels of attainment. For example, in a very good Year 10 lesson the teacher provided a range of worksheets on Pythagoras, ensuring challenge for all. Marking practices vary. Some marking feedback is effective, containing good advice to students, particularly in Years 7 to 9. Support for individuals is good, but some lower-attaining students are taught in large classes where, even with good collaboration between class and support teachers, there is not enough time to help everyone. The use of ICT by teachers is developing. Difficulties of access mean that students have very limited opportunities to enhance their learning of mathematics with the use of ICT. New self-assessment booklets for students are giving students a greater awareness of the level at which they are performing.

Leadership and management

91. Current schemes of work are inadequate, being little more than lists of topics. The departmental handbook is dated and documentation generally does not provide a supportive framework to new and less experienced teachers. Policies, for example on ICT, literacy and on assessment, are lacking. Student progress has been insufficiently monitored, and some scheduled assessments have not taken place. Monitoring of teaching and of marking has been insufficient.
92. These weaknesses have been recognised and appropriate action is being taken. Recent consultation across the whole department has motivated the team, uniting it in a willingness to communicate well, to begin to share best practice and to contribute to clearly-identified areas for development. Collaboration is taking place to draw up new schemes of work and develop departmental policy. Targets have been established recently for students in some year groups. Standard assessment tasks are being put in place, and marking practices are under review. The team has opted to mark its own GCSE coursework this year in order to improve teachers' knowledge of their students' errors and misconceptions. Monitoring of teaching has recently recommenced, with clear areas identified for improvement. Resourcing is improving; graphical calculators are on order and new textbooks are being introduced.

Numeracy across the curriculum

93. There has been no systematic identification or monitoring of opportunities for the use or development of students' mathematical skills across the whole college, although analysis has been thorough within science and design and technology. A draft policy document, to be circulated imminently by the mathematics team, commences the whole-college process and recommends mathematical methods to be used. In subjects such as history, religious education and ICT, very little evidence of the use of numeracy was seen. Competence in mathematics across the curriculum varies. For example, Year 7 music students are able to calculate the correct proportion of a beat for a dotted semi-quaver, but Year 8 students' lack of confidence in drawing graphs inhibits their learning of geography. Where planning is thorough, students' competence is greater. For example, Year 7 science students can calculate density accurately, and plot and interpret graphs. Good use is made of spreadsheets at all stages of design and technology, particularly in the analysis of surveys. Competence, overall, is below that seen nationally up to Year 9, but in Years 10 and 11 it is close to average. Year 10 physical education students are able to analyse pulse rates and cardiac output, and in business education students carry out VAT calculations confidently.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is very good.

| | Year 9 | Year 11 |
|-----------------------|---------------|-----------|
| Standards | Below average | Average |
| Achievement | Good | Very good |
| Teaching and learning | Good | Very good |

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| Leadership | Outstanding |
| Management | Outstanding |
| Progress since the last inspection | Very good |

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and effective team work have led to the improvement since the last inspection
- GCSE results are improving and were well above the average for similar schools in 2004
- Assessment is very well developed ensuring that the students understand what they need to do to improve
- Students' attitudes and behaviour are very good and contribute well to their progress
- Management of practical work in lessons sometimes needs to be better planned to increase efficiency and to avoid hazards

Commentary

Examination results

94. Results in the examinations at the end of Year 9, in 2004, were well below national average but were in line with those in similar schools. The increase in results in recent years is following the rising national trend. GCSE results improved greatly in 2004. They were similar to the national average and were well above the average for similar schools. The proportion of students gaining the highest (A* and A) grades was above the national proportion. Girls performed better than boys.

Standards and achievement

95. Students' attainment in science is well below average on entry to the college but in Years 7 to 9 students of all ethnic groups, gender and ability make good progress and standards improve significantly by the end of Year 9. In a Year 7 lesson, for example, students progressed very well in their understanding of acids and alkalis by making thoughtful predictions about the treatment of bee stings. Very good progress is made by students in Years 10 and 11. This is due in part to the emphasis placed by the teachers on encouraging the students to think logically and to express their ideas in clear scientific language. For example, Year 11 students gained a good knowledge of bonding between atoms and were able to illustrate this clearly in diagrams.

