

INSPECTION REPORT

STARHURST SCHOOL

Dorking

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 125464

Headteacher: John Watson

Lead inspector: Dr Mick Megee

Dates of inspection: 31st January - 2nd February 2005

Inspection number: 268647

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

© Crown copyright 2005

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Special
School category: Community special
Age range of students: 11-16
Gender of students: Male
Number on roll: 44

School address: Chart Lane South
Dorking
Surrey
Postcode: RH5 4DB

Telephone number: 01306 883763
Fax number: 01306 889819

Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of Mrs. E Bleach
governors:

Date of previous June 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Starhurst School is a day and boarding special school for 44 male students with severe emotional and behavioural difficulties between the ages of 11 and 16 years, situated on the edge of Dorking. An increasing number of students also have more complex difficulties like autism. At the time of the inspection, the school was undergoing extensive building works and only 16 students were residential. The previous headteacher had retired the previous summer, and the deputy headteacher was appointed to the post a few weeks before the inspection. Overall, the students' socioeconomic backgrounds are below average and all students are from white British backgrounds. All students speak English as their home language. The standards of students who enter the school are below average overall. In 2003-4, only one student joined left the school other than at the usual time. This is well below average. The school achieved the Investors in People Award in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23629	Mick Megee	Lead inspector	Science, art and design, design and technology, Spanish, music, physical education, special educational needs
31758	Ted Tipper	Lay inspector	
16038	Jill Bavin	Team inspector	English, citizenship, personal, social and health education
20165	Alan Lemon	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, religious education, work-related learning

The inspection contractor was:

Serco QAA
Herringston Barn
Herringston
Dorchester
Dorset
DT2 9PU

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS	9
Standards achieved in subjects and courses	
Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	13
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	19
WORK-RELATED LEARNING	21
RESIDENTIAL PROVISION	21
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES	23
SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 & 4	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	35

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Starhurst school is a very caring and supportive school that offers a **satisfactory** standard of education. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and the school provides satisfactory value for money, despite some major obstacles to achievement. Achievement is satisfactory overall; students in Years 10 and 11 achieve better than students in Years 7 to 9, who take a long time to get used to a regular school life. Leadership and management are satisfactory.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Students in Years 10 and 11 achieve well, especially in their examinations.
- Students achieve very well in physical education (PE) and work-related learning (WRL), and they achieve well in English; students in Years 10 and 11 achieve very well in mathematics.
- Students' achievement in information and communication technology (ICT), religious education (RE), and in Years 7 to 9 in mathematics is not as good as it should be.
- Whilst teaching is satisfactory overall and assessment of students' progress is good, the quality of teaching is too variable, and particularly in the way difficult behaviour is managed.
- The school looks after students very well, gives them very good support, advice and guidance and listens to them well; residential provision is particularly effective.
- The school has developed really good links with other schools and colleges and provides many very good opportunities for enrichment.
- Subject leaders have not yet been able to fully develop their roles across the school.
- Parents are well supported by the school and they are pleased with what it provides.

Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Starhurst School is currently facing some major difficulties which prevent it from achieving as much as it would like. The new headteacher, who is supported by temporary senior managers, has not had time to establish or develop his leadership role, and during the temporary gap in leadership, whole school approaches to behaviour management have weakened. The current school building renovations are seriously disrupting school life and upsetting students, especially the younger ones; many lessons have to take place off site. In spite of these problems, the school has done well to maintain a really high standard of care, to give students and their families very effective support and to sustain good examination results as well as a very effective programme of work-related learning. There have been specific improvements in attendance, safety, and individual education planning. However, the school has not done enough to tackle long-standing weaknesses in RE and managing behaviour.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Students' achievement at the end of:	in relation to individual targets in:	
	Subjects of the curriculum	personal and social education
Year 9	satisfactory	satisfactory
Year 11	good	satisfactory

Achievement is satisfactory overall for students of all ages, including those with additional special educational needs. Achievement in subjects is good for students in Years 10 and 11 because they are more experienced and better able to handle the disruption to their school life. In English, good teaching and learning lead to good achievement. In mathematics, Year 10 and 11 students achieve very well in their examinations, although achievement for younger students is not as good as it should be. In ICT, achievement is unsatisfactory because the subject has been given insufficient time and lessons are sometimes disrupted by students' poor attitudes and behaviour. Achievement is very good in PE and WRL. Achievement in DT is only satisfactory because there are few opportunities for students to make good progress in handling textiles. In RE, achievement is poor because Year 10 and 11 students are not given the opportunity to learn the subject. Achievement is satisfactory in personal, social, health and emotional education (PSHE) and citizenship, and in terms of students' individual social targets. Year 11 students achieve well in the range of accredited coursework programmes they follow. **Students' personal qualities are satisfactory**, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students are positive about their school and their attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory overall. Attendance is satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory, as are teaching and learning. Staff care a lot about the students and try to ensure that there is a calm atmosphere in the classrooms, but they can be too tolerant of swearing and poor behaviour. Teaching and learning are better for students in Year 10 and 11, and they are particularly good in PE and WRL. They are effective in English. In ICT and mathematics, teaching is satisfactory overall. Lesson planning, assessment and homework are all effectively carried out. The curriculum does not meet the statutory requirement for all students to have the opportunity to study RE or to handle textiles. The school provides a very good range of activities to support learning outside the school day.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The new headteacher has not yet had a chance to establish himself and he does not yet have the support of a permanent deputy. At subject level, management is uneven: it is satisfactory overall but very good in PE. Subject leaders have not been able to monitor the work of other staff who teach their subject. The governance of the school is unsatisfactory because not all statutory requirements are met, but governors are supportive and committed to the school.

PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are pleased with the school. They feel that their children are happy and well looked after and they especially value the weekly contact made between the link workers and the home. Parents are concerned about smoking, swearing and students being able to walk out of lessons. The inspection team agrees that there is some justification in these concerns. Students are positive about the school, and value the fact that the school listens to them and takes their views seriously.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve teaching and students' achievement in mathematics, ICT and RE in Years 7 to 9.

- Ensure that difficult behaviour is managed effectively and in the same way by all staff.
- Improve the work of the subject leaders.

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Ensure that all students have the opportunity to study RE.
- Provide an act of collective worship as far as is practicable.
- Provide an annual report and prospectus to parents.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

Achievement overall is satisfactory, and there are no differences in achievement for those with different levels of ability or different types of special educational need. However, students in Years 10 and 11 achieve better than younger students.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve very well in PE and WRL.
- Students achieve well in English, and very well in mathematics in Years 10 and 11.
- Students in Years 10 and 11 achieve well in the range of nationally recognised programmes they follow.
- Achievement up to Year 9 in mathematics, ICT and RE is not good enough.
- Students' progress is being severely disrupted by the building works.

Commentary

1. Students achieve satisfactorily in most subjects. Achievement is good for students in Years 10 and 11, and satisfactory for younger students. Satisfactory achievement is made by the increasing number of students with autism who are entering the school. This overall judgement hides a wide range of achievement – from poor to very good. For the most part this reflects the level of skilfulness of the teaching, and the relevance of the courses which Year 10 and 11 students follow. However, another factor is that many younger students come into the school having been excluded from other schools because of their social, emotional and behavioural difficulties and with a long gap in their schooling, sometimes up to a year and a half. This means that they take a long time to settle back into the routines of school life, have numerous gaps in their skills, knowledge and understanding, and find it a struggle to relate well to other students and staff.
2. At the time of the inspection, the renovations to the building have displaced many lessons, and this disruption is having a strong negative impact on achievement. Students are cooped up in a small part of the school and they frequently become irritated with each other, especially if activities are not pitched at the right level. By contrast, when they are out of the school and having lessons in other facilities and other schools, their behaviour is much improved; this was clearly seen in leisure and tourism, for example. The less experienced younger students are more greatly affected by the disruption than the older students. An additional barrier to good progress is that the headteacher is newly appointed and has had little time to make his mark. He is supported by senior managers who themselves are temporary. This gap in the continuity of the leadership has weakened whole school approaches, especially in behaviour management.
3. Students, including those with more complex needs, make satisfactory progress towards their individual social targets. Year 10 and 11 students have the chance to gain awards in a range of nationally accredited schemes including General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQ) and National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ), Computer Literacy and Information

Technology (CLAIT), Entry Level certificates, Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) Unit Awards, and Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN). The range of programmes is appropriate to the breadth of ability and needs of the current students, and achievement in Year 11 is good. Students also have the opportunity for individual achievement through awards such as Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award and British Canoe Union courses.

