

INSPECTION REPORT

Project 16

Islington, London

LEA area: Islington

Unique reference number: 100391

Headteacher: Vivien Janes

Lead inspector: Peter Johnson

Dates of inspection: 21st – 23rd September 2004

Inspection number: 268702

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Provision for permanently excluded students and students at risk of exclusion
School category:	Pupil referral unit
Age range of students:	14 - 16
Gender of students:	Mixed
Number on roll:	31
School address:	White Lion Centre White Lion Street Islington London
Postcode:	N1 9PW
Telephone number:	0207 527 7011
Fax number:	0207 837 5885
Appropriate authority:	The local education authority
Name of the responsible officer:	Ms Carole Newman
Date of previous inspection:	May 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Project 16 is a pupil referral centre for boys and girls, aged between 14 and 16, who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. There are 31 students on roll, all of whom attend the centre full time. The students come from mainly disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. The majority of students live in Islington but only half have previously attended Islington schools. Students attend the centre after experiencing considerable disruption to their formal education. Most have spent considerable time out of school and around half have been excluded from at least one school prior to admission to the centre. The attainment of students' on entry to the centre is below average in English and mathematics. Students are admitted throughout the school year. Four have statements of special educational need and five are from minority ethnic backgrounds.

The centre has undergone re-organisation since the last inspection when it provided only for students in Year 11. It is now an integral part of the authority's behaviour support service and provides for students in both Years 10 and 11. The head of centre has been in post for only one year.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2925	Peter Johnson	Lead inspector	Mathematics
31754	Charlotte Roberson	Lay inspector	
27409	Susan Hunt	Team inspector	English, citizenship, geography
20024	Paul Wright	Team inspector	Information and communication technology, history, physical education
19171	Robin Lee	Team inspector	Art, music

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The quality of education provided by the centre is **satisfactory**. But the centre has serious weaknesses because the systems to improve students' attendance, punctuality, attitudes to the centre and behaviour are not effective. However, the achievement of students who attend regularly, their learning and the teaching they receive are satisfactory. The leadership of the head of centre is good but management is unsatisfactory. The centre provides satisfactory value for money.

The centre's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Students achieve well in mathematics and art because teaching is good.
- Many students do not attend regularly enough and their poor punctuality frequently interrupts lessons.
- The centre provides a broad range of subjects for students to study.
- The arrangements to ensure students are cared for well and the assessment of their work are unsatisfactory.
- Links with local schools and colleges are effective in supporting students' learning.
- The teacher in charge has a clear vision of what needs to be done to improve the centre, but management of the centre and the role played by the management committee are unsatisfactory.

The centre has improved satisfactorily since the last inspection, although the rate of improvement has been hampered by the frequent changes of staff. The centre provides a suitable curriculum and links with the community are now satisfactory. Teaching and learning are better and provision for English, mathematics, art and personal, social and health education has improved. Although the centre has worked hard to improve students' attendance the actions taken have not proved effective. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is still unsatisfactory.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Achievement of students aged:	in relation to individual targets in:	
	Subjects of the curriculum	personal and social education
14 -16	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Inspectors make judgements in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor.

The achievement of students is **satisfactory**. Students, who attend regularly, achieve standards high enough to gain success in GCSE examinations when they reach the end of Year 11. In 2004, around half the students gained GCSE passes in English and mathematics and certificates in literacy and numeracy. In the same year the centre arranged for two students to attend other schools where they gained GCSE passes in biology and physical education. However, frequent staff changes resulted in the number of subjects in which students gained GCSE passes being reduced from four in 2003 to two in 2004, which students consider to be a reason why they are not sufficiently motivated to attend regularly. Students achieve well in mathematics and art and satisfactorily in English and personal, social and health education. Achievement in information and communication technology is unsatisfactory because it is taught by teachers who are not qualified and insufficiently experienced in the subject. Around a third of students have not attended regularly this term and, as they complete little work, their achievement is unsatisfactory.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, their attitudes to work and behaviour are **unsatisfactory**. Students' attendance and punctuality are **poor**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the centre is **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are satisfactory but there are weaknesses in the way lessons are planned. The good planning evident in English and mathematics is not used consistently by all teachers. Students respond well to the high expectations set for their personal and academic achievement in English, mathematics and art. Teaching is good in mathematics, art and personal, social and health education. The assessment of students' work is inconsistent and, although good in some subjects, it is unsatisfactory overall. The curriculum is satisfactory. The accommodation, although satisfactory because there is sufficient space to teach the number of students on roll, is not conducive to the successful management of students' difficult behaviour. The resources available for teaching and learning are satisfactory. The guidance and support provided for students' personal development is satisfactory but the arrangements to assure their safety and well-being and to set targets for their academic achievement are unsatisfactory. Links with parents, schools and the community are satisfactory.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the teacher-in-charge is **good**. In the short time that she has been in post she has developed a clear vision for the improvement of the centre. Management, however, is unsatisfactory, for although there is a commitment that students will achieve well, insufficient attention has been given to evaluating the work of the centre and to ensuring that agreed procedures are implemented consistently. Governance of the centre by the local authority and management committee is unsatisfactory. The purpose of the centre has not been established with sufficient clarity, which impedes its development. As yet, neither the local authority nor the management committee have effective procedures to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the centre and they are, therefore, not in a position to offer effective challenge and support to senior managers.

PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Only a small number of parents contributed to the inspection. In the main, these parents appreciate the work of the centre. They feel that it is led and managed well and that information provided for them is helpful. Staff are considered to be supportive and parents feel able to approach them with any problems. Students hold widely differing views about the centre. Around half of those who completed the questionnaire consider that the centre helps them to make progress and behave well, but an equal number hold the opposite view. However, they all value the trusting relationship they have with staff. Both parents and students express concern about the frequent changes of staff and the detrimental effect this has had on the quality of education provided by the centre.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve students' attendance, punctuality, behaviour, attitudes to work and their personal development.
- Improve the arrangements to ensure students' welfare, health and safety, especially the academic guidance given to them and the assessment of their work.
- Improve the management of the centre so that the arrangements to monitor and evaluate the work of the centre are more effective and procedures and plans are implemented consistently.
- The local education authority should ensure that the management committee is able to monitor and evaluate the work of the centre in order to improve the standards achieved by students and the quality of education provided.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The achievement of students is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students who attend regularly achieve well in GCSE examinations.
- Achievement is good in mathematics and art.
- Staffing difficulties have limited the opportunities for students to gain external accreditation of their achievements.
- A lack of specialist teaching has resulted in students making unsatisfactory progress in ICT.
- The achievement of students in citizenship is impeded by very poor teaching.

Commentary

1. The irregular, erratic and often poor attendance of a significant number of students is a recurring theme throughout this report. For example, around a third of students have not attended regularly during the three weeks of the current term and, as they have completed little work, their achievement is unsatisfactory.
2. However, the achievement of students who attend regularly is satisfactory; they work hard and achieve success in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) when they reach the end of Year 11. In 2004, 21 of the 42 students entered for GCSE examinations in English achieved at least grade G and of the 29 entered for mathematics, 18 achieved at least grade G. Around half the number of students on roll achieved a pass in both subjects. The centre also made arrangements for two students to study biology and physical education, respectively, at local schools and both achieved GCSE success in these subjects. More than half the students on roll last year also gained certificates in literacy and numeracy.

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

	School results	National results*
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	0	NA
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	0	NA
Percentage of students gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	50	NA

*There were 42 students in the year group. * There is no comparative data for students educated in pupil referral units.*

3. In English, the achievement of students has improved since the last inspection, although it remains satisfactory. Those who attend regularly make satisfactory progress in all aspects of English. They are provided with good opportunities to have their achievements recognised through entry level and GCSE examinations. In the main, students speak, listen and write satisfactorily and the standard of their reading has improved over that reported by the last inspection. In mathematics, students' achievement is better than it was at the time of the last inspection and is now good. Students are competent in a wider range of mathematics but their use of it in other subjects continues to be a weakness.
4. Students achieve well in art and the centre has many examples of their good work on display. Their achievement in personal, social and health education is satisfactory; they have a sound understanding of the personal and health issues relating to topics such as sex, drugs and alcohol, but, as yet, the subject is not having a positive impact on students' behaviour and their

attitudes to work and the centre. Students achieve satisfactorily in their studies of travel and tourism. In information and communication technology however, students' achievement is unsatisfactory because it has been severely limited by the lack of specialist teaching.

5. Students' achievement is limited by the reduction in GCSE courses provided. The centre does not provide as many accredited courses as it has in the past. Students were able to take GCSE examinations in up to four subjects in 2003, but, due to staffing difficulties this was reduced to two subjects in 2004. Students consider the reduction in opportunities to achieve GCSE success to be de-motivating and a major reason why attendance is not as good as it should be.
6. Too little attention has been given to the setting of individual targets as a means of raising students' achievement. Targets set in individual education plans and in the centre's annual report to each students' parents are too generalised or relate to the improvement of their attendance rather than improvement in their knowledge, skills and understanding in each subject.
7. The achievement of students with statements of special educational need is unsatisfactory in relation to the needs defined in the statement and the targets contained in their annual reviews. The centre has not devised individual programmes which relate to their needs and targets in annual reviews relate mainly to the improvement of their attendance rather than improvement to their literacy or numeracy skills. There is no significant difference between the achievement of boys and girls or between students from different ethnic backgrounds.

Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The behaviour and attitudes of students are **unsatisfactory**. Attendance and punctuality are both consistently **poor**. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Non attendance is a serious issue facing the centre.
- Although there are occasions when most students behave very well during lessons overall throughout the day behaviour is often unsatisfactory and sometimes poor.
- Students do not value being at the centre and few can talk of any benefits of being there.
- Not enough planned opportunities are being given to engage students and stimulate learning or to encourage their independence and develop trust and respect.

Commentary

8. Students' attendance has not improved sufficiently since the last inspection and continues to be a priority for the centre. Staff are hampered in their task to monitor, track and record attendance promptly and effectively because the system in use is not computerised. Despite time consuming efforts by staff, too much paper is generated because the system is so cumbersome. Data is not readily at their fingertips and does not enable targets to be set easily and monitored rigorously. Those involved with attendance including the education welfare service all speak of difficulties with the system. Despite evidence to show that teachers and support agencies do work to encourage students to attend, there are still too many students who do not attend regularly. In 2003 – 04, less than a third of the Year 11 students attended for more than 70 per cent of the time.
9. However, there are some mitigating reasons why figures are so low for the last school year. A small number of students live out of the borough of Islington and have a very long journey of up to two hours each way. Significant numbers of students have considerable mental health problems, which mean, at times, it is inappropriate for them to attend. A small minority are actually in secure units but still on roll. However, even taking these factors into account, there is no escaping the fact that many students are simply not attending regularly and for them attendance rates do not improve while on roll. During the three days of the inspection there

were between 8 and 12 students on site, and a further 3 were involved in alternative provision elsewhere, out of the 31 on roll. Punctuality is also poor with lessons beginning late and ending early. Students often arrive late; when they go off site for lunch they sometimes do not return in the afternoon.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	15	School data	30
National data	NA	National data	NA

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

10. Students' behaviour is unsatisfactory. Students have limited ability to control their own behaviour. In most lessons they are able to behave reasonably well and to respond positively to their teachers and friends. However, when out of lessons their behaviour deteriorates. During the inspection many instances of unacceptable behaviour were observed and students were too often heard being rude and using bad language to teachers and other adults. Smoking is not allowed in the building but this rule is openly flouted. During the one whole school gathering in the hall, when all adults were present, behaviour was poor with students interrupting and showing little respect either for their teachers or friends. Staff, all too often, simply react to poor behaviour in an effort to contain it rather than adopting agreed and consistent procedures to promote better behaviour.
11. Students, teachers, support staff, parents and representatives from other agencies all talk of the worryingly poor behaviour from students last year which is also said to have affected attendance. As a result, exclusions were frequent, although this is not reflected in the centre's official figures. There was a high use of unofficial exclusions when students were sent home "to cool off". This practice ceased in September this year.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of students

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Any other ethnic group

Exclusions in the last school year

No of students on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
18	16	0
1	0	0
3	1	0
3	4	0
3	8	0
1	0	0
1	0	0

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

12. Students seen on a recently made DVD provide thoughtful insights into their views and feelings about the centre and life outside. They demonstrate that they can think for themselves intelligently and with maturity. However, those spoken to during inspection showed immature attitudes and were, at times, disrespectful. Like many spoken to, including parents, they recalled the violent outbursts and bullying which disrupted life at the centre so much last year.

Students consider that staff do not always manage behaviour consistently and are often too soft on them. Teachers have had training in behaviour management and things have improved slightly this year, but there is scope to ensure greater consistency and even clearer boundaries so that levels of trust can be improved. The new points system, in place since January, is beginning to have an impact on the behaviour of students but the rate of improvement is slow.

13. Student’s spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is unsatisfactory because not enough is being actively planned and provided to promote these important aspects. This was also a key issue for improvement at the time of the last inspection. Some opportunities are provided to enhance students self esteem and self worth, for example, the short course with the Fire Service and the new programme for personal social and health education is beginning to have a positive impact on students’ personal development. Relationships with many staff are, at times, very supportive and positive and do much to promote the social and personal skills of students. However, even the Head of Centre remarked that these students “need more” and get bored easily. At lunch times, for example, students go off site and often return over excited, but the centre does provide sufficient activities to interest students and channel their energies in a constructive way.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. Teaching, learning, assessment, and the curriculum are **satisfactory**. The care provided for students is **unsatisfactory**. Links with parents, carers, other schools and the local community are **satisfactory**.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **satisfactory**. Assessment is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Frequent staff changes have adversely affected the quality of teaching.
- Teaching is good in mathematics, art and personal, social and health education.
- There is no consistent procedure for the assessment of students’ work.