Teaching and learning

96. Lessons are well planned and structured to involve a variety of activities which capture students' interest and enable them to work with enthusiasm. The pace of the lesson and type of activity is skilfully adapted to the abilities of the students. For example, a higher-attaining Year 11 group concentrated enthusiastically on applying their understanding of genetics to predictions about physical characteristics. They worked both independently and collaboratively on answering examination questions. Whereas a lower-attaining Year 7 group progressed well by receiving frequent reinforcement of key scientific words in a practical lesson on chemical changes. Teachers know their students well and so are able to modify their teaching to meet the needs of individuals within the group. In a few lessons, when the students did not follow instructions precisely, eye protection was not worn appropriately, chemicals were not disposed of in an orderly manner and the students did not make detailed observations. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and this enables them to ask probing supplementary questions to encourage the students to reply accurately and thoughtfully. Behaviour is very good. Students concentrate well and are keen to learn and to contribute to the lesson. Topics are relatively short units of work so students are told their standard of work on a very regular basis. Students are fully aware of their carefully determined target grades. These are referred to regularly and, crucially, students are quite clear on the science which they

need to understand in order to improve. Displays of key words and grade descriptions aid learning and displays of students' work are used well to promote a positive image of science. Homework is used satisfactorily to consolidate and extend the students' learning. Open-ended investigational work is used only to a limited extent but emphasis is being placed on the improvement of achievement in the standard practical investigations for GCSE.

Leadership and management

97. Leadership has created a very effective team. Teachers work together very well, monitoring each other's lessons and sharing ideas on teaching. The training needs of staff are very well met. There is a very clear focus on raising standards of achievement, for example by increasing the use of ICT and further developing investigational skills. This drive is leading to the improving examination success at the end of Year 11. Enthusiasm for science, generated by extra-curricular activities such as a science club, booster classes, competition entries and workshops, is resulting in greater achievement. The department is very efficiently supported by technicians who assist in some practical lessons. It is well resourced in laboratory equipment and text books, and interactive whiteboards will soon be in place. Since the last inspection, leadership has effectively resolved the identified weaknesses. The preparation area, however, remains very cramped which makes it difficult to allocate space for the preparation of chemical solutions.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

| | Year 9 | Year 11 |
|------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Standards | Above average | Above average |
| Achievement | Very good | Very good |
| Teaching and learning | Very good | Very good |
| Leadership | Excellent | |
| Management | Excellent | |
| Progress since the last inspection | Very good | |

Main strengths

- Teachers make excellent use of assessment in lessons to help their students to learn as well as possible
- The planning and structure of lessons allows all students to develop their skills and to practise them in a supportive environment
- Students work purposefully in class and are given the correct level of challenge relative to their ability
- Leadership of the department ensures that schemes of work are carefully evaluated and best practice is identified from the range of teaching strategies

Commentary

Examination results

98. Results of teacher assessment, at the end of Year 9 in 2004, were above the average of those reported nationally. GCSE results, in 2004, were above the national average. Girls outperform boys at GCSE and, at the higher levels, at the end of Year 9.

Standards and achievement

99. Students' attainment on entry is close to the national average. The work carried out by the Year 9 students shows a high level of skills development. Students work with confidence and enthusiasm to develop their own websites. In Year 7, students quickly developed their understanding of the way in which they could represent data graphically. All students are encouraged to carry out self-assessment and to set clear targets for the next stage of their work. The teacher provides a checklist and clear guidelines to help them in this process. The challenge that self evaluation provides motivates the students to achieve very well. In Year 11, students work confidently on web

design. They critically evaluate their work and also carry out peer assessment. This, together with the use of their own ideas, allows them to achieve very well.

Teaching and learning

100. Students participate fully in lessons and enjoy the chance to respond to open questions. The questioning is well developed and helps the students to learn in greater depth. In a Year 7 lesson, on the graphical representation of data, the students showed a clear understanding of the differences between a good and a bad chart and whether the chart was 'fit for purpose'. A response by one student was so quick that it pre-empted the teacher's question. In an excellent Year 8 lesson, a student was asked to demonstrate the use of software to create a database. The student worked confidently as the teacher checked the understanding of the whole class and corrected misunderstandings, as they arose. Students worked purposefully as they created their own databases. In a very good Year 11 lesson, on website design, the students learnt to critically evaluate their work using a questionnaire which they constructed. Each student was given the correct level of challenge relative to their own ability as they took responsibility for setting up their web page and determining the degree of its complexity themselves.

Leadership and management

101. Leadership demonstrates an exceptionally clear vision for the development of the subject, and for how young people learn best. Teachers work as a team to produce schemes of work, which allow each student to learn. The schemes are evaluated to identify best practice in teaching strategies and are then developed to ensure that they are as effective as possible. Since the last inspection, the short course GCSE has been introduced. This is a popular course and has fired the imagination of the students. It makes a significant contribution to the students' ICT skills and to their personal development.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

102. Provision for ICT across the curriculum is satisfactory. Each subject area has at least two data projectors. These are used for multi-media packages in science and English. The use of ICT in humanities is limited, although there is some word processing and the use of graphics in religious education. Students' competence is good when they have opportunity to demonstrate it. They acquire specialist skills using computer-aided design in design and technology. Data-loggers are used in science to monitor changes during experiments. Digital cameras are used extensively in physical education to demonstrate performance. ICT is used to good effect in the production of coursework, where students use word processing, spreadsheets and Internet research to produce high-quality submissions. All staff have been trained to use ICT in their teaching. There is a high level of expertise in the use of ICT within the college, but the benefits of using ICT have not so far been shared sufficiently between departments as some do not use opportunities provided by ICT to support their teaching.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is satisfactory.