4. Good progress and achievement is made by students in English. Students do well in reading and writing and make satisfactory progress in speaking and listening. Staff encourage students to develop a love of reading and writing, especially poetry, by making the topics relevant to their own lives. Students' skills in speaking and listening are only satisfactory because staff are too tolerant of swearing and inappropriate language. Achievement in mathematics is satisfactory overall, although there is a sharp distinction between the unsatisfactory achievement made by younger students and the very good achievement by Year 10 and 11 students in their coursework. This distinction reflects the skilfulness of the teaching.
5. There is very good achievement in PE because of the very skilled teaching and in WRL because of the very good opportunities for work experience. In science it was not possible to judge achievement because too few lessons could be seen. In ICT achievement is unsatisfactory for students in Years 7 to 9 because the subject has been given insufficient time and lessons are sometimes disrupted by students' poor attitudes and behaviour. Achievement in RE is poor for students in Years 7 to 9 because it is not taught throughout the school and teaching is poor. Achievement in DT is satisfactory where the provision does not yet include opportunities for students to learn about textiles. Students achieve satisfactorily in PSHE and citizenship. Although staff work hard to give students choices and to help them grow into competent and caring adults, some can be too tolerant of students' verbal abuse or taking themselves out of lessons. This is a valid concern for parents.

Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities are satisfactory overall. Attitudes to learning are good in Years 10 and 11. Behaviour is satisfactory. Attendance is satisfactory. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 10 students behave well and are well focused on achieving success, which is a result of the good teaching and very effective support they receive.
- Younger students' behaviour is unsatisfactory and some students' attitudes to learning are negative. This is linked to some ineffective management of behaviour in the classroom.
- Teachers are sometimes over-tolerant of unsatisfactory behaviour.
- There are a number of worthwhile opportunities that help students to mature over time.

Commentary

6. While Year 11 students were away from school on work experience placements, the good record of examination successes over several years is an indication of good attitudes and a mature response to preparing for leaving school. Year 10 students have good work habits and are concerned to achieve success in their GCSE and other courses. The positive relationship they have with teachers is conditioned by their good attitudes and these students are prepared to make sustained efforts to complete work. Very often they are interested in the topics of lessons and make thoughtful

contributions, using their knowledge, opinions and feelings, which raise the overall quality of learning.

7. Students in Years 7 to 9 are much less mature, mainly because they have spent less time in the school. The renovations to the accommodation mean that students are confined to a small area within the school, and students can too easily distract and irritate each other. Their inappropriate behaviour disrupts some lessons and in the most severe cases results in students being verbally abusive, upsetting furniture and leaving the classroom. Supervision is ineffective at mid-morning and mid-afternoon break times. As a result, some students' bad behaviour leads to physical and verbal bullying. There are students in Years 7 to 9 who are consistently positive in their attitude to learning who behave well and persevere despite disruption. However, they sometimes have to work away from the classroom to make progress. The disruptive minority occasionally display a severe lack of interest in lessons and ruin the learning opportunities for everyone in their class. Students enjoy and make good efforts in many lessons but not all. At their worst, these students are sometimes reluctant to commit themselves to sustained effort unless the resistance they put up is handled effectively. When their teacher is skilled at interesting them in sharing views and debating, even the most obtuse students take part. All students also respond well at lunchtime because they appreciate the excellent quality and choice of food prepared for them.
8. Staff are sometimes too tolerant of students' poor behaviour. Again, students frequently refer to staff discourteously by their surnames. Some members of staff occasionally correct the students but there is inconsistency in their approach to this impoliteness. The headteacher is aware of this and there are plans to address these issues as a matter of urgency.

Ethnic background of students

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of students on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	44	53	0

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

9. The number of temporary exclusions, which affected 28 students in total, has increased since the last inspection. This reflects the current high level of misbehaviour by a significant minority of students.
10. In Years 10 and 11, work experience, college links, careers education and the challenge of GCSE courses all succeed in preparing students for adulthood. For all students, the very good range of additional activities makes a significant contribution, as do the school's provision for PE and the students' musical experiences. The school's annual drama production is a good opportunity for those students taking part to work as a team, enjoy being characters and perform in public. The strong residential programme, leisure activities in the local community and the many outdoor activities all build students' personal development. These activities contribute positively to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, in the curriculum as a whole, spiritual and moral dimensions are not developed fully. Assemblies pay insufficient attention to spirituality and personal values. Students know right from wrong but do not always act accordingly and the school's emphasis here is not strong enough to demand it. There are no acts of collective worship and the school's arrangements for RE do not meet statutory requirements. This unnecessarily restricts the opportunities for students to learn about other's beliefs.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
--------------------	----------------------

School data	15.3
National data	11.2

School data	8.9
National data	7.7

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

11. The school has reduced considerably the very high level of unauthorised absence reported at the time of the last inspection. While attendance is currently still not as good as that in similar schools, this is a good improvement overall.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The curriculum is enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Students are very well looked after, guided and supported in their work and personal development. The school has good links with parents and very good links with other schools and colleges.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, but good in Years 10 and 11. Assessment is good throughout the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Several key factors have meant that temporarily, teaching and learning are less effective than usual.
- Lesson planning, assessment and homework are good.
- Teaching is good in English and very good in maths in Years 10 and 11, PE and WRL.
- Teaching and learning in ICT for younger students are unsatisfactory and in RE they are poor.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 38 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (3%)	8 (21%)	12 (32%)	10 (26%)	6 (16%)	1 (3%)	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

12. Teaching and learning in the lessons seen ranged from poor to excellent. Teaching and learning are good for students in Years 10 and 11, and satisfactory for students in Years 7 to 9. The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching in the table above looks high, but the inspection team felt that this was not the usual picture of the school, and judged teaching and learning overall to be satisfactory. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher had only been permanently in charge for a few weeks, and has had too little time to make his mark on the school. The alterations to the buildings have severely disrupted school life. Students are confined to one small area of the building and they find being cooped up particularly disturbing. Being unable to avoid the close proximity of other students, their behaviour becomes very difficult with sudden outbursts of bad language and aggression. The presence of inspectors undoubtedly exacerbated this effect. Again, students in Year 11 were out for the whole week of the inspection on work experience. Teachers and students maintain that these students provide very good role models for the others and so have a dampening effect on their behaviour. From discussions and analysis of students' work the inspection team judged that this was true and that there would normally be a greater proportion of lessons in which teaching and learning were good.
13. The building works have had a further negative impact. The temporary senior managers have found themselves drawn away from their routine duties, especially their monitoring responsibilities, in order to ensure that the building improvements are carried out to their satisfaction. This has also meant that senior managers have not been able to pay as much attention as they would like to monitoring and improving whole school approaches to managing behaviour. Further disruption to school life had been caused by the extra cover required for the

temporary senior managers and the two key staff who have been away through long-term sickness. Teaching to older students in Year 10 is better than that for younger students, and this reflects the relative inability and inexperience of younger students to deal with the disruption and changes that are currently taking place. This in turn means that the skills of those teaching younger students are severely tested and sometimes found wanting.

