

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **THE OCKENDON SCHOOL**

South Ockendon

LEA area: Thurrock

Unique reference number: 115216

Headteacher: Mrs B King

Lead inspector: Dr K C Thomas

Dates of inspection: 1 - 4 November 2004

Inspection number: 268493

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of students:	11 to 16
Gender of students:	Mixed
Number on roll:	767
School address:	Erriff Drive South Ockendon Essex
Postcode:	RM15 5AY
Telephone number:	01708 851661
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs K Cooney
Date of previous inspection:	2 October 2002

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

The Ockendon School is an 11-16 comprehensive school with specialist Mathematics and Computing College status. With 767 students on roll, the school is smaller than most other secondary schools. There are slightly more boys than girls in the school as a whole, but considerably more boys than girls in the lower years. Although the school provides for students across the ability range, attainment on entry is well below average overall. Many students enter the school with very low standards of literacy and numeracy. The proportions of students with special educational needs and with formal statements of special educational need are above average. Students with the highest levels of need mostly have moderate learning difficulties and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Fewer than five per cent of the students have minority ethnic backgrounds. As there are around eight different minority ethnic groups represented in the school, there is no significantly large sub-group. While a small number of these students are bilingual, none is in the early stages of learning to speak English. There are 20 Traveller students in the school. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is above average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
3390	Ken Thomas	Lead inspector	
9708	Sylvia Daintrey	Lay inspector	
10759	Lynn Bappa	Team inspector	History Religious education
32379	Bob Brewster	Team inspector	Mathematics Citizenship
22590	Bob Castle	Team inspector	Geography Physical education
12408	Alan Frith	Team inspector	French
31685	Val Girling	Team inspector	Art
8501	Paul Hartwright	Team inspector	Design and technology
8052	Ken McKenzie	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Work related learning
27188	Gill Murray	Team inspector	English
30563	Jackie Pentlow	Team inspector	Science
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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This **effective school** provides good value for money. The excellent leadership of the headteacher ensures that the school provides a good quality of education for all students. Although standards in National Curriculum tests and the GCSE examination are below average, achievement is very good. Teaching and learning are good.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- the outstanding leadership of the headteacher, with very strong support from other senior managers, is ensuring there is a continuous drive to raise standards;
- national Curriculum test and GCSE examination results are rising faster than results nationally;
- students achieve very well because they receive very good support and guidance, teaching and learning are good, and very effective use is made of assessment information to set targets and monitor progress;
- standards of literacy and numeracy are below average;
- students are in regular attendance because of excellent procedures to promote good attendance;
- students are given a great deal of responsibility; this promotes very good attitudes and good behaviour and contributes significantly to the very positive ethos of the school;
- procedures for identifying and making provision for students with special educational needs are good;
- the accommodation for music is unsatisfactory and some statutory requirements are not being met in French, design and technology, music and citizenship.

The school has made good improvement since the last inspection in 2002. All of the identified shortcomings have been tackled vigorously. In particular, the school is making a very determined effort to raise standards of literacy. This, together with the raising of standards of numeracy, remains an ongoing improvement priority. Students' attendance, attitudes and behaviour have all improved. In addition, the school has achieved specialist mathematics and computing college status and the Investor in People award.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Performance compared with:		all schools			Similar schools
		2001	2002	2003	2003
Year 11	GCSE/GNVQ examinations	E*	D	E	A

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

**Achievement is very good overall.** Students make very good progress during their time in the school from well below average standards on entry. Standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are below average at the end of Year 9. Although standards at the end of Year 11 are, overall, below average, GCSE examination results rose sharply in 2004 to be much closer to the national average.

**Students' personal development, including their spiritual development, is good. Their moral and social development is very good. Cultural development is satisfactory.** Students have very positive attitudes and the behaviour of most, both in lessons and around the school, is good. This makes for a harmonious learning environment. Attendance is good. Most students are punctual to school and to lessons.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The quality of education is good. Teaching is good overall** throughout the school. The curriculum is good and the school is beginning to broaden pathways for all from the start of Year 10. Good provision is made for students with special educational needs and for gifted and talented students. Provision to enrich students' learning outside lessons is good. Students' learning benefits considerably from the very good partnerships the school is establishing with parents and the community. Provision is also enhanced by good links with other schools and colleges. Because of difficulties in recruitment there are weaknesses in staffing in a few subjects. Although accommodation is generally good and improving, accommodation for music is unsatisfactory.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are **very good**. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and that of other key staff very good. The management of the school is very good. The school makes very good use of evaluation information to identify strengths and tackle weaknesses. Governance of the school is good and almost all statutory requirements are met. The only breaches of statutory requirements are with regard to the use of information and communication technology in design and technology, music and French, and the reporting of standards in citizenship.

## PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very satisfied with the school and what it provides for their children. They judge that their children are making good progress. Parents appreciate the advantages of the short lunch period but some feel that not enough time is allowed for students to eat their meals properly. Inspectors agree with parents' views. Students feel that it is a good school and have very positive views about most aspects.

## IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- continue to implement strategies to raise standards of literacy and numeracy;
- improve the accommodation for music;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- ensure that statutory requirements with regard to the use of information and communication technology are fully met in French, design and technology, and music;
- ensure that standards in citizenship are assessed and reported to parents.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS

#### Standards achieved in subjects and courses

Examination and test results over time show a rapidly improving trend. Achievement is good at the end of Year 9 and very good at the end of Year 11. At the end of Year 9, standards in English, mathematics and science are below average. Although the 2003 GCSE results were well below average, achievement was very good. The 2004 results were above those obtained in 2003. These results again represent very good achievement.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Test and examination results are rising at a faster rate than results nationally.
- The difference between the performance of girls and boys in science and mathematics at the end of Year 9 is greater than that observed nationally.

#### Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	29.4 (30.8)	33.4 (33.3)
mathematics	33.7 (32.3)	35.4 (34.7)
science	31.1 (32.1)	33.6 (33.3)

*There were 133 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

1. Standards on entry to the school, although covering the full attainment range, are well below average overall. Although many students enter the school with very low standards in English, mathematics and science, there are few at the upper end of the attainment range in these subjects.
2. The trend in the school's National Curriculum test results was above the rate at which the national results rose from 1999 to 2003. In 2003 (the latest year for which national comparative information is available), although the results were well below average in comparison with all schools, they were well above average in comparison with similar schools based on prior attainment (these are schools in which pupils attained similar standards at the end of Year 6). In comparison with schools in similar socio-economic circumstances, results were above average. When standards of attainment on entry are taken into account these results represent good achievement. The school met the higher targets set for 2004. These results again represented good achievement.
3. The 2003 results in English and science were well below average, while those in mathematics were below average. In comparison with similar schools based on prior attainment, the results in science were very high while those in mathematics were well above average. The results in English were average. In comparison with schools in similar socio-economic circumstances the 2003 results were above average in mathematics, and average in science. Results in English were well below average. The school is making a determined effort to raise standards of literacy and the success of the action being taken is seen in the 2004 English test results. These results rose and although below the 2003 average in comparison with all schools were well above average when prior attainment is taken into account. The 2004 results in science were also above those obtained in 2003, while the 2004 results in mathematics were similar to those obtained in 2003. In 2003, girls outperformed boys in mathematics and science by a greater margin than that observed nationally. Although girls outperform boys in English, the



difference in performance is about the same as that observed nationally. Analyses of performance show that there are no significant differences in the performance of students from different backgrounds.

4. Achievement is good in Years 7 to 9 because the National Key Stage 3 strategy is being implemented effectively and there is a substantial proportion of good and better teaching that inspires the students to do well. Teaching also takes good account of the needs of gifted and talented students and those of students with special educational needs. In addition, students' progress is underpinned by the effective use of assessment information for target setting and monitoring. The school is evaluating the progress of individuals so that support can be better focused to prevent underachievement. Similar strengths in provision are seen in Years 10 and 11 where students are also provided with well focused individual support as they prepare for the GCSE examinations. As a result, achievement is very good at the end of Year 11. The school takes great care to ensure that support is provided for any students who may be away from the school for extended periods, whether through long term illness if travelling with their families. Because of the effectiveness of this provision, students of all backgrounds achieve equally well.