| | Year 9 | Year 11 |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Standards | Well below average | Below average |
| Achievement | Satisfactory | Good |
| Teaching and learning | Satisfactory | Good |
| Leadership | Satisfactory | |
| Management | Unsatisfactory | |
| Progress since the last inspection | Satisfactory | |

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers manage students very well, relationships are good and so behaviour is good
- The majority of students lack the confidence and skills necessary to learn without the support of their teacher
- Marking does not tell students how to improve their work
- The resources and accommodation provided are very good
- Provision for students at an early stage of learning English and those with particular learning needs is good
- Carousel teaching arrangements in the early years does not give sufficient continuity to students' experience of the subject

Commentary

Examination results.

103. Results, in 2004, of teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 were well below those reported nationally. GCSE results were significantly below the national average with less than half the national proportion of grades A* to C.

Standards and achievement

104. Students' literacy and number skills, when they join the college, are well below average and their subject skills are poorly developed. In their first term they make good progress to improve these. Progress is then hampered because some students may have no further opportunity to practise these skills for up to five months. By the end of Year 9, though standards are below national expectations, achievement is satisfactory. Students can express their basic knowledge and understanding of the places and themes covered using correct terms. They are beginning to identify patterns, for example in the distribution of cities in France. Written work improves as a result of the clear emphasis placed on practising literacy skills. Poorly developed numerical skills do have an impact on progress.
105. In Years 10 and 11, students are able to build on the progress of earlier years. Students currently in Year 11 can interpret maps and diagrams to explain how processes and relationships can affect the natural environment. They use a range of skills to identify relevant information, organising this to write accurate descriptions of, for example, the burgeoning tourist industry of the 1960s. Higher-attaining students use such information to explain why such changes occur. Taking into account their starting point, achievement is good. Lower-attaining students and those with English at an early stage of development are given good support so that they make similarly good progress.

Teaching and Learning

106. Overall, teaching and learning is satisfactory but is stronger in Years 10 and 11. In lessons, the teacher's knowledge resulted in clear exposition, enriched with examples. This raised interest so students were most often focused and engaged. Lessons were planned in detail and usually moved at a brisk pace so students produced a good quantity and quality of work. Teachers have high expectations in terms of both work and behaviour. They value students' contributions so the latter have the confidence to ask and answer questions. Across all years, oral work is stronger than written work. In a weaker lesson, students' skills were overestimated and the pace of the lesson dwindled so that objectives were not achieved. Students do not have enough opportunities to practice and apply skills, including ICT, fieldwork or geographical enquiries. Case studies involving topical and local issues are used effectively to consolidate understanding. The majority of students respond well to regular homework. In better lessons the work challenged and engaged students. Students, as a result, showed sustained concentration to complete their tasks, as when Year 11 students considered the effects of erosion on coastlines.
107. Assessment information is not used effectively to monitor progress and establish targets that could be reviewed regularly, and some marking does not tell students how to improve their work. Relationships are very positive and behaviour in lessons was good.

Leadership and management

108. Geography is managed as part of the humanities department. Improvement has been satisfactory, standards having risen only marginally. The quality of teaching and learning has been maintained. Curriculum planning has been neglected; the detailed documentation that gave direction and consistency is now out of date. Assessment systems have not developed as envisaged and target setting remains largely undeveloped.

History

Provision in history is good.

| | Year 9 | Year 11 |
|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Standards | Well below average | Below average |
| Achievement | Good | Good |
| Teaching and learning | Good | Good |

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| Leadership | Satisfactory |
| Management | Unsatisfactory |
| Progress since the last inspection | Satisfactory |

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students make good progress because the teaching is good
- The management of the curriculum, particularly in Years 8 and 9, is unsatisfactory
- Relationships are good so students feel confident to contribute in lessons
- Provision for students at an early stage of learning English and those with particular learning needs is good
- The teaching makes a very good contribution to students' personal development

Commentary

Examination results

109. Results, in 2004, of teacher assessments at the end of Year 9, were well below those reported nationally. GCSE results were significantly below the national average with less than half the national proportion of grades A* to C.

Standards and achievement

110. On entry, student's skills in literacy are well below average and their subject skills are poorly developed. They make good progress so that the standards attained by current Year 9 students, though well below national expectations, represent good achievement. Students' work shows a sound knowledge of the most important events and individuals studied. They have a developing understanding of cause and consequence, and can use sources to provide evidence. Students with particular learning needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve equally well because teachers and teacher assistants, aware of their requirements, provide very good support.
111. Students in Years 10 and 11 achieve well, although standards are below average. They can select and organise information to write effective descriptions of events that show a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the topics covered. Higher-attaining students analyse reasons for different changes to reach conclusions that are well substantiated by evidence. Almost all recognise bias and can offer explanations as to how and why actions and events might have been interpreted differently. Students use sources to support their inferences and all but the lower-attaining students can evaluate these in terms of reliability and usefulness.