14. All staff use a good common, agreed layout for lesson plans. The plans set out the aims for the lesson and for the students well but they do not yet include targets for learning basic skills such as literacy, numeracy and using ICT. This means that opportunities for teaching and learning these skills are sometimes missed. Most teachers begin their lessons with an explanation of what they anticipate the students will learn, and end with an evaluation of how well this has happened. This gives students a clear understanding of the lesson and what they have achieved. Arrangements for homework are good. Students are set homework regularly and parents and residential staff see that it is done to a good standard.
15. Good lessons feature a friendly and calm approach between staff and students, interesting hands-on activities, and teachers who know their subjects really well. These qualities mean that students feel untroubled and confident, and are keen to make progress. Teaching assistants work effectively alongside teachers, supporting class activities or working with individuals. Students are usually tolerant of sitting still and answering questions, but they learn especially well when they are given practical activities. In a DT lesson, students loved designing and making an entertaining dynamic card for a special event, and the hands-on experimentation kept them engrossed for a long period.
16. Less effective teaching and learning usually occur because a few teachers lack confidence in dealing with difficult students who are unduly confined in cramped situations. In these lessons, the students realise the apprehension of the teachers and difficulties quickly arise and are sustained to the detriment of all the learners in the class. Occasionally staff do not pace the lessons well, or pitch the activities at the wrong level.
17. The teaching in PE and in WRL is very effective and students learn very quickly. Teaching and learning in English are good. In mathematics, DT and PSHE they are satisfactory, but they are unsatisfactory in ICT for students in Years 7 to 9. Teaching and learning in RE are poor in Years 7 to 9. Some teaching and care assistants have specialised roles including teaching classes, and they do this well and in some cases their teaching is excellent. Assessment strategies are good overall. All teaching assistants keep good records of students' behaviour and effort within lessons and staff discuss these records each week. Teachers regularly assess students' progress in subjects and these assessments inform reports to parents and are used as a basis for planning future lessons.

The curriculum

The breadth and balance of the curriculum are unsatisfactory. There are very good opportunities for curriculum enrichment. The accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students enjoy a very good range of activities on Fridays and after school.
- Planning for most subjects has improved and is good.
- Students in Years 10 and 11 are successfully motivated by good opportunities to gain accreditation in a wide range of subjects.
- Time for ICT lessons is often lost and RE is not taught in Years 10 and 11, and there is not enough opportunity for students to handle textiles in DT.

Commentary

18. The school does not yet provide a suitably broad and relevant curriculum. The strengths identified during the previous inspection in the enrichment of the curriculum through the programme of special activities on Fridays and the extensive choice of after-school activities have been maintained. The issue raised in the previous inspection to ensure that subject planning takes into account the progress students should make as they move through the school has been addressed well in most subjects. There have been improvements in several areas of previous weakness. For example,
- music is now taught regularly by a subject specialist and clearly appreciated by the students
 - Spanish is taught to meet the National Curriculum requirements for a modern foreign language
 - DT now has a good programme of work for resistant materials.
19. However, the school is still failing to meet requirements for RE because the planned programme pays insufficient regard to the locally agreed syllabus, and the subject is not taught to students in Years 10 and 11. Understandably this has a negative impact upon students' achievement in the subject. Although a suitable amount of time is allocated for teaching overall, disruptions to staffing have meant that time for ICT has been lost and this has had a detrimental effect on students' achievement. There is very little opportunity for students to work with textiles in DT. The newly appointed headteacher and acting deputy headteacher understand these issues but have not had sufficient time to address the shortcomings.
20. Teachers plan an extensive range of activities to interest and motivate students. They visit museums, art galleries and the theatre, widening their social experience effectively. Annual residential visits focus on exciting physical activities such as water-sports, enjoyed by most students, and there is the chance of a day visit to France. Students have very good opportunities for choosing from an extensive range of activities on Friday mornings and after school. There are too many options over each term to mention them all. However, current choices include swimming, snooker, archery, orienteering, bowling, cooking, badminton and ice-skating.
21. Activities such as these make a significant contribution to students' cultural and social development. They are designed to enhance students' self-esteem and are likely to contribute in this way to the examination and work experience success enjoyed by students in Year 11. Equally successful in motivating Year 10 and 11 students is the wide range of accreditation available to them. Consequently, the school has a commendable record of GCSE results and vocational successes in a wide range of subjects. Unfortunately it was not possible to meet Year 11 students because they were on work experience placements during the inspection. However, in spite of the structure of weekly records of behaviour and effort being linked to students earning the right to participate in the Friday activities, too often behaviour is unacceptable. Therefore the programme does not always provide sufficient incentive for students to control their behaviour.
22. The school is in the process of major building work and refurbishment. Plans indicate that the new buildings, with purpose-built music and drama studios and a new library, will provide a very effective learning environment. However, at the time of the inspection the consequence of the building work was that staff and students were working in cramped conditions in a very small area, just sufficient to allow the curriculum to be taught. Resources overall are satisfactory with limited access to the full range available because of the turmoil of the building work. Currently the school

does not have sufficient textiles to teach this element of DT adequately. During the inspection staff and students had access to specialist areas such as the ICT suite, an art room, food technology and DT rooms. However, access to computers in classrooms was limited. The school has rightly identified the use of ICT in subjects across the curriculum as an area for development.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes very good provision for the care, welfare, health and safety of its students and provides them with very good support, advice and guidance. It actively seeks the views of students and responds to them in a positive manner.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is very successful in providing personal and academic support, advice and guidance for its students.
- Students are very well cared for in a safe and healthy environment.
- Very good arrangements exist for students joining the school.
- The school is very successful in involving its students in the daily life of the school and in helping to influence their own education.
- The students are supported very well by staff in the residential accommodation.

Commentary

23. The school is committed to ensuring students receive a very high level of support and guidance. Teachers and teaching assistants, between them, get to know each student extremely well and the care staff team works diligently to ensure their welfare, especially that of the boarders. The staff are well supported by a number of enthusiastic visitors to the school such as the partnership social worker and speech and language therapist. A representative of the Surrey Young People's Service has worked closely with students on the dangers of substance abuse and has introduced 'auricular acupuncture' to the school. This appears to be having beneficial calming effects on individuals undergoing the process. The majority of students feel there is an adult they can turn to in time of need and that staff treat them fairly and trust them.
24. The school treats the safety of its students as a major priority. Daily checks by the site manager and the constant vigilance of all staff ensure that potential hazards are identified and addressed promptly. No major issues were identified during the inspection. Thorough risk assessments are carried out for a wide range of in-school and outside evening activities and educational visits. Examinations of teaching areas and the residential lodges are well documented and several risk assessments have been carried out for the new building work. These have ensured the students and staff work and live safely in a school that is currently part of a building site. There are appropriate procedures for the administration of medicines and sufficient numbers of first-aiders available throughout the day and night. The head of care is the nominated person in terms of child protection. He and his deputy are both fully trained and they ensure all members of staff are made aware of the signs to look for, how to react and who to contact should they suspect a student may be at risk. The procedure is very clear with all incidents logged and records securely held. The overall system is designed to sensitively address each individual situation.
25. When students are referred to the school, it goes out of its way to smooth the transition for both them and their parents. They are invited to the school, where they are given a sympathetic welcome by the headteacher and other members of staff and a guided tour. Meetings with the parents are then held monthly at first, and less often when the student has settled, to identify and resolve any problems that arise. Parents are very appreciative of the steps taken to enable their children to settle in to the school.
26. The school council is working well in allowing students to have their say. It has regular meetings, attended by student representatives from each class, where they discuss aspects of their life in school and decide how to spend the small budget they are allocated. At a recent meeting, it was agreed to spend the outstanding balance on an activity day. A list of suggestions was drawn up and a questionnaire produced for all