Commentary

14. The quality of teaching and learning is slightly better than it was at the time of the last inspection. However, the instability caused by having a succession of temporary teachers and frequent changes of staff has had an adverse effect on the quality of teaching and on students’ learning.
15. Although there are examples of very effective planning, such as in English and mathematics, in general the consistency of planning continues to be a weakness. Students who attend regularly apply themselves well to the work they are given and show a determination to succeed. Their learning is satisfactory.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 25 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	2	9	12	0	1	1

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

16. Teaching in mathematics, art and personal, social and health education is good. Teaching is carefully structured and the challenge presented in lessons is gradually increased as students gain confidence; consequently, students are motivated and enjoy the success they experience.

In mathematics, for example, difficult concepts are introduced gradually and are carefully linked to what students have already achieved so that they are not daunted by new material. In these subjects, activities are matched well to students' individual needs and students are interested by them because lessons are conducted at a brisk pace, expectations are high, ground rules are clear and consistently enforced, and relationships are good-humoured yet firm.

17. Teaching is satisfactory in English and travel and tourism. In most lessons, the challenges set are realistically high and questioning is used effectively to check on what students know and understand. Teaching ensures that students understand what they have to do and most stay on task. The teaching of DJ Skills in music is satisfactory because the tutor has a very good knowledge of the topic which is used well to capture students' interest and motivation. Students show real enthusiasm for this subject; in one lesson for example, a student used complex electronic equipment and computer software confidently, concentrated fully for the entire lesson and showed real pleasure in the resulting piece of work.
18. In information and communication technology, teaching and learning are inconsistent and unsatisfactory overall. Teachers have insufficient knowledge of the subject to ensure that lessons are planned well so students do not always understand what it is they are expected to achieve. As a result, they do not show sufficient interest in the subject, do not concentrate sufficiently and make unsatisfactory progress.
19. Both teaching and learning are affected by the poor punctuality of many students. Many arrive late each morning and the consequent interruption to lessons and the need for teachers to repeat parts of the lesson limits the learning that can take place. This situation continues throughout the day because the centre has not yet established firm expectations of punctuality in its students.
20. Overall, the procedures to check students' achievement are unsatisfactory and the weaknesses identified by the last inspection remain. The arrangements are good in English and mathematics; the information gained from assessment is used effectively to ensure that students make progress in their learning. In other subjects, however, assessment is inconsistent and is not sufficient to indicate to students broadly what they have achieved. The marking of students' work is of varying quality because the marking policy is not used with sufficient consistency by all staff. The centre has not established a clear set of expectations for the assessment of students' work.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory**. Opportunities for enrichment are **unsatisfactory**. The accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is suitable to students' needs and abilities.
- The provision for students with statements of special educational need does not fulfil the requirements set out in their statement.
- There are insufficient experienced and qualified staff to meet the needs of the curriculum
- Good links with colleges support students' learning well.
- Students experience good quality work experience and receive good careers education and advice.
- Opportunities provided to enrich students' learning is limited.

Commentary

21. The curriculum has improved and students are now taught a broader, more effective curriculum than at the time of the last inspection. However, science is no longer taught owing to difficulties with the recruitment of a suitably qualified teacher and there is no longer a specialist room in which science can be taught. The centre provides GCSE and AEB accreditation in both English and mathematics, and success in these is good. However, due to staffing difficulties, the centre does not offer as many GCSE courses as it has in the past and while history, geography, ICT, personal, social and health education, citizenship, art, music, travel and tourism and physical education are provided, students can gain additional accreditation only in travel and tourism. The centre also makes arrangements for students to study other subjects at local schools when this is appropriate. The needs, however, of the few students with statements of special needs are not being met because the centre has not devised individual programme which relate to the needs specified in their statements and targets set at annual reviews relate mainly to their attendance rather than the development of literacy or numeracy skills.
22. Provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. There are comprehensive policies on sex and drugs education and alcohol misuse, which inform the effective teaching of the subject. However, citizenship needs to be reorganised and made more relevant to students' needs. There is a very limited range of activities in PE which has not improved since the last inspection and, owing to staffing difficulties, provision for ICT is unsatisfactory.
23. There are now strong college links with both Hackney and Islington Colleges; all students attend short taster courses in motor vehicle maintenance, plumbing, hairdressing and electrical engineering. In addition, the Connexions Service provides an effective programme of careers education and guidance and opportunities for students to participate in work experience. Year 10 students worked successfully in a variety of local businesses last summer term and there are weekly work placements available for Year 11 students to attend. During the week of the inspection, for example, one pupil was working with the local fire service.
24. The centre does not provide a satisfactory range of opportunities to extend the curriculum. There are no lunchtime leisure activities and although a youth club activity has been started once a week by the Youth Service in another part of the building no students attend as yet. The lack of such activities contributes to students' unsatisfactory behaviour during this time. The centre has, however, arranged a small number of cultural trips including visits to art galleries in London, but students' unsatisfactory behaviour does not encourage staff to organise these on a regular basis. Drama is provided once a week, and a drugs counsellor visits regularly.
25. There is sufficient staff for the number of students on roll. However, due to difficulties with recruitment, there are currently a number of overseas, part time and temporary teachers and the experience and qualifications of staff are not well matched to the curriculum. There is, for example, no qualified and experienced teacher of ICT. Staff are not always utilised to best effect and, at times, the deployment of available staff is inefficient.
26. Accommodation is satisfactory, there are sufficient spacious classrooms for the number of students in each class and there is a specialist room for ICT but none for science or food technology. The accommodation has been recently remodelled to provide an ICT room, a quiet room for students and a useful room for meetings. However, the location of the centre on the middle floor of a three storey Victorian building limits the effectiveness of the accommodation. It is not conducive to the effective management of difficult behaviour because there are too many places that the students can avoid staff and too many places where confrontation can occur. The joint use of the central hall by other occupants of the building limits the extent to which it can be customised for use by staff and students of the centre. Office space is restricted and the head of the centre has to share a small room with the secretary. In the main, resources are satisfactory with the exception of English where the number of books available to students for reading and research is poor.