Teaching and Learning

112. Teachers have a good knowledge of the eras covered. They gave vivid descriptions and accurate explanations that raised students' interest so that they were able to sustain their concentration. This was essential as double-lessons are very long for students in Years 7 to 9. In class, students worked hard, the majority completing homework regularly. Sensitive topics were treated objectively, as when Year 9 students learned of the treatment of Jews under National Socialism in Germany.

Students work well in pairs and groups. Historical enquiries provide opportunities for them to do their own research. Such independent work is particularly important as when they join the college students rely heavily on their teachers. An appropriate emphasis is placed on developing literacy skills. Opportunities taken to promote citizenship are not made clear, as such, to the students. Assessment is satisfactory though not consistent across the years so that not all students know how they might improve their work. Targets are set for the end of Years 9 and 11 but students are not set short-term targets that might assist their progress and the monitoring of their learning.

Leadership and management

113. Leadership is satisfactory, the team of teachers share ideas and support one another very effectively. The direction the department is to take in the future is not clear. Management is unsatisfactory because the monitoring and evaluation of the work of the department lacks rigour, for example assessment data is not analysed effectively. The structure and interpretation of the timetable is such that one of the groups observed had three lessons of history on one day. This is not best use of the teaching time available and timetable arrangements are unsatisfactory. There is no clear pattern to the allocation of staff to groups in Years 8 and 9.
114. Improvement has been satisfactory. Despite a setback in 2004, standards at the end of Years 9 and 11 have risen in recent years. The teaching of skills has improved. Target setting is still at an early stage of development.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is good.

| | Year 9 | Year 11 |
|------------------------------------|-----------|---------------|
| Standards | Average | Above average |
| Achievement | Good | Good |
| Teaching and learning | Good | Good |
| Leadership | Good | |
| Management | Good | |
| Progress since the last inspection | Very good | |

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve well because of well-planned lessons that are well taught
- GCSE results have risen considerably since the last inspection and are now above the national average
- Students respond very well and clearly enjoy their work in the subject
- Work does not always match the needs of the different groups in classes and this affects the pace of learning for a small but significant number of students

Commentary

Examination results

115. GCSE results in 2004 were above national average with about three-quarters of students gaining A* to C grades on each course. This was a significant improvement since the last inspection.

Standards and achievement

116. On entry, students' standards are below average. By the end of Year 9, most students have average knowledge of religion, with above average understanding of the impact of Islam on their lives. Their below average literacy skills are often a barrier to learning, but overall achievement is good. Standards of students' work in Years 10 and 11 are above average. They interpret religious beliefs and sensitively analyse social issues well. Most have extensive knowledge of Islam and they analyse major life questions from the point of view of believers with maturity.

Teaching and learning

117. The most effective teaching is well planned to ensure the pace of learning is very good. Students achieve well because the hard-working teachers make good use of the exceptionally good understanding of Islamic teaching of the majority of students. When Year 7 students compared Jewish practices with Islamic and Christian ones, the teacher skilfully reinforced students' self-esteem and listened carefully to their ideas. The teacher made good use of these to develop students' understanding of Judaism very effectively. Students have a real interest in the subject. Older students particularly enjoy work and respond very well when their teachers talk about their own experiences and beliefs. Year 10 GCSE students were very attentive when hearing about their teacher's experience of stereotyping. He not only amused them with his stories, but also enabled students to gain very good understanding of prejudice and discrimination. Students with special educational needs and EAL students are well supported. They achieve well and take a full part in lessons, often helped by their fellow students. Teachers work well at developing all students' religious vocabulary. Occasionally in students' work, there were minor inaccuracies that arose from the teachers' lack of specialist knowledge of a specific faith. Teaching provides good opportunities to develop students' spiritual, moral, cultural and social skills. However, where teaching is less effective, the pace of learning is adversely affected by work not sufficiently matching the needs of the students. For example, when cutting out and copying exercises were set.
118. Marking is good and students know what they need to do in order to improve their work because teachers give them good feedback, particularly in their GCSE work. Good, newly introduced work on assessing progress is helping students in Years 7 to 9 better understand their progress.

Leadership and management

119. Schemes of work are well developed and meet the requirements of the new Leicester Agreed Syllabus. The GCSE work in both full and short courses is well organised. Having no subject specialist teachers in the team puts considerable pressure on the highly committed leadership. Since the last inspection, examination results have risen from below average to above. Schemes of work are now well matched to the agreed syllabus. The teaching and students' achievement are now good.