students to express their preferences. Their views are also sought on where they would like to go on their activity week as well as through annual 'listening and responding' surveys. Boarders have weekly discussions in their lodges to discuss issues as they arise and their opinions have been sought on the decoration and furnishing of the new accommodation. Students are able to discuss their personal and learning targets at the family review days and they contribute to their annual reports from Year 9 onwards. Starting with Year 7 this year, they are being given a greater responsibility for their own self-evaluation. Students are very appreciative of how much their views are sought and valued.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has developed a good relationship with its students, parents and carers. Links with other schools and colleges are very good and contacts with the community are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents receive a good standard of information about the standards achieved, and progress made, by their children.
- The school needs to involve more of its parents in contributing to their children's education.
- The school has established links with other schools that are of clear benefit to the progress of students.
- The use of links with the local community to enrich the learning of students is under-developed.
- General information about the school, provided for parents, requires improvement.

Commentary

27. The school has regular contact with parents of individual students. Every Friday they receive a telephone call from their child's link worker, a member of staff who is responsible for keeping a close eye on the personal and academic development of two or three students. This weekly contact, to discuss a student's behaviour and progress during the week, is supported by regular family meetings at the school where progress is discussed and short-term targets set and reviewed. Parents also receive short written reports at the end of the autumn and spring terms. These assess, for each subject studied, a student's level of effort, class work and homework completion, behaviour, attitudes and attainment. A more detailed end-of-year report measures performance against the specific skills required for each subject and lists targets for the following year. This combination of regular meetings and reports keeps parents well informed of their children's progress, something for which most are very appreciative.
28. While the school has forged some rewarding contacts with individual parents in connection with the progress of their children, it could do more to involve all parents in their children's learning. Many families live some distance away from the school and find it difficult to attend parent evenings and workshops. However, the school provides only brief information on what students will be studying and how parents might assist them.
29. The school has developed some very good relationships with other schools and colleges. These expose students to more vocational forms of education in areas such as catering and the building trades. Year 11 students spend one day a week following such a course outside the school, with several entering trades they have studied on leaving the school. A joint project with a secondary school to develop teaching and learning for students in Years 10 and 11 led to the introduction of GCSE and GNVQ courses in leisure and tourism. Some students study Spanish at another school, which is a specialist language college. There are also many examples of staff sharing their expertise with colleagues in other schools and of the students

visiting them to use their facilities. The joint school production with girls from a nearby school is a particularly successful example of a partnership in action. All these links do much to raise students' confidence and self-esteem and contribute to their learning.

30. Students undertake many trips to places such as theatres, museums, football clubs and local leisure centres for swimming, fitness and other sporting activities. Boarders, in particular, are able to visit several local organisations, such as the youth club, in the evenings as part of a supervised programme of activities. Visitors to the school are, however, limited in number apart from coaches from a professional football club and a few organisations such as the police and a drug action team who work with the students on drug awareness. Several good contacts have been made with local businesses, which provide the students with work experience placements, and there is a link with the local rotary club. However, there is no formal relationship with the Education Business Partnership and, apart from an involvement of students studying leisure and tourism with a travel company whose headquarters are nearby, little use is made of commercial organisations in enhancing students' learning and life experiences. The school is rather reluctant to involve the community in its everyday life but has recognised this and is currently targeting this shortcoming as part of its school improvement plan.
31. Newsletters are produced once every term and are very informative on what has been happening in the school. They are particularly good at celebrating the achievements of individuals. The prospectus, however, needs updating and there has not been a governors' annual report to parents for two years.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is satisfactory and the management is satisfactory. Governance is unsatisfactory, as statutory requirements are not met in terms of the curriculum in RE and DT, there is no daily act of collective worship, and not all required information is provided for parents.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Despite the serious continuing difficulties of the last year, the new headteacher and temporary senior management team have maintained a satisfactory quality of education.
- The temporary senior staff have continued to provide a high quality of care and a very good range of off-site activities throughout the period of disruption.
- Subject leaders have not been able to promote the whole-school aspects of their role very well.
- The governors are supportive of the school but have failed to meet all the necessary legal requirements.

Commentary

32. There have been a number of barriers preventing the school from moving forward as quickly as it could. These include the interruption to the continuity of the leadership caused by the retirement of the previous headteacher. The current headteacher was appointed only a few weeks before the inspection and so he has had very little time in which to make his mark on the school and to develop his own ideas about where the school is going. At the same time, he is supported as far as possible by a temporary deputy head, and it is unlikely that the new headteacher will have a permanent deputy until next academic year. One or two key staff have unfortunately been away through long-term ill-health during this period. At the same time, most of the school's accommodation is being renovated, and this has had an adverse impact on the students' behaviour and capacity to learn and is stretching the resources of the teachers and senior staff to the limit. Senior staff offer positive role models to other staff in maintaining a calm demeanour in the face of some exceptionally demanding and confrontational behaviour.

33. The priorities have been to maintain very high standards of care and safety; to provide an exciting range of activities away from the site; and to sustain an acceptable quality of education for students who are packed into a few rooms within the school, or who have to travel considerable distances to attend lessons in other schools or facilities. Judged on these priorities, the senior staff have been successful. However, the constant demands of the situation have meant that the senior managers have had fewer opportunities to develop their leadership role and have had to carry out their wider duties as best they can. Overall they have managed to do this to a satisfactory, albeit minimal, level in the short while they have been in charge. Once the buildings have been finished, and the permanent appointments have been made, the school should move forward more rapidly.
34. The senior managers and staff recognise the need to work together as a team, especially while facing the difficulties of their situation. They mainly do this well, although there is now an urgent need for the senior staff to take a step back and to re-establish a consistent approach to the management of the students. This would include, for example, providing support for less skilful staff, and establishing guidelines for students in how they address staff. The current physical environment, although temporary, has meant that students constantly test the limits of the staff. The incentive systems, which were undoubtedly adequate when there was ample space and minimum disruption, are not able to cope with the frequency with which students presently become upset, aggressive and out of control.
35. The headteacher has made a satisfactory start by drafting a school development plan for the governors to take the school through the next three years. However, the plan does not identify clearly the five or six key priorities which need to be established, especially for this first difficult period. The senior management team carries out some monitoring and evaluation of teachers' performance but at present this is not sufficiently focussed on raising the quality of teaching and learning, particularly of staff who are unfamiliar with the range of difficulties which the students offer, especially their behavioural difficulties.
36. Management is judged as satisfactory. Subject coordinators have also been under pressure from the circumstances of the school and have not all been equally successful. Overall they have provided a basically satisfactory quality of leadership and management but they have not really been able to develop their roles across the school. Not many of them have had a chance to see other teachers teaching their subject, for example, and they have yet to develop their expertise in providing opportunities for developing students' basic skills through their particular subjects. In RE, the lack of interest in the subject up until now from most senior staff and very ineffective subject leadership and management have been to the detriment of students' achievement. However, in PE there is very good leadership and the subject accordingly is of great value to students' personal development.
37. The governors are committed and supportive of the school and show a good understanding of the nature of the students. Financial reporting is done well and the day-to-day running of the school is effective and smooth. The most recent audit found some minor problems in the way the school manages its accounts but the recently appointed bursar has overhauled all the school's management systems and has made the necessary changes. The school does not comply with what is legally required in respect of the provision of a regular act of collective worship, a prospectus and an annual report to parents. More seriously, the school does not ensure that all students have the opportunity to work with textiles in DT, or to be taught RE. The failure to comply with this last requirement has an adverse impact on students' achievement and governance is therefore judged to be unsatisfactory.
38. At the last inspection, leadership and management were found to be effective. Given the difficulties facing the school leaders and the barriers they have faced in maintaining satisfactory standards, improvement is judged to be satisfactory.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	1325605
Total expenditure	1298806
Expenditure per student	27634

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	26836
Balance carried forward to the next	53635

WORK-RELATED LEARNING

Provision in work-related learning is very good; statutory requirements are fully met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The work experience programme for Year 11 students is a very positive stepping-stone to employment, further education and training.
- Good careers education and guidance gives very good support for WRL.