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	27 (34)	52 (50)
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	94 (90)	91 (91)
Percentage of students gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	100 (98)	96 (96)
Average point score per student (best eight subjects)	28.4 (29.7)	34.7 (34.8)

*There were 127 students in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

5. GCSE results have also risen at a faster rate than results nationally. Although the proportion of students obtaining five or more A\* to C grades over the last four years was well below average, the proportion gaining five or more A\* to G grades shows a steady rise. Value-added measures, based on students' test performance at the end of Year 9, show that the achievement of students gaining five or more A\* to C grades in 2003 was satisfactory, while that of students obtaining five or more A\* to G grades was very high, and in the highest five per cent of similar schools nationally. There was a significant rise in the percentage of students obtaining five or more A\* to C grades in 2004 reflecting the impact of the effective use of assessment, rigorous monitoring and very good support. Although the school did not meet the target set for the year group, this was because the target was unrealistically high. When attainment at the end of Year 9 is taken into account the proportion of students gaining five or more A\* to C grades exceeded expectations and achievement was very good. In 2004 virtually all students obtained five or more A\* to G grades. This was an improvement on the 2003 results and a good indication that the school provides equally well for students of all attainment levels.
6. In 2004 the proportion of students gaining A\* to C grades rose in almost all subjects. Although remaining below the 2003 national averages, the proportions of students gaining these grades in English, mathematics and science showed a significant rise. Because the school is successful in maintaining the engagement of students of all attainment levels and backgrounds, virtually all obtained grades in the A\* to G range. This makes a significant contribution to the overall rise seen in standards. The 2004 GCSE results in art were particularly good with the proportion of students gaining grades in the A\* to G range being well above average. Girls outperformed boys in all subjects other than drama and music, where boys outperformed girls, and English, science and history where results were about the same. The differences in performance between boys and girls generally reflect the differences in performance observed nationally.

7. The achievement of students with special educational needs is comparable to that of their peers because procedures for identifying and supporting them are very effective. They receive good teaching in subjects and when withdrawn for small group work. The very few students with English as an additional language are fluent English speakers and achieve as well as others in their classes. The school provides a wide range of extension activities for students who have been identified as gifted and talented. They benefit considerably from these activities. These students achieve well in their academic subjects and this achievement is enhanced further through the extension activities.
8. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are continuing to rise. Although standards remain below average overall, enthusiastic teaching is helping to drive up standards in many subjects, and particularly English, mathematics and science. Work seen in information and communication technology and drama is consistent with national expectations, while Year 11 work in art is above expectations. Weaknesses in literacy and numeracy skills are the major barriers to raising attainment generally. The school is working hard to tackle these issues both through very structured intervention in the lower years and through the introduction of comprehensive literacy and numeracy policies. Although the literacy strategy is being implemented consistently and successfully in all subjects, the numeracy policy is not as yet having the same impact.

### **Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Students' attitudes are very good throughout the school. Behaviour, attendance and punctuality are good. Students' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Students have very positive attitudes to the school because they are fully involved in making it a better place to be.
- Most students behave well most of the time because expectations are very clear and consistently implemented.
- The school has worked extremely effectively over the last four years to improve attendance rates.
- The school is particularly successful in promoting students' moral and social development.

### **Commentary**

9. Students' attitudes, behaviour, attendance and personal development have all improved since the last inspection two years ago. Students overwhelmingly agree that this is a good school to be at. Year 11 students are very pleased with the progress they have seen during their time at the school and are very good role models for younger students. Year 7 students are very enthusiastic about all the opportunities available to them. Students are proud of their school and want the best for it, as can be seen in the way they wear their uniform and the fund-raising they carried out to help the school achieve its specialist status. Their attitudes have improved over time because they have been given the opportunity to play a full part in developments and are trusted to show initiative and responsibility. For example, they greet visitors at the front door without being asked, help other students in schemes such as paired reading and peer mentoring, and support members of staff so that adults can carry out their roles more effectively. Students' very good attitudes have a significant impact on the progress they are able to make in their academic achievement and personal development. This is especially notable in Year 11 when students of all abilities are highly motivated to do as well as they can to gain their qualifications, and also very willingly undertake a wide range of important responsibilities around the school.

10. A striking feature of the school is the very calm and orderly atmosphere throughout the day. Behaviour is often very good, for example in assemblies, during break times and in the crowded corridors when students move from one lesson to the next. In lessons, the vast majority of students behave well and are able to concentrate on their learning. Occasionally, the behaviour of a small minority of boys and girls in Years 7 to 9 deteriorates, either because of weaknesses in teaching which does not meet their needs or because of a lack of self-discipline. The school's very effective procedures for dealing with challenging behaviour are usually highly successful. Students know exactly what is required of them in terms of their conduct because they are consistently reminded by staff. The system for rewards and sanctions is fully understood and applied. Very good provision is made for students in Years 10 and 11 who are at risk of becoming disaffected. The result is a falling rate of fixed period exclusions and no permanent exclusions or racist incidents in the last two years. Neither students nor parents see bullying as an issue and are very confident that the occasional incident is taken seriously and handled well by the school.

**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	666	21	0
White – any other White background	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	2	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	1	0	0
Black or Black British – African	2	0	0
Chinese	5	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	74	0	0

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

11. Attendance rates have improved dramatically over the last few years and in 2003/4 reached 92.2 per cent with very little unauthorised absence. Students' good attendance is a reflection of their great interest in school life and contributes to the good progress they are able to make in their learning. Staff and students have been invited to national conferences to explain how they have achieved this transformation. The school's successful measures include:
- using an electronic registration system coupled with very close monitoring;
  - setting clear academic and personal targets and rewarding success;
  - shortening the lunch break and requiring students to stay on site;
  - improving the quality of teaching so that students are more interested in attending lessons;
  - giving students a great deal of responsibility and showing them that they are trusted.

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.9	School data	0.2
National data	7.2	National data	1.1

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

12. The school has worked closely with the Traveller community so that parents now want their children to come to school as often as possible and they make sure that class work is completed when they are away from the school. Punctuality has also improved since the last inspection. Students arrive promptly for the early start to the school day and participate well in

assemblies and form tutor time. There is occasional lateness to the first lesson of the afternoon because some students are unable to finish their lunch in the short time available.

13. Good provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development makes a significant contribution to their all-round personal development. Central to the ethos of the school is the development of students' self respect and confidence. This is seen as an essential element in raising aspirations and achievement. Good provision for students' self-knowledge and spiritual awareness plays an important part in this. Provision is particularly strong in art and drama where students have many opportunities to empathise or reflect on what is special about the human spirit. Student groups are given responsibility for providing the 'thought for the day' that serves as a theme in assemblies. When students are not in assemblies, it is also intended that the thought for the day should be used in tutor periods. However, use in this context is less consistent and students do not always benefit from a period of reflection when not in assemblies. The school also emphasises the importance of ensuring that students understand and respect other people's feelings, values and beliefs and this has a vital impact on their progress, attitudes and achievement. Students' cultural development is satisfactory. They develop an understanding of the traditions and values of other faiths, and an appreciation of cultural diversity through art, geography, history, modern foreign languages and religious education; however, opportunities to enhance this aspect of students' personal development are not taken in other subjects. Nevertheless, a strong moral code permeates the life of the school. Expectations of work and behaviour are high and are fully accepted by virtually all students. Students are developing into valued members of the school community and they carry out responsibilities conscientiously when undertaking roles such as representing the views of others on the school council.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided by the school is good overall. There is much lively and interesting teaching and this, together with the effective use of assessment, promotes good learning. Students' learning experiences are enriched by good provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) and a good range of enrichment activities. Links with parents and the community are very good and those with other schools and colleges are good.

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching and learning are **good** throughout the school. Assessment procedures are used effectively to guide students' progress and raise standards.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Rigorous monitoring and very good support are promoting good teaching and learning.
- Good relationships and teachers' very good planning support students' learning well.
- Assessment procedures are good and are being used effectively to show students how to improve their work.
- In a few lessons students do not maintain interest because learning activities are not demanding enough.
- Not enough use is made of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning in some subjects.