TECHNOLOGY

Years 7 to 9 follow a foundation course taught on a rotational timetable, initially with art and music and then with art and ICT. Students then study one of five GCSE short courses. Many students extend their studies to take a full GCSE. Applied GCSE engineering & manufacturing is available and taught in partnership with Leicester College.

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is good.

| | Year 9 | Year 11 |
|------------------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Standards | Average | Above average |
| Achievement | Satisfactory | Good |
| Teaching and learning | Good | Good |
| Leadership | Good | |
| Management | Satisfactory | |
| Progress since the last inspection | Good | |

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many students are motivated to extend their qualifications, and achieve very well, because teachers freely give their time to support students
- A modular approach to timetabling the different fields of the subject is affecting achievement in Years 7 to 9, and assessment targets are not identified clearly in each module
- High expectations and very good links with a further education provider have enhanced the provision of the subject
- Effective teaching techniques are not shared enough, and students on the short course GCSE are under-performing

Commentary

Examination results

120. The results of teacher assessments at the end of Year 9, in 2004, were well below those reported nationally but evidence of current work would suggest that this may have been unduly harsh. GCSE results in the short courses varied between the subjects, with graphics doing best, but overall, results were low. Results in the full courses, gained through additional study in the students' own time, were well above the national average with food technology and electronic systems results being particularly high. In the first year of the applied courses, results were below the other full courses. Over the last four years there has been an improving trend in all fields of the subject.

Standards and achievement

121. Students start the course with skills and previous experience which are well below those usually seen. Some students have no previous experiences. Students make good progress and achieve well in lessons. By the end of Year 9, their overall attainment is restricted because of the tangled timetabling arrangements that result in groups of students having different experiences of the subject and a lack of continuity. For example, in a Year 8 food technology lesson, students' work was below expectations because they had not done food technology in Year 7. Teachers give students very good opportunities to use ICT in their work. Some outstanding practice of partnership-working with Leicester College has enabled students in Year 8 to produce designs for a new digital camera which are then prototyped, in dense plastic foam, using computer numerical controlled machines. All students achieve well when tasks are carefully matched to their needs, as seen in food technology, and in when students are given opportunity to work in teams and on topics that clearly interest them. Students' development of English is promoted well when the teaching and additional support reinforces and strengthens technical vocabulary. This enhances overall achievement for many students.
122. Many GCSE students extend their short course study by additional supported study during lunch hours and in after-college sessions. These students demonstrate standards that are well above the national average, the best displaying standards of design work far beyond the usual expectations for students of their age. Year 11 students did well when the work was tailored to their interests, for example in resistant materials when girls made high quality jewellery using nickel-silver and silver. The attainment of students who only study the compulsory short course falls far short of expectations. These courses do not appeal to all students' interests and are too demanding for some students. Students studying the recently introduced applied courses are achieving well and are motivated by the opportunities to use professional equipment at Leicester College.

Teaching and learning

123. Teaching in Years 7 to 9 varies in quality. Some is outstanding. Where the lesson contains competition, challenge, and excellent planning that ensure all students are included well, students make very good progress. These, and other very effective techniques seen in some lessons, are not used consistently across the department. Some lessons concentrate too much on sustained writing and drawing, and do not break down into a range of shorter activities that build up to the desired conclusion.
124. GCSE students all benefit from the very good specialist subject knowledge of teachers. In a very good lesson that used introductory activities, DVD film and very good discussion, students were able to consider the complex advantages of different manufacturing processes. Teachers have very high expectations of their examination students and this leads to excessive time spent producing

course work folders. Students often do more than is required, instead of getting on with modelling and constructing products, and leaving sufficient time to practice examination techniques. This was an issue in the last inspection.

Leadership and management

125. The department has a strong professional design and manufacturing ethos. The curriculum in Years 7 to 9 is not referenced sufficiently to the National Curriculum assessment criteria. Staff are deployed well to their strengths, but some very good practice in teaching is not shared sufficiently. The department is well organised and display is used very effectively to set high standards.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Drama and media studies are also option choices in Years 10 and 11. These courses were sampled.

In a Year 10 drama lesson teaching was good. Students responded well to the structure of the lesson, and although some opportunities for developing dramatic skills were missed the overall achievement of students in their performance piece by the end of the lesson was good. In a Year 11 lesson, teaching and learning were satisfactory. The focused support of the teacher enabled individual students to make progress on their performance pieces, but there were few opportunities for the group as a whole to develop their skills in dramatic techniques.

In a media studies lesson, good teaching focused appropriately on preparation for the forthcoming examination and the planning enabled most students to make good progress with their revision. The literacy needs of a small number of lower-attaining students in the group were less well met and their progress was satisfactory. Good use was made of a recent visit to the National Museum of Film.