Commentary

39. The school has a broad programme of learning opportunities making a positive contribution to WRL, which are led very well. At the centre is very good provision for work experience and, working with a specialist organisation, the school ensures there is the variety of work placement choices to match students' needs, health and safety and interests. The standard arrangement is for all Year 11 students to have two one-week periods in a work placement of their choosing. While students are particularly well supported and supervised, placements are planned to challenge them to respond positively to workday demands and manage new relationships appropriately. Overall, most students achieve this very well and learn the realities of working life. This is the result of very effectively managed preparation of the work experience programme. A wide range of provision is very well co-ordinated to introduce and equip students. Options in Years 10 and 11 in leisure and tourism and business studies provide students the opportunities to learn about commercial and economic facts. A link with a travel company, with offices nearby, led to students learning skills in customer relationships.
40. Well-planned careers education gives students a good knowledge and understanding of health and safety in the workplace. It promotes key skills, especially developing students' self-awareness and decision-making. The strong partnership with the Connexions personal advisor in relation to careers guidance builds very effectively on students' readiness for leaving school. This is carried out with considerable insight into students' special educational needs. The early contact with parents and students when they are in Year 9 develops into work on building relationships in Year 10. Students are taken on canoeing, climbing and ten-pin bowling activities. These activities are a great help towards breaking down resistance when trying to get students to engage in some thinking about careers. Visits to a skills festival and to the local mainstream school's careers facilities gives Year 10 students a sharp focus on the types of work experiences or further training they would like to explore the following year.

RESIDENTIAL PROVISION

Residential provision is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Residential provision makes a very effective contribution to students' education and it promotes personal development and independence.
- The provision is very well organised and led.

- The links between residential and school provision are very effective.

Commentary

41. Very good provision is made during residential hours as a result of strong leadership and management, and this gives considerable support to students' personal development, learning and achievement. Staff understand and work very effectively to clearly defined responsibilities and are actively involved in continued professional development. The teamwork of the residential social work staff is very good. In particular, their daily meetings and attendance along with teachers at weekly year group meetings mean that all staff are especially well briefed on the current issues affecting each resident student. These issues include concerns about behaviour, medical conditions or health and safety. The detection and prevention of bullying is a key agenda item and staff ensure that incidents are quickly dealt with as a priority. This is part of good overall care planning and behaviour management for each student.
42. Close attention to students' care means they have developed positive views about their residential experiences and this leads to good relationships with adults. Residential social workers work very effectively alongside teachers, supporting students during the school day and co-operating on strategies to help students achieve their individual education plan targets. Where a target involves improving reading, for example, time is set aside in the evening for shared reading. This is a further encouragement for students and it tackles the areas in which they need to make progress. Time is also made each day for students to do homework and residential social workers are on hand to help when needed. In the variety of leisure activities provided, many good opportunities are planned for students to improve social skills and self-reliance. Based on the assessment of students' social and personal skills, independent living programmes are devised in which students learn and share cooking and other domestic tasks. In the very positive climate of residential hours, students achieve well in taking responsibility for themselves and others.

PART C: SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English was inspected in full and Spanish was sampled.

43. In **Spanish**, students learn words that will stand them in good stead if they go on holiday to Spain. For example, Year 8 students enjoyed a lively introduction to a satisfactory lesson in which they learned the Spanish words for family members. One or two of the students who have recently joined the school after a gap in their schooling found it difficult to settle. However, the specialist teacher, who is from Spain, effectively used the interactive whiteboard to run a program about the Simpsons, giving the students the authentic pronunciation for words like 'hijo' and 'hija'. Most students enjoy their lessons and are pleased with their achievements.

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve well in reading and writing because teachers meet differing needs well.
- Detailed records of students' achievement help teachers to pitch the level of challenge in lessons well.
- Learning is constrained in many lessons because of inappropriate behaviour that is not always managed effectively.
- The co-ordinator leads the subject with considerable knowledge and enthusiasm, but does not yet observe other teachers teaching English or check colleagues' planning and students' work.

Commentary

44. Students of all ages and abilities achieve well because teaching and learning in this subject are good throughout the school. This means that the school has maintained the strengths found at the time of the previous inspection. Members of staff keep very detailed and useful records of students' achievements in relation to national standards. These are used well to plan lessons that successfully pitch the level of work to suit students' differing needs. Good quality teaching is also helped by the careful choice of resources designed to engage students' interest.
45. The subject co-ordinator places a great emphasis upon fostering a love of literature and interest in reading. He takes great care to select reading material of interest to students, such as adaptations of 'Lord of the Flies' and 'Holes'. Consequently, when students are co-operating in class they are impressively willing to read aloud in English lessons. Students carry this interest and willingness into other subjects such as music, where they readily read song lyrics. Reading is successfully reinforced in several ways, including rewards for students who complete a required amount of reading time and an accepted routine of beginning every English lesson with ten minutes of individual reading time.

46. Students also benefit from the link between reading and writing. Their interest in shared reading texts is used effectively as a vehicle to encourage writing. For example, students in Year 11 write lively and interesting letters as if from Romeo or from Juliet to a friend. These letters provide examples of very good achievement for students in the quantity of work they produce as well as demonstrating their secure understanding of the key points of the plot. The vast majority of students are extremely reluctant to write. However, teachers and classroom assistants successfully inspire most students to express their ideas on paper, often in the form of poetry. This is helped by the careful choices presented to students for subjects to write about. For instance, there are moving examples of students writing about how it feels to be bullied or to realise that they themselves are bullies.
47. The provision for developing students' speaking and listening skills is satisfactory overall but a mixed bag. Students have good opportunities to speak to an audience during the annual performances and more regularly in assemblies. During the inspection two students successfully engaged their audience's attention with a clearly articulated role-play about bullying. All members of staff set an unfailingly patient example in the way they speak to and listen to students. This approach gives students time to formulate and voice their ideas if they wish. A lesson for students in Year 10 focussed very specifically on listening skills and thanks to the teacher's patience and determination, students did succeed in listening very closely in spite of one student demonstrating poor and unacceptable behaviour for much of the lesson. However, on too many occasions adults are over-tolerant of abusive language and distracting behaviour. Students resort to swearing and abusing members of staff very readily. This means that they are not reliably developing communication skills and using the increasingly suitable vocabulary that adults strive to teach them. Parents are right to be concerned about this and the extent to which students opt out of classes. Achievement in speaking and listening is satisfactory overall.
48. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator develops the subject and maintains its strengths with considerable knowledge and enthusiasm. The result of this is a good curriculum providing a good balance between using literature as a basis for writing and covering key skills of grammar and punctuation as well as the richness of special events such as drama productions. The co-ordinator has rightly identified the value of increasing contact with staff teaching students between Years 7 and 9 as an area for development. However, such initiatives are hampered by too few opportunities to observe colleagues teaching and too little regular time to check the consistency of good quality planning and the quality of students' work. Therefore management of the subject is judged satisfactory rather than good, and improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. The use of language and literacy in other subjects is satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator has successfully raised staff awareness of the importance of students' reading in all subjects and this element is good. For instance, students willingly read game cards in a lesson about the dangers of drug misuse. However, the success in getting students to write in other subjects, while satisfactory, is less consistent. There are examples of reasonable pieces of writing in history but also examples of files of commercially produced information with very little student writing in other subjects such

as business studies. The difficulties regarding students' listening and speaking skills follow a similar pattern in most subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Years 10 and 11, students work hard and because of very effective teaching they achieve very well in their GCSEs.
- Overall teaching, achievement and learning are satisfactory, but for younger students these are unsatisfactory because of disruptions in their learning.
- In leading the development of mathematics there has been good attention to maintaining high standards in Years 10 and 11 and not enough to strengthening Years 7 to 9.