Care, guidance and support

The Centre provides an **unsatisfactory** level of care for its students. They receive **satisfactory** support and guidance. The involvement of students in the work and development of the unit is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The arrangements for child protection are satisfactory and are monitored well by the head of centre, but assessments about the risks for pupils going out of the centre are not carried out effectively.
- Procedures for tracking students' achievements in their academic work are not as effective as those for their monitoring personal development.
- There are supportive arrangements for the induction of new students.
- Students are not sufficiently involved in the work of the centre.

Commentary

27. Overall, arrangements to support students' care, welfare, health and safety are unsatisfactory. The centre complies with procedures for child protection adopted by the Local Education Authority and these are effectively co-ordinated by the headteacher. The centre liaises with other agencies to monitor the progress of students on the "at risk" register, and others about whom there is a concern. There are planned arrangements to supervise students off site, and places that students visit have been checked with the local authority as being suitable and safe. However, not enough is done formally to make an assessment of the risks particular students may face or pose during visits or placements.
28. There is a sufficient number of staff on call to supervise and support students during break times and for students who are out of lessons. However, these arrangements are not always effective as students sometimes get into potentially dangerous areas of the centre such as the weights room. Although it is planned for this term, staff have not yet been trained to use safe handling practices that are consistent with local and national guidelines and have not yet undergone first aid training.
29. Monitoring of students' personal development is satisfactory and provides staff with an appropriate range of information to assist them in measuring the effectiveness of any advice and support provided. However, procedures for tracking students' achievements in their academic work, setting targets for improvement and involving them in assessing their progress are not as effective. This is because unsatisfactory use is made of assessment information. Academic targets set for students to achieve are too generalised and not specific to their individual needs.
30. The centre has an effective programme for careers guidance and advice. The provision is supported through good links with Connexions staff that are based at the centre. However, the current arrangements for integrating careers guidance into personal, social and health education and tutorial time is unsatisfactory. There are effective induction arrangements for new students; whenever possible, students and their parents will visit prior to admission in order to familiarise themselves with the centre and they are given helpful guidance on what is expected of them.
31. Although attempts have been made to engage students formally in the development of the centre through a student council, these have proved to be unsuccessful. Staff find it difficult to get students to contribute their ideas sensibly on how to make the centre a better community. Not all students feel positive about the centre and this is reflected in their unsatisfactory attitudes and attendance.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Partnerships with many parents, other schools and within the community have been extended in recent years and are now **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff succeed in communicating with many parents regularly and effectively.
- Parents have positive views of the unit but recognise the difficulties it faces.
- Links within the community are improving steadily.
- Students benefit from the good links with mainstream secondary schools and colleges.