### **Commentary**

14. The school has introduced very rigorous procedures for evaluating the quality of teaching. These procedures, which begin with the self-evaluation of every lesson by teachers followed by reviews with middle and senior managers, are having a significant impact on students' learning. The sharing of ideas of how to improve is seen as an essential part of the drive to raise standards and this has led to an improvement since the last inspection. There is now more teaching that is good and better and less that is unsatisfactory.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 101 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (1)	20 (19)	47 (46)	30 (29)	3 (3)	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.*

15. A particular strength of teaching is the amount of thought that teachers give to the planning of lessons. This helps to ensure that attention is paid to the needs of students of different attainment levels. The attention given to lesson planning also provides newly qualified and teachers in training with clear guidance in their work. This helps to ensure good progression in lessons because learning activities provide an appropriate level of challenge. The structures of the national Key Stage 3 strategy are put to good use by many teachers and are having a beneficial effect on the students' learning throughout the school. In the best lessons, learning objectives are made clear at the outset so that students can see where they are heading. The learning objectives are then reviewed at the end of the lesson as a means of helping students to evaluate the learning that has taken place. The positive impact of the national strategy is also seen in the rising standards in Years 10 and 11. However, not enough use is made of information and communication technology in some subjects and this is having an adverse impact on progress, most notably in mathematics, design and technology, and modern foreign languages.
16. Most students respond well to the high expectations of teachers. In most lessons teachers exercise a firm but friendly control that leads to a productive working atmosphere in which learning can thrive. By contrast, teaching in a small number of lessons suffers because teachers do not exert enough control, have unclear aims or do not engage the students enough. Students lose concentration and waste time in these lessons, and teachers have to spend too much of their time demanding students' attention. Little progress was made in the three unsatisfactory lessons observed during the inspection because learning objectives were not clear and learning activities were not challenging enough.
17. Teaching for students with special educational needs is good. Effective use is made of teaching assistants who have a good knowledge of the needs of their students and use this knowledge well to provide them with effective support. This is particularly evident when students in Years 7 and 8 are withdrawn to follow a corrective reading programme that is taught by teaching assistants. The resources used to support the learning of Traveller students and students with special educational needs are particularly well designed to take account of their' individual needs. This makes a significant contribution to the good progress these students are making and does much to promote equality of opportunity. The very few students with English as an additional language are fluent English language speakers and do not need any additional support.
18. There has been further improvement in assessment procedures and the use of assessment information since the last inspection. The school makes systematic use of a wide range of information from a variety of sources to analyse potential and set targets for improvement. Teachers make effective use of the information gained from assessments to guide the planning of students' learning. This is particularly seen in the good provision that is made for gifted and talented students and in the good quality of the individual education plans of students with special educational needs. The account that teachers take of the academic and personal targets contained in the plans help students with special educational needs to make good progress in their learning. Because of rigorous monitoring there has also been an improvement in the marking of students' work. In most subjects this is now thorough and informative. However, in English, design and technology and art, some marking does not give students clear enough guidance on how they can improve. This is an issue that has been identified by the school through the monitoring of students' books and professional development time is allocated to ensuring that marking complies with the school policy.

## The curriculum

The curriculum is **good**. Enrichment through extra-curricular activities is **good**. Staffing, accommodation and resources provide good support for learning.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The range of subjects provides well for the aspirations of students and their parents.
- The strong links built up with local businesses and other educational institutions have widened the range of learning opportunities for students, especially in Years 10 and 11.
- Provision is enhanced by the schools' programme of 'insight days' and by an increase in the range of extra-curricular activities.
- Not enough use is made of the library within lesson time.
- The very short lunch break creates time pressures on students and delays the start of some lessons immediately after the break.
- Difficulties in recruitment have led to weaknesses in staffing in a few subjects.

### Commentary

19. The curriculum is broad and balanced and has become more responsive to the needs and abilities of all students since the last inspection. In Years 7 to 9 students have good access to the subjects of the National Curriculum and to religious education. All Year 7 students now have an English lesson every day as part of the school's drive to raise standards of literacy. A successful bid to become a specialist mathematics and computing college has resulted in improved access to information and communication technology. This will enable information and communication technology to be used more effectively to support teaching and learning in all subjects. Higher attaining students in mathematics are now able to take a GCSE examination in statistics in Year 9. Drama is timetabled weekly and students also benefit from some teaching of dance by an outside provider. French is taught as the only foreign language.
20. The range of subjects in Years 10 and 11 has widened and includes subjects outside the National Curriculum. Both drama and media studies are popular, for example. Effective curriculum planning provides students with good access to a variety of combinations of subjects, including GNVQ courses in leisure and tourism, and art and design. All students now follow an Intermediate GNVQ course in information and communication technology. An alternative curriculum for a small group of students successfully allows them to combine work on basic skills and core subjects with extended work experience.
21. Arrangements for evaluating the curriculum are rigorous and innovative. Subject leaders meet regularly with members of the senior management team and all staff attend a weekly teaching and learning workshop which supports curricular developments. This has been a key factor in the school's successful and widespread use of the national Key Stage 3 strategy and in raising achievement. Assessment information is used effectively to guide curriculum planning and this is seen, for example, in history and science. The curriculum meets statutory requirements with two exceptions. These breaches are with regard to the use of information and communication technology in French and the use of computer-aided design and manufacture in design and technology. Most subjects have enough time to meet their curriculum requirements but in science, the amount of time allocated in Years 10 and 11 is below average and restricts students' progress in scientific enquiry and practical work. The reorganisation of the school day with a twenty-five minute lunch, although generally very successful, creates some time pressures on students' which are not conducive to good learning in the lesson immediately after lunch.
22. The school is fully committed to ensuring that there is equality of opportunity and this is demonstrated in the provision made to ensure that all students are able to benefit from what the curriculum offers. The daily personal learning programme is successful in targeting and

reviewing individual needs. Individual education plans for students with special educational needs are clear and are reviewed regularly. There is very good provision for Traveller students. This provision includes packages of work to give continuity in learning when they are away from the school. Gifted and talented students are well catered for in lessons and in extra-curricular activities. Insight days and taster sessions at institutions of further and higher education enhance provision for these students.

23. The personal, social, health and citizenship course (PSHCE) is well organised and well taught. The appointment of a Life Skills and Health Co-ordinator reflects the importance that the school places on this aspect of students' learning. An appropriate citizenship course is in place but students are not currently formally assessed or information reported to parents. Arrangements for careers advice and work experience are good. Careers guidance is an integral and well-established part of PSHCE provision. Students have access to a variety of work-related learning through the school's links with employers and other agencies in this field, and through the local Enterprise Co-ordinator. Local businesses, the Connexions service, local community groups and colleges of further education are represented at student target setting days. These are increasingly well attended by parents and help to inform them of the range of opportunities on offer. Work experience is provided for all students in Year 11. Students learn to write letters of application and receive training for interviews. There is a strong platform for developing work related learning. Together with the good advice students receive on the careers and courses available when they leave school, this represents a good level of preparation for later stages of education or employment.
24. Enrichment through extra-curricular activities supports learning well. Revision classes are provided in mathematics and English to help students catch up on coursework and many subjects offer booster classes for students preparing for the GCSE examination. Students make good use of the computing facilities at breaks and after school. A number take part in sport, in extra-curricular drama and have instrumental tuition. The school offers further opportunities through a programme of 'insight days'. These extend the curriculum by devoting a day for a year group to explore an area such as enterprise or the environment. Students are provided with additional opportunities to achieve through a good range of sporting activities.
25. Staffing is good overall. Most areas are fully staffed with experienced specialist teachers. One of the strengths of the school is the very good quality of the support that is given to newly qualified teachers and those who are being trained through the Graduate Teacher Programme. This helps to minimise the impact of difficulties in teacher recruitment that the school, in common with many others, faces. In subjects where teachers are less experienced they are closely monitored and supported by senior staff and advisers, for example in music and French. Because of difficulties in recruitment there are vacancies in design and technology, and religious education. Although the school is taking measures to reduce the impact of these vacancies, there is an adverse effect on overall provision in these subjects. An appointment has been made in design and technology and the vacancy is to be filled in January 2005. Learning is well supported by teaching assistants who are effective because they are attached to departments and are well aware of the needs of students. Technician support is effective in design and technology and the art technician supports other subjects in the use of visual aids and the creation of displays.
26. Resources for teaching are good overall and support the teaching of the curriculum well. Resources are particularly good in art, for example, where the effective use of a web-cam and an interactive whiteboard contribute well to learning. Information and communication technology provision is a strength of the school. There is a very good ratio of computers to students and interactive whiteboards have now been introduced to most departments. The computers are housed in five information and communication technology teaching rooms of which four are equipped with very modern computers. The library is now organised as a resource centre with 18 modern networked computers having Internet access. There are only a moderate number of books. Although the library is used well by students during break and after school, not enough use is made of this very good resource to support teaching and learning during lessons.

27. Very good improvement has been made to the accommodation since the last inspection. The school has refurbished its classrooms, corridors, toilets and other facilities so that it now provides a very pleasant learning environment, which students respect and value. Display is used well to promote pride in the school and reflect the emphasis on raising standards in literacy. The new mathematics block is a very welcome addition to the school's accommodation. This will help to ease some of the pressures on space arising from the increasing numbers of students on roll. Accommodation in music is unsatisfactory and the need to clear equipment away for the lunch break has an adverse impact on progress in some lessons. The school is very aware of the further improvements required and has very carefully budgeted for these over a five-year rolling programme.

### Care, guidance and support

Arrangements for students' care, welfare, health and safety are **good**. The school's provision of support, advice and guidance is **very good**. Students are involved **very well** in the school's work and development.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- A wide range of very effective strategies is deployed to support individuals and groups of students so that they can achieve as best they can.
- Students have a very considerable voice in the school so that they are partners in the school's improvement.