Commentary

50. The number of students gaining a GCSE in mathematics has been, over several years, consistently high and this success matches the GCSE results reported at the time of the previous inspection. Very effective assessment provides accurate predictions of each student's likely GCSE grade and actual results show students very often exceeding these in the examination.
51. Students are achieving very well in Years 10 and 11 as a result of highly effective teaching. They are confident in working with number operations, quickly adding or subtracting three and four figure sums in their head or working on paper with multiplying or dividing mixed fractions. They calculate the area of various shapes and use the correct formulae, where necessary. In lessons, the rapport with students is very positive, enabling the high expectations for behaviour and work to succeed. Students' behaviour is very good; their enjoyment of mathematics and their efforts are as impressive. Lessons are businesslike, starting crisply with purposeful intent. Very good planning is at the heart of this and ensures learning objectives are very clear in the lesson activities and in students' understanding of what is required of them. The incorporation of very good multimedia presentations using an interactive whiteboard makes explanations and demonstrations interesting and clear for students, particularly as they are often involved in working at the whiteboard as well. This means that complicated mathematical ideas are quickly learned. For example, in the course of one lesson students learned effective methods of listing and analysing all possible permutations created by throwing two dice.
52. The quality of teaching and learning of students in Years 7 to 9 is unsatisfactory overall, although the barriers to greater effectiveness are for the most part temporary. Learning has suffered this academic year as a result of their teacher's absence for several weeks. Many of these younger students have been out of school for some time, and this further delay has been unfortunate. While their mathematics lessons were covered by other teachers there is little evidence that lessons followed the plan of what students should have been taught. Students' exercise books contain little work for the period of their teacher's absence, which in effect has slowed their rate of progress. The planning of lessons is careful and detailed. It is clear that the teacher has developed good expertise, especially when explaining and demonstrating tasks with the use of an interactive whiteboard. For example, the mathematical procedures involved in understanding and calculating the interior or exterior angles of polygons are set out in clear logical steps on the board. However, students are more often content with the less challenging task of copying this into their exercise books than with applying the procedures to solving problems. Behaviour management in the classes is not always effective, especially when students are very upset and uncooperative. This has been a particular problem with the turmoil of the building changes and renovations. Despite the considerable patience, encouragement and calm shown by the adults in the classroom, students' responses may be harsh and negative. Those students who wish to get on with their work may choose to tackle individually an exercise from their mathematics texts rather than be taught as a class or do their work away from the classroom.
53. Leadership and management in mathematics are satisfactory. Much of the good provision seen at the time of the last inspection has been maintained. At that time the provision in Years 7 to 9 was not as strong as that in Years 10 and 11 and currently the gap is greater. As a result, improvement, overall, is unsatisfactory. Mathematics in Years 10 and 11, where the subject leader teaches, is well managed and this has ensured a consistent record of good examination results. However, responsibility for Years 7 to 9 is not yet effective. There is not enough monitoring and support to ensure that the quality of teaching and students' achievements are as good as in Years 10 and 11.

Mathematics across the curriculum

54. Students throughout the school have a good command of number facts and competently tackle numerical calculations in different situations with mental and mechanical methods. Equally, they use measurements accurately, for example, in science, food technology and PE. Students also handle data in a variety of ways such as creating spreadsheets and graphs in ICT.

SCIENCE

Science was sampled.

55. The specialist teacher was unfortunately away during the inspection, and the two good lessons seen were covered by other teachers. From samples of work, students appear to achieve to a satisfactory level. By the end of Year 9, students have studied a range of topics including the solar system, reproduction, chemical reactions, food and digestion, and the effects of acid rain. These topics prepare them appropriately for the accredited coursework programmes that they follow later on. Year 10 and 11 students have the opportunity to gain entry level certificates and GCSE in science. Last year only a few students were successful, and this is similar to the position at the last inspection, when the provision overall was judged as unsatisfactory.
56. Students are assessed regularly, although predicted grades in the results at the end of Year 11 in 2004 did not materialise. This would indicate that teachers' expectations are not in line with students' capabilities. Marking in the students' folders is not of a good quality. There were mostly only ticks, and there were very few helpful comments, and glaring errors were overlooked.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The time for teaching has been disrupted so much that students in Years 7 to 9 have made insufficient progress.
- Most students in Years 7 to 9 show a good capacity to achieve much more than they do.
- Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

57. The rate of students' progress has been too slow during this academic year, as they have produced a very limited quantity of work. This is the result of a combination of different factors. At the start of the year, the school was for several weeks without its ICT facilities because of the current building programme. When facilities became available it was only a few weeks until the teacher suffered a prolonged absence, interrupting teaching. The situation for some groups has been exacerbated also by educational visits on the days they should have had an ICT lesson. Regular lessons have just got underway in the past few weeks.
58. No lessons could be seen in Years 10 and 11, so teaching cannot be judged for that age group. Teaching and learning in Years 7 to 9 are satisfactory, overall. However, the thirty-five minute lesson each week in Years 7 to 9 is too short a time for students to achieve sufficiently, as there is too little opportunity for them to learn with hands-on experience. In Year 7, where students were designing a poster, they quickly learnt the

initial steps of using desktop publishing. However, there was only enough time to open a text box in the desktop publishing program and enter a small amount of text. They used the program skilfully but had not the time to experiment with the publishing feature or develop their designs. Achievement is sometimes unsatisfactory because of the poor behaviour in some lessons. The disruption created by the Year 8 group was so severe that no teaching and learning was possible in the course of the whole lesson.

59. Whereas students in Years 7 to 9 achieve unsatisfactorily in lessons, they nearly all demonstrate a sound knowledge of computers and use of the Internet. Year 7 students are familiar with finding files and opening programs. They saved their work and, on the Internet, performed a search for images. Year 9 students are skilled at manipulating text, changing its size and font, underlining words and making corrections. One student used Word Art independently to create an attractive banner title for his story. In the work seen, students in Years 10 and 11 have designed a simple advertising leaflet using borders and a drawn image. These students have also produced computer-generated bar and pie charts. In 2004, nearly three-quarters of the Year 11 students entered successfully completed the Computer Literacy and Information Technology (CLAIT) course, which requires them to have achieved basic computer knowledge and skills.
60. Provision in ICT was better at the time of the last inspection. Students' attitudes to learning were more positive and they made good progress. This has not been sustained, partly as a result of barriers created by staffing difficulties and a major building programme but also by ineffective leadership and management. There has not been a clear direction and strong resolve to overcome barriers. The current planning of what to teach in ICT is detailed and comprehensive, which is an improvement, although there has not been time to make it fully operational. While the CLAIT course equips students with a range of computer literacy skills, compared with what students in Years 7 to 9 are attaining and Year 11 students' GCSE results in other subjects, there are some students who could benefit from a more advanced programme.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

61. The introduction of interactive whiteboards as a teaching aid has raised the profile of ICT in students' learning. Good use is made of whiteboards in mathematics and ICT lessons and during group work students have good opportunities to use the boards' touch-sensitive facilities to demonstrate what they know or have learnt. There are good links through the use of ICT with some other subjects. In English, for example, Year 7 students are designing a pamphlet based on a story they are developing. Similarly in art and design, Year 8 students are making a poster based on the style of wartime propaganda images.