Commentary

32. The development of partnerships with schools and within the community is no longer an issue of concern. Parents now receive more regular written information, which is satisfactory in its range and quality. Written reports at the end of the school year include sections from all teachers and are honest evaluations of progress being made. The newly written parent handbook is a positive move to keep parents and carers better informed. Informal communication with many families including telephone conversations with teachers and support staff is very regular. However, a significant number of parents do not support the centre in ensuring regular daily attendance. Translation services are used on occasions for those families who do not speak English as their first language. The Connexions Personal Adviser is one of many staff who has regular contact with families in the area. He is a familiar face to many and is doing much to establish even more secure links with parents. Parents are not slow in alerting staff when they are unhappy about aspects at the centre and it is reported that many made their concerns known last year when behaviour deteriorated in the centre; the centre worked hard to ensure that parents were satisfied that everything possible was being done to improve behaviour in the centre.
33. The centre does not have a solid nor securely positive reputation within the community. However, there have been improvements since the appointment of the new head of centre and she is keen to extend links further. Effective partnerships exist with outside bodies that are beneficial for students. Strong links have been forged with the Youth Service and the Youth Offending Service. There are also effective links that have been made by individual teachers such as those with artists and the fire service. Occasional visits and visitors enrich the curriculum. Last summer a successful workshop called "Trading Places" was organised by a parent which gave opportunities to students to swap places with teachers during a drama session to enhance understanding about roles and ideas. A very successful "Christmas Social" was much enjoyed for the first time last year by many involved with the centre, including parents.
34. The centre has established effective links with local schools and colleges. Staff at these establishments understand and support the work of the centre and, for a small number of students, opportunities are provided to enable them to receive tuition in, for example, biology and physical education. Students also attend a nearby college for short courses in mechanics and plumbing and a small number have participated in a football school for longer periods of time. Good support from local shops and businesses has enabled students to have a wide range of work experience opportunities.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership provided by the head of the centre is **good** but management and governance are **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The head of the centre has established a clear vision for the development of the centre, but actions to achieve this are not implemented consistently by all staff.
- Little use is made of rigorous self-evaluation to raise standards.
- The local education authority and management committee provide support for the centre, but have not determined the present and future purpose of the centre with sufficient clarity.
- Financial management of the centre is satisfactory.

Commentary

35. The head of the centre has high hopes and aspirations and has spent much of her first year in the post trying to establish a positive ethos for the centre. She has a realistic and accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the centre in relation to teaching and students' achievement and a clear understanding of what needs to be done. She has struggled with recruiting and retaining staff for any length of time, but good recent appointments indicate that she is being successful in achieving a more settled staff group. She has worked hard to try and develop a close and mutually supportive team. Many of the planning documents and guidelines are of a high standard, but their implementation is inconsistent.
36. The leadership of other key staff though satisfactory has weaknesses. Subject leaders have clearly identified responsibilities which relate to their subjects and their contribution to the development of the centre as a whole. While most ensure that their subject is led and managed satisfactorily, they are not, with the exception of English and mathematics, working as an effective team so that in several areas of the curriculum even the most basic requirements, such as producing planning documents and following the centre's marking policy, have not been fulfilled. Additional management responsibilities have recently been allocated to teachers, but, as yet, there is little evidence that they are being fulfilled consistently and therefore policies and procedures agreed by the staff as a whole are not being implemented consistently by all staff.
37. The management of the centre is unsatisfactory. Although the LEA has provided detailed guidelines on self-evaluation, none of the procedures or guidance has been followed. Data generated by the centre is not used effectively to evaluate the impact of teaching and the curriculum on students' achievement, attendance and personal development. Performance management of staff is being completed, but monitoring of the work of subject co-ordinators and teachers has only been undertaken informally. The allocation of preparation and non-contact time is generous, but is being used inefficiently at present.
38. The governance of the centre is unsatisfactory overall. The centre is supported by the Management Advisory Group (MAG) and by senior LEA officers. Together, they ensure that the centre fulfils all its statutory responsibilities. The MAG offers good support for the head of centre, but does not have a monitoring role and the centre is not accountable to it. It does not become involved with curriculum issues and, despite being aware that the centre only offers two GCSEs, will not interfere with what is seen as a matter for the head of centre and the LEA. The LEA officers also are very supportive of the centre and the LEA as a whole has made great efforts to assist with the recruitment and retention of staff within the borough. Other initiatives, such as introducing child and adolescent mental health service and Connexions staff into the pupil referral units have also been successful. However, the LEA has not addressed satisfactorily the present and future purpose of the centre. On one hand, it is not sure whether the head should be advised to provide a wider range of GCSEs to the students, or whether an emphasis on the preparation of students for later success at college should be the priority. Additionally, no clear role for the future of the centre has been determined. It may have a role trying to re-integrate students back into mainstream schools, or alternatively cater wholly for excluded students. Until these basic issues can be resolved, the centre continues to lack focus and a firm identity.
39. The management group relies too heavily on the head of the centre and does not provide sufficient challenge to help shape the direction of the centre and to improve the students' attitudes, behaviour and attendance. An LEA officer is a regular presence in the centre and has

visited classrooms, but formal monitoring of the curriculum has not taken place and subject leaders are insufficiently held to account for the quality of provision in their subjects. Students' attendance and behaviour continue to be concerns for the centre, but the management group has an incomplete appreciation of the present situation and is therefore not able to help in securing improvement.