Art and design

Provision in art is good.

| | Year 9 | Year 11 |
|-----------------------|---------|--------------------|
| Standards | Average | Well above average |
| Achievement | Good | Very good |
| Teaching and learning | Good | Very good |

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|
| Leadership | Good |
| Management | Satisfactory |
| Progress since the last inspection | Good |

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching leads to very good achievement in GCSE examinations
- The curriculum meets the needs of students in Years 10 and 11 very well
- Students have very good attitudes and a strong desire to do well
- Not enough use is made of teacher assessments and students' self-evaluations at the beginning of each new unit in Years 7 to 9

Commentary

Examination results

126. The results of teacher assessments, at the end of Year 9 in 2004, were well below those reported nationally. GCSE results were above average for both the applied double award and the single award, art and design courses. These results reflect a rising trend in the proportion of students achieving A* to C grades.

Standards and achievement

127. Standards in Year 9 are higher than the previous teacher assessments indicate. There are particular strengths in students' development of practical skills, of drawing and research, and in some but not all classes, good use of sketchbooks that show students thoughtful self-evaluations and growing

confidence to express personal preference and opinion. In the most successful instances, and where teachers have challenged students to draw on their wider knowledge and understanding, there is evidence of students making comparisons with work by artists, craftspeople and designers from different cultures and traditions. Higher-attaining students tend not to use their knowledge of historical and social contexts to inform their analysis. Students' longer-term progress and achievement are hampered by the rotational arrangement. When students start a new art unit, teachers tend not to pay enough attention to the information they are given about students' prior achievements - either to help the students themselves pick-up where they left off earlier in the year or as the starting point to plan lessons that are pitched at an appropriate level. Students make good quality evaluations of their work but the impact of these is reduced when it is carried out at the end of a unit rather than throughout the unit as a means of tracking progress and strengthening their independent learning skills.

128. In Years 10 and 11 there is evidence of high quality work. There are excellent working links with a local further education college and students build very strong portfolios of work, having used a range of different processes and equipment. The curriculum they experience, whether in fine art or vocational courses, gives them a very good foundation for advanced work. In recent years, a number have chosen to study the subject at an advanced level. In all courses, sketchbooks are high quality, reflecting good levels of experimentation and thoughtful annotation. Research, into the work of artists and designers from different times and cultural backgrounds, is generally of a high standard. Digital media is used with flair and imagination, for example to manipulate, experiment and layer images.

Teaching and learning

129. Teachers' command of the subject and their excellent team work provides students with very positive learning experiences. Expectations are high, behaviour orderly and lessons are well organised. Teachers' demonstrations of different techniques hold students in rapt attention. Their good quality resources - examples of drawings and other art work - serve to consolidate students' understanding of specialist terms and working processes. Students are motivated, keen to learn and to improve their performance. Teachers make good provision for the development of a specialist vocabulary in students' written work and through question and answer. More opportunities could be created for extended speaking, giving students the chance to practice and refine their understanding through talking.

Leadership and management

130. There is very good teamwork and 'pooling' of expertise and equipment. Staff give generously of their time at the end of the day to enable students to rework or produce extra units of work, or through organised visits - most recently to Paris and shortly to Barcelona. The department has a great deal of useful information about students' potential and actual achievement by the end of Year 9. To date, this has not been analysed rigorously enough to ensure that planned work and teachers' on-going assessments build most effectively on what has already been achieved in these early years. Curriculum innovation in GCSE examinations has been very well led and results have improved since the last inspection.

Music

Provision in music is poor.

| | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| | Year 9 |
| Standards | Well below average |
| Achievement | Unsatisfactory |
| Teaching and learning | Poor |
| Leadership | Poor |
| Management | Poor |
| Progress since the last inspection | Unsatisfactory |

Main weaknesses

- Teaching is unchallenging and does not develop students' skills and knowledge in a progressive way
- Assessment is inaccurate and does not tell students how well they are doing or how to improve
- Schemes of work do not focus on the requirements of the National Curriculum
- Students are not encouraged to take part in enrichment activities such as instrumental lessons or extra curricular activities

Commentary

Examination results

131. Results of teacher assessments, at the end of Year 9 in 2004, were well below those reported nationally. Evidence seen during the inspection would suggest that the levels awarded are generous.

Standards and achievement

132. Year 7 students are able to use graphic scores and compose pentatonic melodies, and read basic rhythms from notation. They use appropriate language to describe the music they compose but by Year 9 there has been no significant improvement in these standards. Tasks are not well planned and there is insufficient challenge for students of all levels of ability.