HUMANITIES

RE is reported in full below. History and geography were not inspected.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **poor**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and achievement are poor.
- There is no adequate plan for what students should learn in religious education.
- The weaknesses in provision seen at the time of the last inspection have not been addressed.
- The subject does not meet statutory requirements, as it is not taught in Years 10 and 11.

Commentary

62. Teaching and learning for students from Years 7 to 9 are poor, and as a result, students achieve poorly. In the work students have done they have very superficially touched on the commonality and differences between the major religions. In two of the three lessons seen, students related the thoughts stimulated by their choice of photographs from a wide selection provided. While this activity interested students satisfactorily and would have served well as an activity to develop personal and social objectives, it gave insufficient emphasis to religious education. The variety of thoughts and feeling shared by students were not channelled in that direction. The fact that it was the same activity for students in Year 8 and 9 underlines the inadequacy of planning for religious education lessons. The work done in lessons together with the very limited amount in students' exercise books shows they do not develop sufficient knowledge and understanding over time.
63. The presentation to Year 7 students of the film 'The Ten Commandments' succeeded, to an extent, in them experiencing the story of Moses. What Year 7 students learned was limited to a few salient facts and they are capable of being challenged much more. There was no discussion or further research in the course of the lesson. There has been poor improvement in response to the unsatisfactory provision for religious education seen at the time of the last inspection. The lack of effective leadership and management for the subject has meant it has deteriorated. It did not meet statutory requirements in the last inspection and it still does not meet these requirements. The school has tried out teaching RE as part of a new social science curriculum, but there is too little weight attached to planning for the religious education element and what there is falls short of what is required. There is insufficient regard paid to the locally agreed syllabus for religious education throughout the school and there are no religious education lessons on the timetable for students in Years 10 and 11.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning and assessment of students' achievements do not include work with textiles.
- Teaching by the specialists is good and this helps students to learn quickly.
- Good links for catering have been made with a local college.
- ICT is not used enough to support learning in the subject.

Commentary

64. The school provides DT through lessons in resistant materials, graphics and food technology. Students' files, pieces of work and teachers' planning for all aspects of the subject include some good designs and writing. Younger students up to Year 9 design and make CD racks, a steady hand game and rubber band or air powered cars and

boats. The students enjoy the practical work and produce creditable results. All students in Years 10 and 11 work towards GCSE Resistant Materials, and City and Guilds Preliminary Cookery Certificate. As part of their GCSE course work, they generate their own ideas for projects and produce attractive pieces of work like a disco lighting board, or a three-drawer cabinet. The final practical assignment in cookery is to plan, prepare and cook a three-course meal. Five students in Year 11 attend a link college course in catering and complete written and discussion work as part of NVQ Entry Level 3 accreditation. This course also gives students the opportunity to cook in a professional catering kitchen, and to serve the public.

65. The school's results show that students are increasingly successful year by year. However, students' achievement is judged to be only satisfactory because there have been too few opportunities for them to work with textiles, or to take examinations in graphics. The long-term schemes do not include any activities for the textiles element, although resistant materials, graphics and food technology are well covered. Therefore the curriculum does not meet requirements. There is no difference in the achievement of students of different capabilities.
66. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with evidence of good teaching in lessons. Teachers have created a culture of safe working practices in the two well-equipped specialist rooms. The specialist in resistant materials and graphics provides lessons that suit the needs and interests of the students and give them good opportunities to develop their practical skills. Year 8 students worked hard in one lesson on designing a clock face. They found the theoretical part of the lesson slightly difficult, but this was mainly because of their eagerness to get on with the hands-on part of the lesson. This involved accurately marking out on paper the twelve hours on a clock face. They were fast learners and most of them got the idea quickly using compasses. There is a strong focus on design in lessons and the teacher demands a good standard of work, and encourages the students to evaluate their own work and think of how it could be improved. In food technology, Year 10 students produced an excellent cheese lasagne and a banana surprise. They had to design a menu cover, cost the meal out, buy the ingredients and then make the dishes. Good teamwork and pace, with students being able to choose for themselves how to vary the dishes, were the key to the successful lessons. Assessment procedures are good for the limited curriculum available, and the school enterprisingly makes informal use of staff to drop in and taste the boys' efforts in the kitchen. More formally, the school chef is an external assessor for the cookery coursework and provides expert feedback which the boys value.
67. The planning of lessons is generally good, with reminders about past and future learning spelt out. However, opportunities for developing students' basic skills are not clearly laid out in the planning and this means that opportunities are often missed. For example, key words specific to the subject or lesson are not identified. Less successful lessons occurred when students became aggressive and stormed off, and sometimes teachers were over-tolerant of swearing or bad behaviour. There have been difficulties in the provision of computers with the accommodation changes and there were very few opportunities for the students to make use of computers to assist design or for research. The subject contributes satisfactorily to students' cultural development, through experiences of foreign dishes and the visit of a local blacksmith, but more could be done by way of visits to relevant places of interest.
68. DT at present is managed in two distinct parts: the food element and the resistant materials/graphical element. The subject is satisfactorily led and managed by two

enthusiastic and skilled coordinators who recognise the weaknesses, especially in terms of textiles, and who have developed plans to work more closely together in order remedy the problems. There are good resources for food technology, and satisfactory but improving resources for resistant materials and graphics. Resources for working with textiles are very limited, and so resources are judged unsatisfactory overall. Many of the weaknesses identified at the last inspection have been overcome and improvement in the subject is judged as satisfactory.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Music and art and design were sampled. Physical education was reported in full.

69. In **music**, the specialist teacher has excellent skills in composing, playing and singing, and the music provision adds significantly to the life of the school. The school was recently given the High Sheriff's Award for its CD featuring a song composed and performed by the students about the effects of bullying. The specialist provides individual instrumental lessons for students with a particular interest or aptitude. For example, in a very good lesson on the drums, one student worked very hard to improve his technique and to repeat difficult phrases. Group lessons are not quite as successful, and this is because one or two students severely test the teacher, who can be over-tolerant of their behaviour rather than risk a confrontation.
70. In **art and design**, the specialist has a great deal of expertise in her subject and this is acknowledged and respected by students. The newly refurbished art room provides a very pleasant, spacious environment in which to be creative. It is well equipped with a special kiln room and an interactive whiteboard but there is a need to build up further the computer and ICT equipment. Displays round the room are very attractive and inspiring for students to see what each other has achieved. The displays include bright lino prints of fish, cockerels, and a Volkswagen Beetle. There are pastel drawings in the style of Picasso, sponge prints, and a whole array of very well made ceramic objects such as fish, vases, and character jugs. The specialist teacher plans to enter the school for an Artsmark later this year when the building works are complete. In the two satisfactory lessons seen, the teacher worked hard to create a positive work ethic, and she was successful to a certain extent but when one or two students became difficult they were not managed well. Students swear at the staff without being reminded that this is unacceptable, and they use discourteous forms of address using her surname, again without remark. Once or twice, the staff were overly helpful with students, doing work for them when it would have been better to allow the students to complete their work independently. However, some of the students show a lot of talent in this area and their work is rightly celebrated.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have very good knowledge and skills in PE which they use for the benefit of the students.
- Achievement is very good across a very good range of activities.
- Very good links have been made with a mainstream school.