### Commentary

28. The school's systems for supporting and guiding students' progress through the school are based on highly consistent monitoring of their academic performance and personal development. This starts with the very good induction arrangements into Year 7, which ensure that the students feel very well settled in their new classes. Members of staff at all levels know individual students very well and very good use is made of assessment to monitor their progress so that any underachievement can be identified and tackled quickly. For example, targeted students in Year 7 receive additional support from teachers and teaching assistants, both during and after the school day, to raise their literacy skills. In Year 9, students at risk of underachieving in the National Curriculum tests are offered revision sessions run by heads of department. In Year 11, mentors from local businesses as well as Connexions advisers support all students. This helps to raise their aspirations. The school has very creatively appointed a life skills and health co-ordinator, with vast experience of working with young people and their families, to provide in-house support and counselling on issues to do with managing behaviour and developing life skills. The school has instigated regular meetings of professionals from an extensive number of outside agencies, which it can call upon to provide support and guidance for students where needed.
29. Students are very confident that their views are sought, valued and acted upon. There is a very effective system of year group and whole school councils, which enables the school to seek students' ideas and students to raise matters of their own. The school has responded very well to issues raised in the survey it undertook at the beginning of term among students from Years 8 to 11. For example, it has ensured that all students now know the range of adults they can turn to if they need help with any problem and it is working very closely with students, including the specially trained Year 11 peer mentors, in raising awareness of anti-bullying strategies. Students are involved very well in reviewing their work and setting targets at the start of the academic year. They are not, however, required to contribute a comment about their progress in their annual reports.
30. The school has successfully created a learning environment in which students, especially the most vulnerable, feel secure and cared for. Pastoral staff and members of the senior



management team are highly alert to the serious challenges that some students, including those who arrive at the start of Year 7, encounter in their lives. The designated teacher for child protection is experienced in the role and ensures that all staff are aware of their responsibilities. Arrangements for fire safety are very good and there are a good number of staff with first aid certificates. The new health and safety co-ordinator has appropriately revised the policy and drawn up an action plan which includes the development of formal risk assessments in all departments. There is still a health and safety issue related to electrical equipment in the music room, where problems were identified in the 2000 inspection. Students have a good awareness about the importance of healthy living, but the popularity of the new menu in the canteen, together with the rising numbers of students in the school, means that there is not always time to eat a healthy meal in the very short lunch break.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

Links with parents and the community are **very good**. Links with other schools and colleges are **good** and improving rapidly.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has very successfully won the support of parents and the local community with the result that they are very well involved in improving standards and provision for the students.
- The school is starting to establish very productive links with other schools.

### **Commentary**

31. Parents are highly satisfied with the school. They are so keen for their children to attend that an extra form group was admitted in Year 7 this year. They support the school well over matters such as attendance, behaviour and uniform, and they turn out in large numbers for assemblies to celebrate their children's achievements and meetings about their progress. Senior staff and year team leaders have made it a priority to inform and involve parents at every opportunity. For example, they receive termly reports on how well their children are doing, monthly newsletters about developments in the school and postcards if their child has been particularly successful. Parents of Year 11 students are kept very well informed about coursework deadlines and revision timetables so that they can support learning at home. The work of the home-school liaison officer is very effective in building links with 'hard to reach' parents through home visits. The school works very closely with the Traveller Education Service to develop strong links with the Traveller community. As a result, Traveller parents are keen to support the education of their children. The school has been approached to be a centre of excellence in this area of work. The school is not complacent and has good plans to continue to strengthen its partnership with parents.
32. The school rightly sees itself as a community school at the heart of the drive to raise aspirations and self-esteem. It has established a very extensive network of agencies that meet regularly at the school to focus on developing a range of support that can be provided for local families and their children. Very good use is made of external funding to ensure that the local community can benefit, for example in the provision of parenting classes. The school has very good links with local businesses. These provide a wide range of support including mentors for students in Year 11. Experienced individuals are very warmly invited into the school to share their expertise, and this has a significant impact on provision, for example in French, design and technology, and personal and career development. An outstanding testimony to the community's backing for the school is the way in which it raised the money required for the bid to become a specialist school. Community resources are exploited to support teaching and learning more effectively in some subjects than others. For example, there are some useful links in art, music and physical education but they are underused in science.

33. The school is very active in seeking out links with other schools that will benefit its own provision and support wider educational developments. Its partnerships with other secondary schools have a positive impact on music, drama and information and communication technology, for example, as well as on staff development through joint training and the sharing of expertise. Links with the main colleges and a university in the area ensure that students, especially those identified as gifted and talented, gain useful experiences of post-16 studies through taster days. Links with primary schools successfully enable students to transfer smoothly from Year 6 to Year 7. The school has made a good start, as part of its remit as a specialist school, on developing these links further.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management of the school are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and that of other key staff very good. The management of the school is very good. The school makes very good use of evaluation information to identify strengths and tackle weaknesses. Governance of the school is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher is providing inspirational leadership and a clear vision for the future of the school as a highly innovative and outward looking institution.
- Senior managers are very effective and ensure that the processes of evaluation and review are sharply focused and demanding.
- Governors take a strong strategic role and have a good working knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

### **Commentary**

34. The headteacher provides determined and effective leadership for the school's improvement. She is highly visible around the school and this, together with her caring approach to both students and staff, makes a significant contribution to the very positive ethos within the school. The headteacher successfully led the bid to gain specialist mathematics and computing college status. This has led to much improved facilities and the provision of valuable additional resources not only for the students but also for the local community.
35. The headteacher's clear vision for the future development of the school allied to very effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating its work, is having a significant impact on the quality of education the school provides. This clear commitment to ensuring the highest possible standards in all areas of the school's work is shared by other senior managers. Performance and other management information is analysed systematically and used effectively as part of the procedures for reviewing the work of departments. Because of this the school has a very clear picture of its strengths and is able to plan efficiently to tackle weaknesses. Among the many strengths of the school is the willingness to identify, adapt and apply good practice from a range of outside sources in order to ensure continued improvement. Other key staff share the headteacher's vision and work hard in their own areas of responsibility to achieve the school's targets.
36. The management of the school is very good. All of the key issues for action identified in the last inspection report have been tackled vigorously. Line management roles and responsibilities, from the leadership team to the other levels of management, are well understood and rigorous procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are bringing about improvement. Performance management is fully implemented. A comprehensive assessment database has been established and very good use is made of this information by the senior leadership team and heads of department for target setting and monitoring. This is making a major contribution to the raising of standards. The school improvement plan is comprehensive, contains appropriate targets and is closely linked to department plans. Planning for improvement in subject departments is generally good at all levels. Very good management in mathematics, history, art and citizenship is having a

positive impact on standards. Leadership and management in almost all other subjects are good. However, there are weaknesses in leadership and management in music. At the time of the inspection temporary leadership arrangements were in place in design and technology, and French. These arrangements are proving effective in promoting improvement in the subject because of the support being provided by consultants and, in French, a senior teacher from another local secondary school. Similar arrangements are in place in music, although with less effect and there are significant weaknesses in management of the subject. The school is without specialist teachers of religious education and the head of humanities maintains oversight of the subject. Although the arrangement is satisfactory planning for improvement in the subject is restricted because of the lack of specialist input. Leadership and management in physical education are satisfactory. Good management of the provision for students with special educational needs enables a well-trained and effectively deployed team of teaching assistants to work very well together.

37. Governors are very supportive of the school and carry out almost all of their statutory duties well. The few statutory requirements that are not met are with regard to the use of information and communication technology in design and technology and French, and the reporting to parents of standards in citizenship. Governors are very clear about the nature of the school and keen to maintain its traditions, whilst supporting innovation and change. Governors work closely with the school and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. The race equality policy reflects the commitment of governors to ensuring that the school provides for the needs of all groups of students.
38. The school's financial management and planning are very effective. The school bursar provides senior managers and governors with detailed financial reports and the budget is monitored with great care. Best value for money is sought both in purchasing goods and services and in educational outcomes. All of the school's income is spent for the intended purposes and in accordance with the priorities identified in the school improvement plan. The large balance being carried forward is committed to building work that is in progress. The school provides good value for money.

**Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	2,897,715
Total expenditure	2,817,210
Expenditure per student	3,907

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	436,626
Balance carried forward to the next	517,131

**Work related learning**

**What is the effectiveness of work related learning?**

39. Provision for work related learning (WRL) is good and meets statutory requirements. Evidence gathered through discussions with the co-ordinator for WRL and through discussions with students about their work experiences indicates that the programme effectively covers the three specified aspects of learning: through, about and for work. Many aspects of the WRL programme are covered in PSHCE lessons. In addition, the school carefully links this work with aspects covered in other subjects. For example, the geography department deals with the changing nature of work around the world and the English department works with students in the preparation and completion of work experience journals. Students also maintain a work related diary. The diary provides a comprehensive record of students' WRL activities and enables senior managers to monitor students' progress. Enterprise activities begin as early as Year 7 with 'Insight into Industry' days and this process is taken further in Year 9 when careers related work begins in conjunction with Connexions. The school has effective links with local employers, many of whom provide representatives to work with students in school. The school also makes extensive use of Project Trident. All of

these activities are to be linked in a systematic way through a world of work student profile, which is in the process of being introduced. This will provide a solid base for consolidating and extending WRL in the school.