Teaching and learning

133. There is some good teaching in Year 7, where students are engaged and involved in active learning of composition and performing skills, being taught in small groups. In Years 8 and 9, however, full size groups are taught. Here, lessons lack pace and direction, with whole lessons spent on one activity without any clearly understood learning outcome. Questioning is ineffective, lacking clarity or focus, resulting in students being confused and losing interest. Practical tasks are confined to keyboards and no opportunities are offered to develop singing. Projects are stretched over many weeks without developing skills, knowledge and understanding, and topics such as *Instruments of the orchestra* are duplicated during Years 7 to 9 with no fresh challenge. Too much time is spent on drafting and redrafting written work, such as writing song lyrics or designing concert programmes, rather than developing musical skills. The development of ICT skills is confined to one project in Year 7 where students learn to use the keyboards to multi-track composition work. Opportunities are missed to use computer software to extend the compositions of the higher-attaining or to support the learning of the lower-attaining students. With no clear assessment policy, students do not know how they compare to students nationally or what they need to do to improve. The assessment of National Curriculum levels at the end of Year 9 is not based on secure evidence and does not reflect the quality of the work or the skills that have been achieved. Although students are well behaved and want to learn, are keen to answer questions and enjoy group practical work in Year 7, they have insufficient challenge and direction to engage them and enable them to progress sufficiently through Years 8 and 9.

Leadership and management

134. Leadership has little vision for the future and there is no focus on raising standards. There has been considerable support from the senior leadership to improve the quality of teaching and learning, but there is little evidence of positive action being taken in response. More experienced teachers contribute to the department but good practice has not been shared. Schemes of work do not concentrate on the progressive acquisition of skills, lack detail, and are not linked to National Curriculum requirements. With no GCSE course, the profile of the department within the college is low and there has been no take-up for instrumental lessons. No extra curricular activities are offered and students have no opportunity to take part in music making activities, even though several students express an interest. Resources have been improved since the last inspection but have not resulted in raising standards or improving the quality of teaching.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is good.

| | Year 9 | Year 11 |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------|
| Standards | Below average | Average |
| Achievement | Good | Good |
| Teaching and learning | Good | Good |

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Leadership | Very good |
| Management | Very good |
| Progress since the last inspection | Good |

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of learning opportunities is provided for students both in and out of college time
- Students achieve well as a result of good teaching
- Teaching time is lost for some team games because of the need to travel to fields outside the local area
- Thorough assessment tells students how well they are doing
- GCSE teaching strategies are not always appropriate for students with learning difficulties

Commentary

Examination results

135. The results of teacher assessments, at the end of Year 9 in 2004, were below those reported nationally. GCSE results were significantly below the national average. However, the course is new and the students did better than expected.

Standards and achievement

136. Students' standards in the subject are well below average when they join the college. By the end of Year 9, these standards have risen to be below average. Students achieve well as a result of the teaching they receive. Most students can link the skills they have learnt and apply them to small game and competitive situations, as seen in basketball and hockey lessons. They have a basic appreciation of tactics. In a Year 7 badminton lesson, some students showed that they could analyse and comment on skills and techniques so that they could improve their performance. At the end of Year 11, standards in both the common course and the examination course are average. Students have taken their skills and techniques to a higher level, so their performance improves. They respond effectively to more demanding challenges set by teachers, as seen in a Year 10 football lesson on how to dribble the ball and beat an opponent. Students of this age continue to achieve well.

Teaching and learning

137. Teaching is good overall, with some instances of very good teaching. Lessons are well planned with each activity building on the previous one, and providing students with increasing and varied challenges so that students learn well. Lessons move at a brisk pace although, sometimes, teachers move onto the next stage too quickly and before checking that students have mastered a skill or technique. Students warm up at the start of lessons but this is not always monitored closely enough by teachers. The attitude and behaviour of the students are very good and contribute to students' learning and progress. Assessment procedures are very good. All students are assessed in all activities, with students themselves being involved in the process. As a result, students know very clearly how well they are doing and what they must do to improve. Non-participants continue to learn by being productively involved in lessons.

Leadership and management

138. Experienced leadership has developed an effective team. The department is forward thinking and striving to build upon its achievement so far. The curriculum is broad and well balanced between team and individual activities for both boys and girls. A good range of activities is provided at lunchtime and after college which give students more opportunities to learn in different contexts.

Football coaching schemes and the Junior Sports Leader course encourages responsibility amongst students and establishes firm links with the primary schools. The department is aware that more appropriate teaching strategies are required on the new GCSE course to cater for the needs of lower-attaining students and, in particular, those with language and literacy difficulties.

139. Since the previous inspection, higher-attaining students are more effectively challenged, teaching is more closely monitored and an examination course has been introduced. The good quality of teaching has been maintained. The issue of inadequate outdoor facilities has not been resolved. With no adjacent playing field, time is lost in travelling to facilities further away. At one of the sites used for football, the changing room facilities are not cleaned after weekend use and the playing surface, being a public facility, is used for exercising animals. These are both potential health hazards.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

Students can choose between GCSE business studies and a dual award vocationally based business studies course. The latter was the focus for the inspection.

Business studies

Provision in business studies is very good.