Commentary

71. One of the strengths of PE is that the teaching is carried out by staff who know their subject very well and are committed and enthusiastic to pass on skills and understanding to the students. Students in turn are impressed by the levels of skill they see in their teachers, and aspire to attain the same high standards. Students are encouraged at all times to 'play fair' and follow accepted codes of conduct and rules. In this way the subject makes a good contribution to students' personal development.
72. Students achieve very well in a very good range of sporting activities. Students in Years 7 and 8 go swimming once a fortnight. In Years 7 to 9, they develop their skills in a range of sporting activities such as football, dance, gymnastics, basketball, uni-hoc, cross-country running, tennis and cricket. In Years 10 and 11, students are offered additional activities such as table tennis, canoeing, golf, fishing, weight training and climbing. Students enjoy these sports and do well. Students in Year 10 take a GCSE short course in PE, and those who do well in this are entered for the full GCSE in Year 11. All but one of the students in 2004 who took the GCSE were successful in the exam and 2 students attained a 'C' grade. This is very good achievement and was an improvement on the previous year.
73. Teaching and learning are of a very good standard. Lessons are very well planned and managed, and the teacher's expert knowledge and skill often shine through. For example, Year 9 students went down to the local sports hall for some football and circuit training. The teacher, who has experience as a professional footballer, demonstrated advanced techniques like disguising a pass, and the students were very impressed and keen to learn the new skills. In another lesson, again in the sports hall, the teaching was carried out by a member of care staff who has specialist qualifications in trampolining. This was a marvellous lesson. The students had been looking forward to this lesson all day, and were very keen to get on with the practical part of the lesson. However, the teacher made them all go through a thorough warm-up and there was not a hint of dissent or reluctance. The inspection team had seen these students in other lessons back in the school being restless, uncooperative and irritated with each other. They stood around the trampoline, and as each student climbed they shouted encouragement to each other, genuinely appreciative of each other's efforts and sometimes spontaneously applauding. They were led by the excellent role model of the teacher, who, with some flair, demonstrated the necessary physical skills. His advice was spot on too. To one student he said "We need a little programme to develop your flexibility" and his accurate and honest feedback made the students determined to succeed. One student said "Can I try again?". Another said "I've just got to get it right" and all of them pushed themselves to the limit. Through lessons like these, students are enthusiastic to raise their levels of fitness, and become committed to succeed.
74. Leadership and management are very good. The subject leader has worked very hard on writing very effective schemes of work in collaboration with staff at a local mainstream school, who wrote to the inspectors to express their gratitude for the links that have been established to their mutual benefit. The subject contributes well to students' personal development through visits to football games, Wimbledon, and a link with Chelsea Football Club. During the building alterations, students have to travel by minibus to undertake their lessons off the site, for example at a local sports centre. When the buildings are finally finished later this year, the accommodation should be very good. Resources are good and rely on the effective links forged by the coordinator. There is some good use of ICT, predominantly using video analysis for GCSE and for self-assessment. The school has done very well in the current difficult circumstances to maintain the high standards of the previous inspection.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

Leisure and tourism was sampled.

75. In **leisure and tourism**, Year 10 students had to undertake the lesson in a local mainstream school. Despite the time taken to get there, there was a virtue in this. Being away from the cramped conditions of their own school, and being in the calm atmosphere of the other school, had a clearly beneficial effect on the students' behaviour. The lesson was a follow up to a visit the students had made to a local tour operator. They learned about the difference between tour operators and travel agents, and the importance of attractive brochures, and learned key words such as 'marketing', 'excursions' and 'guest houses'. The teacher worked very effectively with the teaching assistant to produce a very pleasant and relaxed working atmosphere, and the teacher's enthusiasm was infectious. The students shared jokes with the teacher – at one point a student was given a worksheet which he thought was difficult. "This isn't leisure and tourism, this is leisure and terrorism!" he said. A really good part of the lesson was saved towards the end when one of the students produced an excellent PowerPoint presentation he had worked up himself following the visit.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social, health and emotional education is reported in full and citizenship was sampled because the two subjects are integrated and there were no specific lessons in citizenship on the timetable during the period of the inspection.

76. **Citizenship** is carefully planned in conjunction with PSHE and other subjects. The introduction of citizenship to the curriculum is a new initiative since the previous inspection and it is comprehensively and conscientiously planned. Documentation indicates that planning to help students become informed citizens is good, and helps students to achieve to a satisfactory level.

Personal, social, health and emotional education

Provision for personal, social, health and emotional development (PSHE) is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students have very good opportunities to assess their strengths and areas for development and voice their views in subjects across the curriculum.
- Messages about personal and social responsibility, both in planned PSHE lessons and other subjects, are inconsistent because some members of staff are too tolerant of unacceptable behaviour.
- A good range of stimulating activities makes a positive contribution to boys' skills in participation and social development.
- The coordinator does not have enough time to oversee the provision.

Commentary

77. The integrated provision for personal, social, emotional and health education is satisfactory overall, reflecting a similar picture to that found at the previous inspection. This is because while there are elements of strength in provision, there are also areas of relative weakness and these apply to both specific PSHE lessons and to relevant learning in other subjects and activities across the curriculum. However, the school has developed its system for planning to avoid repetition and ensure students' make

progress. The strengths in the provision ensure that students make satisfactory gains personally and socially overall, whereas the weaknesses prevent achievement from being more than satisfactory.

78. A key strength in the school is its commitment to giving students good opportunities to make choices, to reflect upon their own achievements and to have their voice heard. This is indicated in the school's commitment to regular meetings of the School Council and scrupulous efforts to be fair with the results of class elections. When teaching is good the learning intentions of lessons are often shared with students, who are invited to judge the extent to which they have been met by the end of the lesson. When these systems are working successfully they help students to accept responsibility for their own learning. Similarly, students have regular opportunities to reflect on and record their achievements at the end of topics or units of work. They usually do this sensibly and honestly. This gives them a good chance to acknowledge their personal skills, identify targets for the future and accept individual responsibility.
79. The teaching of specific PSHE lessons varies considerably but is satisfactory overall. Very good teaching successfully motivated all students in a Year 10 group to sustain a very good level of effort for an entire careers lesson. In good lessons students are challenged successfully to explore ideas such as 'sanctuary' and 'empowerment' or to identify responsible actions related to drug misuse. Nevertheless, on occasions the school's systems for managing behaviour do not work and insufficient learning takes place in a specific lesson. During the inspection there were several occasions when lessons were disrupted by poor behaviour. The extent of staff tolerance of verbal abuse to adults and fellow students and the acceptance that several students will not stay in lessons indicate that expectations are sometimes too low. Consequently, messages about personal responsibility are inconsistent.
80. The school provides an extensive choice of highly interesting activities for students on Fridays. These include mountain biking, fishing, gym fitness training and cooking. They are clearly popular with students and successfully help them to participate in valuable activities and so make a positive contribution to PSHE. Strengths in special events such as the performance of "Romi'o and Julie'et" give students valuable opportunities to work alongside students from neighbouring schools and enhance their social development. A choice of residential activity weeks and the programme of work experience provide students with good opportunities to apply their understanding of personal and social responsibility. However, there are missed opportunities to record students' particular achievements arising from these events.
81. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Planning to embrace the various strands of PSHE is detailed and thorough, and good resources such as the drug awareness board game are developed and acquired. Assessment procedures through the use of individual education plans are satisfactory and the weekly behaviour and effort charts provide a useful ongoing record of social behaviour over time. The weaknesses in promoting consistent guidance for PSHE require a whole school review of procedures that the co-ordinator so far has had insufficient time to implement. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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