40. The financial management of the centre is satisfactory. The LEA has retained the responsibility for the staffing costs, but the rest of the budget is devolved to the centre. Careful spending decisions are made by the head of the centre, in consultation with both the LEA's financial officer and the assistant head of the Behavioural Support Service. The school secretary works closely with the head of the centre and the financial officer to ensure that spending is assiduously monitored and recorded. The teachers were given a capitation allowance for their subject for the first time this year. They appreciated the sense of trust and responsibility that this brought with it. The principles of best value are always followed in spending decisions and despite the weaknesses in students' attendance, behaviour and personal development the centre provides a satisfactory standard of education and satisfactory value for money.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGE 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Seven lessons were observed. Inspectors looked at students' work and held discussions with students about their work and with the subject leader.

Provision for English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The subject has been developed well in a short space of time.
- Students have good opportunities to pass examinations in both Year 10 and Year 11.
- The marking of students' work is consistent and it helps them improve.
- Students' poor punctuality impedes their progress and disrupts the learning of others.
- There are insufficient books that are stimulating enough to promote students' interest in reading.
- The centre has not given sufficient thought to how students can develop their literacy skills in other subjects.

Commentary

41. Provision for English has been maintained satisfactorily since the last inspection. Students, who attend lessons regularly, make satisfactory progress in all aspects of English. There are good opportunities for Year 11 students to have their achievements recognised through entry level and GCSE examinations. In addition, there is an opportunity for Year 10 students to sit AEB literacy examinations at level one and two. Last term, all fifteen Year 11 students passed an accredited course in either GCSE or entry level examinations.
42. Students' achievements in speaking and listening are satisfactory overall. They are confident in discussions and readily express their opinions. For example, during a lesson on Martin Luther King, the two students present discussed how King had been assassinated by a sniper, they knew the accused was James Earl Ray and that he was imprisoned for 99 years. They discussed the feelings of someone in jail for that length of time. High attaining students are confident readers and the records of students who attend regularly indicate satisfactory progress. Achievements in writing are also satisfactory, and although often reluctant to express their ideas on paper, most students are able to write legibly and accurately. Students redraft pieces of GCSE coursework to produce work of a good standard. The new subject leader is encouraging reluctant writers to use their ICT skills to investigate information on the Internet. In addition, students are encouraged to read topical newspaper articles and complete the narrative. This was very successful with two students completing a newspaper article regarding two school girls made ill by bullying tactics at a London comprehensive. Written work is always constructively marked and this helps students understand how well they have done and what they need to do to improve.
43. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Planning is structured well so that students have a clear understanding of what they have to do. Clear lesson objectives and key words pertaining to the lesson are clearly shown on the classroom's white board. Lessons are pitched at the right level and students are suitably challenged by the content. However, on occasions the poor punctuality of students causes disturbance to lessons and impedes the learning of students who have arrived on time. Occasionally, this lack of punctuality results in poor behaviour.

44. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The new subject leader has been in post for six months and has worked incredibly hard to establish English in the centre. She has put in place methods to assess and record students' progress and has revised the planning to ensure students can achieve success. The subject leader has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve the subject further and she is helped considerably in this by the LEA adviser for English.
45. Accommodation is satisfactory; however, resources to promote literacy throughout the centre are unsatisfactory. There is no library and there are insufficient fiction and non fiction books to stimulate students' interest in reading and promote the development of their reading in other subjects.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

46. The centre has not devised the means by which language and literacy can be promoted systematically in all subjects of the curriculum. There are a few opportunities for students to develop their literacy skills across the curriculum, though a few are found in PSHE and mathematics. During a life skills lesson on vandalism, for example, the two students were given opportunities to discuss the penalties they would give young offenders who burnt schools down or broke glass in bus stops. However, there are generally insufficient opportunities for students to extend their language because teachers are reluctant to engage students in open discussion because of the potential that these present for disruption.

MATHEMATICS

Four lessons were observed. Inspectors looked at students' work and held discussions with them about their work and with the subject leader.

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students are motivated by the good teaching they receive and achieve well.
- The assessment of students' work is good and helps them to improve.
- Leadership of mathematics has secured considerable improvement in a short time.
- Mathematics is not used effectively in other subjects.

Commentary

47. Students respond well to the good teaching of mathematics. Those who attend regularly make good progress in a short time and their achievement is good. The new subject leader has developed a more comprehensive plan of work so that students' competence in mathematics extends across a wider range of areas than at the time of the last inspection. Provision for mathematics has improved well since the last inspection.
48. In 2004, students achieved well in General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) and other external examinations; 18 of the 28 entered for GCSE achieved at least grade G and of these, 15 achieved higher grades. In 2004, 12 students also achieved level 1 and 2 passes in the Entry Level Certificate. The work of students in the current Years 10 and 11 indicates that those who attend regularly are on track to achieve similar results. For example, in Year 10 students use co-ordinates correctly to plot points on a graph accurately, they identify congruent triangles and understand basic probability. In Year 11, students understand and calculate the perimeter of polygons accurately and are able to simplify simple algebraic expressions.
49. Students display good attitudes to their work in mathematics. They sustain concentration during lessons and the work in their folders is presented well, indicating that they take care with their work. In the main, they behave well in lessons and any misbehaviour is generally managed well.