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| | Year 11 |
| Standards | Average |
| Achievement | Very Good |
| Teaching and learning | Very Good |
| Leadership | Excellent |
| Management | Excellent |
| Progress since the last inspection | This is a new course |

Main strengths

- Work is carefully planned to develop students' learning, building on what they already know
- The teacher and support teacher work very effectively together and direct their support to the needs of each individual student
- Strategies to develop students' literacy skills are very effective
- Teaching has developed a classroom atmosphere in which students work hard and with enjoyment

Commentary

Examination results

140. Results, in 2004, for this vocational subject were well above the national average. This was the first year that the course had been examined.

Standards and Achievement

141. Students' standards of attainment, at the start of the course, are below average. The students make rapid progress as they are taught new skills. As part of their coursework, they are involved in role-play exercises which develop their problem solving skills. They learn how to write reports that accurately reflect the manner in which people within business organisations interact with each other. They carry out peer assessment as they critically evaluate each other's accounts. The majority of the students work confidently, others receive targeted support. At the end of the course, they carry out structured revision exercises which enable them to reach standards which reflect their potential.

Teaching and learning

142. Very good planning between teaching and support staff ensures that the latter are very well informed and able to make a major significant contribution to the work in the classroom. Students are well supported in developing their literacy skills. Teaching, through the consistent use of key words and by ensuring that students understand and correctly use specific vocabulary, helps students increase their subject understanding and develop their literacy skills. Literacy skills are

further developed through individual support to help students construct sentences, which accurately communicate what they are trying to say. In a Year 11 lesson, which followed a role-play, a student was in the role of a reporter and was helped to express observations in a style which was appropriate. In a Year 10 lesson, on purchase orders, the teacher went through a worked example and the students then worked co-operatively in pairs to produce their own examples. An effective strategy, in developing students' understanding and learning, is giving students time to think and formulate their ideas before requiring them to explain these ideas to others. Teachers have developed a purposeful learning environment within which students work hard and are fully engaged by their work. The student handbook, produced for the course by the department, clearly lists the way in which assessment will be carried out for the coursework. The teacher has very good subject knowledge and allows the students to develop their understanding by producing interesting, informative and enjoyable tasks.

Leadership and management

143. Leadership has a clear vision for driving the department forward. Care is taken, when planning the schemes of work, to build on prior learning and to incorporate worksheets, which will support the learning of all students. Support staff are deployed extremely effectively and provide excellent support for students with additional educational needs. The department has developed its own high quality teaching resources, which are carefully designed to meet students' needs and are used very effectively. Links have been set up by the department with local businesses, which give the students useful case studies for their coursework. This is a new course since the last inspection.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

144. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. The curriculum is challenging and well taught: issues are relevant to students and are presented in a positive way. All students undertake work experience placements in Year 11, for which they receive careful preparation in PSHE lessons, and during which they are monitored by college staff. Students' motivation is increased by their being able to gain certification for the work they complete during their placement. Work experience is well integrated with the rest of the students' curriculum: on their return, they complete assignments about their experience for their GCSE English and business studies courses. The college works closely with the local Connexions service to ensure that students receive good information, advice and guidance about their options at 16. It is taking part in a national project aimed at widening participation in higher education, and it has established good links with a range of further and higher education providers. Students benefit from this for example by attending summer schools and weekend events at De Montfort and other local universities.

Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The college does not meet the statutory requirements for this course and students do not have a coherent experience
- Students may choose an examination course in Years 10 and 11
- Leadership and management have been significantly strengthened by recent staff changes

Commentary

145. Some of the required content of the course is taught within the personal, health and social education programme and covered by work in other subjects. These include topics on human rights, asylum and immigration, government and electoral systems, diversity, global warming and the United Nations. Some students are encouraged to develop skills of participation and communication through the work of the well-organised and representative college councils. The college council meeting held during the inspection week was led and organised by students. In the meeting, they discussed issues in a reasoned and thoughtful manner. However, students' experience of citizenship cannot be guaranteed and there is, currently, no systematic planning for teaching the required content. The college does not assess and report on students' progress in the subject and so does not meet this requirement.

146. The GCSE short course, now in its third year, is a good innovation. A small number of students were examined in 2004. All students gained a pass and a quarter gained the higher A* to C grades. There are no national comparators available. The nature of the timetable meant that it was only possible to observe a single lesson during the inspection. Scrutiny of students' recorded work show that current standards are below average. Students have been taught using helpful handouts and extracts from appropriate sources. Annotations to these, by the students, show the appropriate focus on content and the students' notes show their understanding. Appropriate visits, in this case to the Crown Court, put theoretical learning into a practical context. ICT was use effectively to word process a record of the visit. There is little evidence of extended writing. Work is marked but does not always provide sufficient guidance on how work might be improved.
147. The college is aware that it does not meet statutory requirements and staffing changes have been made. Leadership and management issues are identified and, as part of the PSE programme, the development of citizenship is an identified and planned priority.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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