## **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**.

##### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Students make very good progress between entering the school and taking the GCSE examination; boys have made especially good progress recently.
- Teachers know their students well as individuals and are therefore able both to support and to challenge them effectively.
- The English teachers share a commitment to driving up standards through lively and well focused teaching. This helps students to understand not just what they learn but how they learn.
- Schemes of work vary in quality and are in need of systematic review.

##### **Commentary**

40. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests and in teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 students' performance was well below average. They did less well in the English tests than in mathematics and science, although their results were in line with those of students in similar schools. Consistent with the difference seen nationally, girls' results were better than boys. 2004, however, saw a significant increase in the percentage of students reaching the expected Level 5 and above, bringing results closer to the 2003 national average. These results compared very favourably with those obtained in similar schools. The gap between English and mathematics was much smaller and students did better in English than in science.
41. GCSE examination results are also rising significantly. Although still below average, the number of A\* to C grades gained by students in 2004 were twenty per cent higher than the previous year, with boys doing particularly well in matching girls' success. Results rose too in English literature, where the number of boys gaining grades A\* to C was almost double the previous year.
42. Work seen during the inspection reflects this rise in standards. Students arrive at the school in Year 7 with well below average standards of literacy and achieve well from this base by the end of Year 9. Those with special educational needs make good progress because they are well provided for and understand the steps they need to take to improve. Higher attaining students are effectively challenged and stimulated. Most students use their time in class very well, showing a willingness to listen carefully to their teacher and to one another. They respond well to questions and show good recall of key ideas, although they are not always able to expand their answers in a formal setting; when asked to take on a role, however, most handle ideas more confidently. Homework is completed and checked regularly and students' books offer a clear record of the key points to be learned from each topic. Students of all ages can concentrate well and record ideas during class discussion. Reading skills are developing well. Those students who receive support in small groups with a teaching assistant, or through paired reading with older students, are clear about the progress they are making. Students in Years 7 to 9 use specialist terms accurately to describe writers' techniques and older students show a developing awareness of how themes and ideas are conveyed in literature. Most students tackle some demanding texts for GCSE, although few read widely outside the syllabus.

43. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are busy and positive in tone. Behaviour is very good. Teachers encourage students to learn from one another, often asking them to test out ideas in pairs for maximum involvement. The Key Stage 3 strategy has been successful in encouraging teachers to raise the demands they make of students, while setting out clearly the steps by which they can achieve success. All teachers deliberately share and review learning objectives with classes and continue this practice up to Year 11. This is usually very successful in creating purposeful attitudes to learning. On the one occasion when teaching was less than satisfactory this was because the approach to studying a poem was too narrowly analytical for a Year 8 class; traditional questioning failed to engage the students' imaginations and so they lost direction. Generally, however, teachers are particularly effective in asking follow-up questions, which help students to develop thinking skills and in matching tasks to their students' abilities.
44. The leadership and management of the department are good. Changes in staffing have been well managed by the school. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection. The new head of department knows and deploys her team well, has set priorities and offers experience and organisational skills. This offers a good basis for continued improvement.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

45. The school has made it a priority to tackle the key action point from the last inspection about low levels of literacy. Although students enter the school lacking many basic skills, they are making good progress as a result of the consistent application of an imaginative and thorough literacy policy. Teachers are succeeding in making students pay more attention to how they organise and express their knowledge and ideas in both speech and writing. They explain key words clearly and use activities that support students' developing control of language for learning. This is improving achievement in all subjects and has made a particular impact in raising standards in history, geography and English.

### **French**

Provision in French is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are improving, but in recent years have been well below the national average.
- Students learn well because teaching is good but they remain too dependent on their teacher.
- Not enough use is made of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning.
- Very effective external and internal support ensures that the department is well led and improving.

### **Commentary**

46. Teachers' assessments at the end of Year 9 show that standards are well below national averages. In 2004, hardly any students reached the 2003 national average. The proportion of Year 11 students gaining A\* to C grades in 2003 was well below the national average, with boys and girls below their respective national averages by similar amounts. In 2004, the results of both boys and girls improved, but remained well below the 2003 national average. Inspection evidence shows that standards in the current Year 9 and Year 11 have improved, but remain below average. Taking standards on entry to the school and at the end of Year 9 into account, achievement is satisfactory. Students from all background achieve equally well, as do students with special educational needs.
47. During the period of the inspection the department was given strong support by an experienced teacher from another local school. Achievement is improving because teaching and learning are good in all age groups. Teachers use French systematically in lessons and

students are starting to use it themselves when responding. Relationships and classroom management are good. Teachers vary lesson activities and resources well, conducting lessons with good pace and integrating cultural information about France effectively. In lessons, students focus strongly on what they need to learn to obtain good results and, when marking exercise books, teachers give helpful guidance. Some students use computers to help them make progress, but the department has not provided this opportunity for all, and younger students do not receive their statutory entitlement to the use information and communication technology. There are no contacts with native speakers of French, even through e-mail. Students rely heavily on their teachers throughout the learning process and do not acquire independent learning skills.

48. Leadership is good. The school has arranged very effective support for modern languages from independent consultants and staff from a local secondary school who provide very good role models. These beneficial links have led to significant improvements, despite the fact that there is no substantive head of department. There is good teamwork amongst the teachers and the external consultants and regular lesson observation, with evaluation, is leading to worthwhile innovation in the classroom. Management is satisfactory. The school's systems ensure that the department gathers information about students' progress regularly and makes it available centrally. The methods used by teachers to assess students' learning in lessons and to give students meaningful information on how well they are doing and how they might improve are not well developed and the school has not analysed data relating to recent examinations in any detail. Plans are in place that will improve these practices. Improvement generally is satisfactory and the current rate of progress is promising.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Test and examination results are improving faster than the national trend.
- Member of staff are enthusiastic and highly committed to raising standards.
- Good use is made of assessment information to guide action.
- Good relationships in lessons have a positive impact on learning.
- Not enough use is made of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning.

### **Commentary**

49. The 2003 end of Year 9 National Curriculum test result were below average. The 2004 results showed an increase in the percentage of students attaining the expected Level 5 or above although the overall results remained below the 2003 average. Girls outperform boys by a greater margin than that observed nationally. Standards in Years 7 to 9 are improving because of the effective implementation of the national strategy for mathematics. While the 2004 GCSE examination results remained below the 2003 national average, they showed a significant rise, with a narrowing of the gap between the performance of boys and girls. Students' performance at the end of Year 11 represents very good achievement when the overall well below average standards on entry in Year 7 are taken into account.
50. Inspection evidence shows that standards across the school are below average and that basic numeracy skills are particularly weak. Nevertheless, students' exercise books show that standards are rising and reflect the very good progress students make from Year 7 to Year 11. Lower attaining students in Year 7 try hard to master basic algebra while higher attaining students in Year 11 demonstrate the ability to engage in higher-level work on, for example, function transformations. More students are achieving higher grades in the GCSE examination because they are offered greater challenge in lessons and their progress is being monitored

more closely. Students with special educational needs are provided with good support and their achievement is similar to that of their peers.

51. Teaching and learning are good. The best teaching is characterised by high expectations and the productive use of lesson time. As a result lessons proceed at a good pace. Teachers have good subject knowledge and good knowledge of test and examination requirements. Because of this students know what they have to do in order to obtain the best possible grades. Lesson planning is very good and clear learning objectives ensure that students are engaged in lessons. Teachers make good use of questioning and this encourages independent thinking. In a few lessons, learning is less effective because the work is not matched well enough to the students' attainment levels. Nevertheless, teaching assistants work closely with class teachers to support students with special educational needs. As a result, these students are fully engaged in lessons and their progress is comparable to that of their peers. Effective use is made of homework to consolidate and extend classroom learning and after school revision classes support students preparing for the GCSE examination. Because students have very good attitudes, they work well to attain challenging targets.
52. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The head of department is very enthusiastic and fully committed to raising standards. She is a good role model for staff and students. There is a clear vision for further improvement and this is seen in the detailed subject development plan. Senior managers provide effective support. Teaching and learning are rigorously monitored with appropriate action taken to tackle weaknesses. However, students have limited access to information and communication technology and this is having an adverse impact on learning. Difficulties in the recruitment of teachers are being managed well with very good use being made of the Graduate Teacher Programme. Good use is made of assessment information to identify potential underachievement and this, together with the support of parents, is helping to raise standards. However, not enough use is made of National Curriculum levels and GCSE grades in day-to-day marking to challenge students to improve further.
53. Improvement since the last inspection is good. The school has very recently achieved mathematics and computing college specialist college status. Teaching and learning, test and examination results and the accommodation have all improved. The potential for further improvement is good.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

54. Standards of numeracy are below average. The standard of mathematical competence is well below average on entry to the school and improves to be below average at the end of Year 11. Staff development activities have been devoted to highlighting the issue among the whole staff and cross curriculum work has established a common approach to mathematical elements in areas such as graph work. The application and development of students' mathematical skills in subjects other than mathematics is, for example, through the use of formulae in science, graphical work in geography and measurement in design and technology. A school numeracy strategy has been introduced and this provides useful guidelines of how students' mathematical skills can be developed in all subjects. However, less emphasis has been given to the implementation and monitoring of this strategy compared to the school literacy strategy. A thorough audit of the mathematical skills required in different subjects has been carried out and matched against mathematics National Curriculum levels. This provides a good basis on which to work to raise students' mathematical competence.



## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching and learning is leading to rising standards.
- Assessment is used well to monitor the progress and raise the achievement of students.
- Not enough emphasis is placed on scientific investigative work to promote students' scientific thinking.
- The lack of time in the GCSE double course is restricting the teaching methods that can be used.
- Good leadership and management are moving the department forward.

### Commentary

55. In 2003, National Curriculum test results for students at the end of Year 9 were well below average. Girls' results were above those of boys. Results were average when compared with schools in similar socio-economic circumstances but well above average when compared to schools in which students attained similar standards at the end of Year 6. Results were better than those for English and just below those in mathematics. Achievement relative to attainment on entry to the school was very good being well above that expected. Results in 2004 were above those obtained in 2003, with little difference in the results of girls and boys. GCSE examination results, in 2003, were well below average and similar to those obtained in English and mathematics. Boys' and girls results were similar. When standards of attainment at the end of Year 9 are taken into account, these results represent good achievement. The achievement of students with special educational needs was similar to that of their peers and there were no significant differences in the achievement of students from different backgrounds.
56. Work seen during the inspection shows that, by the end of Year 9, standards are below average for both boys and girls. Higher-attaining students are able to undertake group research and formulate scientific equations. Lower-attaining students can draw simple diagrams of energy transformation but answers lack specific detail. Students, on the whole, make very good gains in their knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts in Years 7 to 9. Students in Years 10 and 11 are making good gains in their knowledge, and understanding in science. Strengths are in students' scientific knowledge but comparative weaknesses are in investigative and practical skills. Standards, overall, are below average for both boys and girls. Higher-attaining students in Year 11 have a good understanding of the structure of alkenes and alkanes and understand how genes carry information from one generation to the next. Lower-attaining students are less secure in their knowledge and understanding and find it difficult to apply their knowledge.
57. Teaching and learning are good. The good subject knowledge of teachers and high expectations are communicated well and stimulate students' interest. Good relationships, behaviour and attitudes make positive contributions to the good progress students make in lessons. Students work well individually and when working in pairs and groups. Homework is used effectively to extend and consolidate class work. Although lessons are well planned, it is sometimes difficult to cover all of the work in the time allowed by the fifty-minute period. This leads to an emphasis on the transmission of knowledge and students being too dependent on the teacher. Lesson starter activities tend to be used to recap facts rather than stimulating students' thinking. This inhibits the development of students' inquiry skills. The lack of emphasis on investigative science also restricts the development of students' practical skills. The relatively low allocation of curriculum time for the double GCSE course is restricting practical work and the development of a deeper understanding of scientific principles. The good emphasis given to the appropriate use of technical language supports the development

of students' literacy skills. Numerical skills are also applied effectively. Increasing use is being made of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning.

58. Leadership and management are good. Work in the department is rigorously monitored and this provides a basis for future development. A determination to tackle weakness underpins the strong commitment to continued improvement. Effective use is made of assessment to monitor students' progress and to plan modifications to the GCSE course. The marking of students' work is thorough and comments offer encouragement and guidance on how to improve. Teachers work well together, give excellent support to each other and are very good role models. Students appreciate the support given out of lessons and the extra revision sessions. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. New courses have been introduced and standards are rising although the time allocation for the GCSE course has not improved. The capacity for further improvement is very good.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- GCSE examination results are improving.
- There has been a significant improvement in the information and communication technology curriculum with all students in Years 9 to 11 now following a GNVQ course.
- Information and communication technology resources have improved very significantly in the last two years. The number of computers is now above average.
- Teaching and learning are good, and effective use is made of assessment to raise achievement.
- Some subjects do not make enough use of the very good information and communication technology resources and students' improving information and communication technology skills to support learning.

### **Commentary**

59. Results in the GCSE examination in 2003 were well below the national and school averages. There was an encouraging improvement in 2004 but they were still well below the 2003 average. Nevertheless, when the low standards of attainment of these cohorts of students at the end of Year 9 are taken into account, these results represent good achievement for many students.
60. Inspection evidence shows the improvement that has taken place since the last inspection. Although standards are below average in Year 7, students make good progress to reach standards that are average by the end of Year 9. This represents good achievement for most students. Some particularly good work was seen in Year 9, where all students have now started an Internet based GNVQ course. This course will be completed over three years and offers students enhanced opportunities for success as it will enable them to attain the equivalent of four GCSE passes at the end of Year 11. Although the standard of work covers a wide range, taken overall, standards are broadly in line with course expectations. Girls' performance, as indicated by recent examination results, is better than that of boys. However, teachers are now employing strategies to raise the attainment of boys, although it is too early to judge outcomes. Students of all backgrounds, and those with special educational needs, are achieving equally well.
61. Teaching and learning are good in all years. Lessons are well planned and learning resources are used effectively to provide good challenge. Lessons generally have good pace, which helps to maintain students' interest and enthusiasm. Very good use is made of on line resources and self-assessment to support learning. Students with learning difficulties are appropriately supported and there are ample opportunities lessons for the higher attaining

students to undertake more challenging information and communication technology activities. These include the use of more sophisticated methods to create web pages and to engage in digital video editing. In order to stimulate interest and develop additional skills, the department has also established video conferencing links with other schools, including one in South Africa.

62. A number of factors are contributing to the good achievement and improving standards seen in the subject. The subject has good leadership and management, and very good support from senior management. This has led to the achievement of specialist mathematics and computing college status. There have been significant changes in staffing and the quality of teaching is improved because subject specialists teach the majority of lessons. A better resourced and more challenging curriculum is being taught. Good improvement has been made over the last two years and the capacity for further improvement is very good as other subjects make more use of the enhanced resources to apply students' rapidly improving information and communication technology skills.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

63. The use of information and communication technology in the majority of subjects is at least satisfactory but there are significant issues to be tackled in several subjects. The number of computers is now above average for a school of this size and the availability of resources is good. Good use is made of computers and other information and communication technology equipment to support teaching and learning in a number of subjects. In art and media studies, for example, effective use is made of digital still and video cameras. Good use is made of the growing number of interactive whiteboards in many departments, for example in religious education and English. However, there is more scope for the use of information and communication technology throughout the curriculum. Not enough advantage is being taken of students' increasing levels of computing skills and knowledge to support their learning. This is apparent in mathematics and music, for example. The curriculum in design and technology in Years 7 to 9 does not meet statutory requirements because students do not have the opportunity to experience computer-aided design. The curriculum in modern foreign languages also does not meet statutory requirements with regard to the use of information and communication technology. The school is aware of these weaknesses and the wider application of the improved information and communication technology resources, further staff training and more rigorous monitoring are embodied in the specialist college development plan.

### **HUMANITIES**

64. Because of the structure of the timetable there was too little evidence to make an overall judgement about provision in religious education, which as a result was sampled. The 2004 teacher assessments show standards to be broadly in line with the national average. This is not confirmed by inspection evidence, which shows standards are below expectations for the age group. The proportion of students gaining A\* to C grades in the 2003 GCSE examination was below average, with the performance of boys being well below that of girls. All students obtained grades in the A\* to G range. The proportion of students gaining A\* to C grades in 2004 was slightly below the 2003 figure, although all students again obtained grades in the A\* to G range. When students' well below average standards on entry to the school are taken into account these results represent good achievement. Three lessons were observed, in Years 8, 9 and 11. A sample of students' work was also scrutinised. Standards observed were below expectations for the age groups. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and students are making satisfactory progress. Lessons are well planned and students respond well to the high behavioural expectations of teachers. Very good attention is paid to the development of students' literacy skills. However, because of difficulties in teacher recruitment, the subject is presently without specialist teachers and a head of department. Although the temporary subject management and teaching arrangements are satisfactory, because teachers are not specialists lesson topics are not explored in the depth necessary to raise achievement and standards.

## Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are starting to improve as a result of the good teaching, good leadership and a strong focus on literacy.
- Teachers have good knowledge, high expectations and enthusiasm for the subject.
- Good monitoring and assessment procedures are successfully contributing to students' learning and achievements.
- Not enough use is made of fieldwork to support classroom learning.

### Commentary

65. Students join the school with a limited range of geographical experiences and standards are well below average. By the end of Year 9 inspection evidence shows standards are below average. This contrasts with the broadly average teacher assessments. Taking standards on entry into account, however, achievement is good at the end of Year 9. Students in Year 9 demonstrate an understanding of simple environmental issues. They successfully use a wide range of technical terms related to mapping, ecosystems, volcanoes and earthquakes. Although the 2003 GCSE examination results were well below average, achievement was satisfactory when standards on entry are taken into account. Students did significantly better in geography than their other subjects. The 2004 examination results were marginally lower than those obtained in 2003. This was largely because of staffing difficulties and students' low literacy levels. However, inspection evidence shows that students in Years 10 and 11 are achieving well and that standards are below rather than well below course expectations. Boys and girls perform equally well and there are no significant differences in the achievement of students from different backgrounds.
66. Teaching and learning are good in Years 7 to 11. Teachers are enthusiastic and have high expectations. They have good geographical knowledge, which they apply well to plan lessons and to question and challenge students' thinking. Because students display good attitudes and relationships are good, the environment for learning is positive. Students respond well to the encouragement they receive in lessons and as a result, learning is good. Lessons are well prepared and have a good literacy focus and this is helping to raise standards. However, students are not provided with enough opportunities to engage in fieldwork. Students' work is well marked and students know what they need to do to improve. Scrutiny of students' books shows that they produce good quality work. Learning for students with special educational needs is enhanced because of the good support they receive from both teachers and teaching assistants.
67. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The head of faculty provides a clear vision and drive for improvement. Teaching has been strengthened by new appointments and there is more cohesion in the work of the department. The effective use of assessment, the rigorous monitoring of students' progress and good teaching are beginning to have a positive impact on standards and achievement. The department has made good progress over the last two years and there is increased potential for further improvement.

## History

Provision in history is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving because of a very clear focus on improving students' writing skills.

- Students achieve well because teachers support them effectively and encourage them to become independent learners.
- Students enjoy their lessons and more are beginning to choose the subject as a GCSE option.
- This is a very well led department with a clear focus on continued improvement.
- Occasionally, teachers do not explain clearly enough to students what they are expected to do and why.

## Commentary

68. Standards at the end of Year 9, although below average, are improving. Students enter the school with very low standards, particularly in literacy. Consistently good teaching, with a strong focus on improving students' writing skills, provides students with good grounding in historical knowledge. As a result standards are rising and achievement is good at the end of Year 9. Students presently in Years 10 and 11 are making good progress and achieving standards that are broadly in line with course expectations because of the attention paid to improving their literacy skills. Students interpret and analyse sources well and begin to evaluate the reliability of different sources. Students' interest in the subject has been stimulated and a higher percentage of students have choosing history as a GCSE option. This is having a positive effect on standards. This is seen in the GCSE examination results. Although the 2004 results were below the 2003 national average they showed a significant rise with an increase in the percentage of students gaining grades in the A\* to C and A\* to G ranges.
69. The quality of teaching is good overall with many very good features. A particular strength is the emphasis on helping students to improve their writing skills so that they are able to explain their answers and write more analytically. Lessons also focus very effectively on supporting students to develop independence without spoon-feeding them. Teachers are enthusiastic about their lessons and, as a result, students of all attainment levels learn well and show enthusiasm for the topics they study. In a Year 7 lesson, for example, students wrote convincingly about the difference between being famous and being significant, using different historical figures to illustrate their arguments. Occasionally teachers' instructions lack complete clarity and some of the activities provided are too difficult for some lower attaining students. Generally, however, lessons are carefully planned to meet the needs of all students.
70. Leadership and management are very good. The recently appointed head of department has made a very good start to improving standards in the subject. Documentation is useful and thorough. Teachers work very well together as a team, sharing good practice and helping each other to tackle problems. The trend in the department is one of improvement.

## TECHNOLOGY

### Design and Technology

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is very good.
- Students have particularly good attitudes to their learning.
- The combination of teachers and support staff working together provide a very effective learning environment.
- Not enough use is made of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning, and the curriculum in Years 7 to 9 does not meet statutory requirements with regard to Computer-Aided Manufacture (CAM).
- More permanent leadership is needed to continue the development of best practice throughout the department.

## Commentary

71. The 2003 GCSE examination results were close to the national average. The 2004 results were similar. Teachers' assessments show standards at the end of Year 9 to be close to average. As standards on entry are well below average, this represents very good achievement. In the separate subjects the 2004 results were well above the 2003 average in resistant materials, with girls gaining much better results than boys. In graphics products, results were below average with girls' results again above those of boys. However, in food technology, results were near average with boys' results above those of girls. GCSE results have shown a gradual improvement over the last three years so that overall, the results are better than the average results in other subjects.
72. Inspection evidence confirms that students make steady progress through each year until, by the end of Year 11, standards overall are close to course expectations. Taking the well below standards on entry into account, achievement at the end of Year 11 is very good. Students establish good working techniques, develop an understanding of the relevant health and safety issues, and the conventions for dealing with wood, plastic, textiles, card and food. However, they are given less opportunity to use metal in their design and manufacture.
73. Teaching is generally good in all years. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Student learning follows a similar pattern. In particular, teachers expect and get good standards of behaviour. When combined with the positive attitudes of the vast majority of students, a positive learning environment is created. Lesson planning is good. Lessons have clear learning objectives that are communicated well to students and achieved through a series of well structured activities. Homework is regularly set to reinforce and extend lesson activities. A particular feature of the teaching is the effective use of technicians, learning support assistants and skilled engineers who contribute directly to students' learning during and after lessons. The additional support is particularly helpful to students with special educational needs who make good progress as a result. However, in some lessons not enough challenge is offered to higher attaining students, particularly in Years 7 to 9. Students in these years do not receive their entitlement with regard to computer-aided manufacture. They are not provided with enough opportunities to use information and communication technology in the production of text, tables, graphs, diagrams and calculations. Marking takes place on a regular basis but there is a lack of consistency in the guidance offered to students on how they can improve the quality of their work.
74. Because of staffing difficulties, leadership and management are temporarily under the control of a non-teaching consultant who has been appointed director of technology. This is a good temporary measure and one that is providing clarity of vision and knowledgeable innovation. The monitoring and support of teaching and learning is a strong feature and one that is contributing well to students' achievement. However, there are a number of weaknesses that need to be tackled. These relate to the deployment of staff, resources, the completion of schemes of work, the use of information and communication technology and a common assessment procedure in line with the whole school policy. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection, but the lack of double periods is a constraint to the continuity of work in practical lessons.

## VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

75. **Drama** was sampled. The subject is taught separately for one lesson a week throughout Years 7 to 9 and is a popular and successful GCSE subject. The drama curriculum is varied and stimulating and students of all abilities enjoy their drama lessons, producing work of a high standard. The subject makes a significant contribution to their literacy development by giving students the opportunity to talk at some length and in a variety of contexts. Students gained a high percentage of A\* to C grades in the GCSE examination in 2004, with boys outperforming girls. Given that standards on entry are well below average, these results represent very good achievement. Four lessons, spread across Years 8 to 11, were observed.

In these lessons good and some very good teaching motivated students. Students showed good attitudes to the subject and worked hard. As a result they were making good progress.

## Art and Design

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve well because teaching and learning are good, and effective use is made of assessment information to set targets and monitor progress.
- Students understand well the formal elements of art and design.
- Recent introduction of more work using computers and sculptural materials has contributed to raising the achievement of boys at GCSE but has not yet developed sufficiently across the curriculum.

### Commentary

76. In 2004 the end of Year 9 teacher assessments showed standards to be above average. This is not reflected in inspection judgements, which are that standards are in line with expectations. GCSE results have been below average in recent years with boys not achieving as well as girls. In 2004 the percentage of students achieving A\* to C grades doubled to be above the national average with boys now doing relatively as well as girls. This rise in standards was because of a number of factors including the introduction of new units of work involving computers and three-dimensional media, together with the provision of workshops outside normal teaching time to ensure all students achieved as well as possible. Students' good attitudes also contributed positively to their learning.
77. Achievement is good overall. Students arrive in Year 7 with skills broadly below average. Their skills, knowledge and understanding improve gradually so that by the end Year 9 they are attaining standards that are average. Students achieve well in Years 10 and 11 because teaching and learning are clearly focused on the GCSE examination content and marking is guided by the examination criteria. Students are attaining standards that are above course expectations by the end of Year 11 with very secure understanding of the principles of composition and drawing. Standards in printmaking and sculptural work in Years 10 and 11 are adversely affected because students are not introduced to these techniques in the lower years. Computers are used well by some higher attaining students in Years 10 and 11 but, in general, not enough use is made of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning.
78. The quality of teaching and learning is good with teachers being both knowledgeable and experienced. They use visual aids well and give lots of individual attention to ensure that all students, including those with special educational needs, achieve equally well. Assessment is used effectively to monitor students' progress and to indicate how the quality of their work can be improved. Clear examples of work showing levels and grades would aid consistency in teachers' marking. More focused questioning would allow recaps and plenary sessions to become more effective.
79. The quality of leadership and management is very good. A clear vision and sense of purpose has enabled standards to rise dramatically. Teaching and learning are monitored well. Teachers reflect on the success of lessons and as a result amend units to suit the varying needs of groups and individuals. This effective team includes a well-qualified technician who supports teachers in the department very well. Art makes a very good contribution to the spiritual and cultural development of students by offering opportunities to reflect on their own practice and to appreciate links with the work of artists both here and abroad. Improvement since the last inspection is very good with standards having risen, improved achievement of

boys, the introduction of new schemes of work and the addition of a full-time technician to the subject team.

## Music

Provision for music is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching provides students with the opportunity for enjoyable musical experiences.
- Strategies for raising standards are good but need more time to become embedded.
- Students are not given enough information on how they can improve.
- The music curriculum is restricted because of a lack of resources and dedicated accommodation.

### Commentary

80. Standards on entry are well below average. Teachers' assessments at the end of Year 9 are unreliable and there are no records of students' progress through Years 7 to 9. Results in the GCSE examination in 2003 were well below average and the 2004 results were similar to those obtained in 2003. Girls attain slightly higher standards than boys. No students are presently taking music as a GCSE option in Years 10 and 11. Considerable support is being provided to the department and standards in Years 7 to 9 are rising. This is because there is a strong focus on providing students with enjoyable practical musical activities. Inspection evidence shows that this is having a positive effect on students' achievement. It is expected that the GCSE course will be reinstated next year as music grows in popularity.
81. Because the subject is given a good deal of support, the quality of teaching is good. The majority of students enjoy lessons and respond with enthusiasm. Teaching is built on very good subject knowledge and is very imaginative. This was seen in a Year 7 lesson, for example, where students performed an accompaniment and developed some exciting rhythms in response to well constructed learning activities. However, the 50-minute period does not allow enough practical activity in some lessons. Students respond well to teachers' high expectations and their attitudes are generally good. However, a small number of Year 9 misbehave and restrict progress in some lessons. No evidence was seen of singing or vocal activity. Not enough use is made of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning and students do not receive their entitlement in this respect.
82. In order to improve provision the school is providing the subject with considerable consultancy support. Because of this leadership and management are satisfactory and there are signs of improvement. However, there are a number of weaknesses that need to be tackled. Schemes of work do not provide a good enough basis for ensuring continuity from year to year. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory and do not provide enough information on standards or a basis for monitoring progress and identifying underachievement. These weaknesses are identified in the school improvement plan and action is being taken to tackle them. The accommodation is unsatisfactory and having an adverse impact on standards. The music room is used for lunches and this restricts lesson time as all equipment has to be taken away at the end of period immediately before lunch and put out in the period immediately afterwards. Resources, and in particular percussion instruments and instruments of other cultures are limited. The subjects' contribution to the after school personal learning programme is limited to a singing group and a rock group. Good support is received from Thurrock music services including instrumental tuition and the holding of musical events at the school. There are plans for a school production of *'Oliver'* in 2005, in collaboration with drama and art. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection and students' perceptions of the subject are improving. With continued support the subject has the potential for further improvement.



## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have good knowledge of their subject; they apply it well with enthusiasm in their teaching.
- Not enough curriculum time is allocated for the subject and this constrains students' achievement.
- The department has good systems for the assessment of students' work.
- Not enough lesson time is spent on skill acquisition and development.

### Commentary

83. Students on entry are below average. By the end of Year 9, standards are still below average and achievement is satisfactory. This is confirmed by the 2004 teacher assessments. In Year 9 students show rudimentary competence in football, netball and basketball. Basic skills are not well enough developed to be applied effectively in games. This weakness is partly related to the limited time allocation for the subject. The fifty-minute lesson period restricts practical work and does not allow enough time for more rapid progress to be made in lessons. In the core physical education programme in Years 10 and 11, achievement is satisfactory and standards are just below average. The 2003 GCSE examination results were below average. The 2004 results were below those obtained in 2003. This was partly because students' below average literacy skills and poor examination techniques adversely affected performance in the theory paper and partly because of staffing changes. Students currently following the GCSE course are well motivated and build successfully on their core physical education programme. Although standards in Year 11 are below course expectations, achievement is satisfactory when standards at the end of Year 9 are taken into account.
84. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Enthusiasm for the subject, clear objectives and wide teaching knowledge enable staff to motivate, interest, and develop understanding in the subject for students. For instance, in a Year 11 basketball lesson students learned how the hand is used in different dribbling movements. Teachers have good expectations of both behaviour and performance. However, there are instances when immature student behaviour impedes learning, as seen for example, in a Year 9 gymnastics lesson. There are indications that standards are improving as observed in a Year 8 hockey lesson and Year 7 basketball lesson. Not enough lesson time is spent on skill acquisition and particularly on skill development. There are good levels of participation in the extra-curricular sport programme.
85. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Good teamwork, organisation and documentation enable the department to run smoothly. This is a new, young and vibrant department. Teachers are working well as a team and show a strong commitment and potential to be successful. The head of department shows a clear understanding of the action needed to raise standards. Satisfactory improvement has been made over the last two years, especially in the use of assessment of students and in the self-evaluation of teaching. However, there is a need for the greater sharing of good practice in order to secure further improvement.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

86. Provision for students' personal, social and health education is good and fully reflects the ethos and values of the school. Drugs awareness and sex education are taught in a sensitive and informative manner. Schemes of work and other supporting documentation are thorough, relevant and helpful. Teachers and other involved staff deal very well with sensitive issues. Because of this provision, students are well informed and knowledgeable about a range of topics, including first aid, the dangers of smoking, and the world of work. They empathise with

people in different situations and respond confidently and maturely in lessons and in other situations. Provision for careers education is good and effectively prepares students for the next stage of their lives.

## **Citizenship**

Provision in citizenship is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A well structured scheme of work ensures that all strands of the subject are taught.
- Good quality resources support learning and reinforce the status of the subject.
- Good staff training supports the effective teaching of the subject.
- End of year reports do not contain specific reference to citizenship.

### **Commentary**

87. Standards across the school are below average. Students' below average literacy skills are impacting on their achievement. Books contain appropriate amounts of work with a range of content to assist students learn about their responsibilities as citizens and to encourage them to develop the necessary understanding. Marking is carried out well with useful comments to aid improvement. Formal assessment and reporting of standards, though planned, is not yet being carried out.
88. Citizenship is combined with PSHE and careers and taught regularly by form tutors once a week throughout the school year. Citizenship is also included in schemes of work in most other subjects, but in many of the lessons observed the connections between the topics being studied and citizenship were not drawn to students' attention. Nevertheless, the ethos in this school is one in which there is a great emphasis on taking personal responsibility and the contributions that everyone can make to the common good. This makes a significant contribution to the development of students' understanding of what responsible membership of a community means and is one of the main reasons why the school has improved so rapidly over recent years.
89. Teaching and learning in the small number of specifically citizenship lessons seen during the inspection were satisfactory overall. In a good Year 8 lesson students tried hard to understand the concept of ethics and clearly understood the difference between rules and ethics. However, weaknesses in basic literacy skills made it difficult for them to demonstrate their understanding fluently. Other lessons observed covered a wide range of topics including social attitudes to disability and crime and punishment. Lessons are well prepared and resourced with a wide range of interesting activities to illustrate the concepts being learnt. Consequently, students of all attainment levels co-operate well with their teachers and show enjoyment in lessons. The supportive learning environment builds students' confidence and encourages them to discuss sensitive issues in a mature manner. Effective use is made of visiting speakers from a wide range of agencies to enrich students' learning. Students with special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants. As a result they are fully included in lessons and their achievement is comparable to that of their peers.
90. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject is purposefully led and managed by a senior teacher who has inspired the present programme. Heads of year effectively monitor teaching by their teams of tutors and consistency in teaching is ensured by the careful preparation and distribution of resource material. A detailed scheme of work enables teachers to make the best use of timetabled lessons and underpins teaching and learning in the subject. However, end of year reports do not mention citizenship as a discrete subject and students often have no record of the coverage of citizenship in other subjects. Nevertheless the subject has been very successfully established and this aspect of students'

personal development is a strength of the school. The subject has good potential for further improvement.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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