However, students' punctuality to lessons is poor and the disruption this causes limits their learning and that of the rest of the class.

50. Teaching and learning in mathematics are good. The methods used are effective so that students quickly understand the concepts being taught. Lessons are brisk and purposeful with little time wasted. Students are expected to work hard and the challenge set by the content of lessons is realistically high – high enough for students to take the subject seriously, but not so high that they find it daunting. Students are motivated well by the teaching. They are interested by the topics taught, they expend considerable effort to complete the tasks set and spend most of the lesson engaged in the activities set for them. The assessment of students' attainment on entry to the centre is very good, as is assessment during lessons, which helps students to know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
51. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The subject leader has clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of provision for mathematics and, although only in post a short time, has a clear vision for how to secure improvement. The teaching of a non-specialist teacher is supervised well in order to monitor teaching and assure its effectiveness. Much has been done in a short time to bring about improvement; the effective assessment procedures and an outline scheme of work have been written since the beginning of the current term. A small budget has been allocated for the subject and the subject leader is wisely evaluating the resources already available before purchasing so that spending can be accurately targeted to improve students' achievement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

52. The use of mathematics across the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Insufficient consideration has been given to how mathematics can be used by other subjects. The subject leader is aware of this weakness, which was also identified by the last inspection, and has produced guidance for staff so that improvement can be achieved.

SCIENCE

Science is not provided by the centre.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Three lessons were observed. Inspectors looked at students' work and held discussions with them about their work and with the subject leader.

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Development of the subject has been undermined by staffing difficulties.
- The centre has established an effective ICT room.
- Records of students' knowledge and understanding are insufficient to guide planning or to track students' progress.
- More use needs to be made of ICT across the curriculum.

Commentary

53. Standards have declined since the previous inspection when students' progress was judged to be good. This is because the centre has had great difficulty in recruiting and retaining suitably qualified staff. Analysis of the limited amount of work available shows that the students' achievement, over time, is unsatisfactory. Assessment of students' developing ICT skills has not been used systematically to help in planning the curriculum.

54. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall. Lessons are not always well prepared. Objectives are not always clear and are not shared with students. Students who attend lessons have unsatisfactory attitudes towards the subject. Even with a member of staff supporting them, they are unable to sustain their interest and attention. On the occasions that students are on task they do develop a limited range of skills. For example, they word process work and alter its characteristics and appearance by changing font size and style.
55. Leadership and management of the subject are unsatisfactory. The temporary subject leader is enthusiastic and keen to develop the subject, but he has been managing this area for less than three weeks. He has not yet had the opportunity to oversee planning, monitor teaching or strategically plan for the development of the subject. All of these areas are in need of development in order to raise standards.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

56. Not enough use is made of ICT across other subjects of the curriculum. It is used well in English lessons in drafting and improving work for presentation and in music for basic compositions. However, there is no link between what is planned for students to achieve in ICT in other subjects and the work they undertake in ICT lessons.

HUMANITIES

Geography

57. There was insufficient evidence to form a judgement about provision as only two lessons were seen and there was no students' work by which their progress and achievement could be evaluated. In the two lessons that were observed the students learnt about the earth's crust; planning for both lessons was extensive and the teacher displayed good knowledge of the subject.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design

Three lessons were observed. Inspectors looked at students' work and held discussions with them about their work and with the subject leader.

Provision for art is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of art is good.
- The standards achieved by students are often high but, they are not given the opportunity to gain an external accreditation for their work.
- Students respond well to high expectations of performance and behaviour.

Commentary

58. The standards of teaching and learning reported in the last inspection have been maintained and students' achievement is good. Students' portfolios of artwork often contain impressive results. There are many examples of carefully drafted and completed projects. The individuality of students is encouraged and the progress they make within the subject can be seen as they develop their own personal styles. Students become increasingly willing to take more risks, and try new techniques and methods of expressing themselves as their confidence grows.

However, there is no accreditation available in art for Year 11 students that would enable their achievements to be recognised.

59. The curriculum provides a varied and interesting range of activities. In one successful Year 10 lesson, students were engaged in drawing a melon and a pumpkin, using pastels. They discussed the shape, texture and colours and looked at the shadows cast by both items. They had an understanding of two and three-dimensional representation. Once they had drawn the outside, they cut their object in half and looked at the inside as a contrast. They demonstrated a good awareness of how pastels can be worked, using a wet finger and an additional colour, to create different shades and textures. The Year 11 topic on portraiture has produced some striking results. Students often join the centre with an interest in 'graffiti' art, which employs bold outlines and bright colours. They are encouraged to build on this style and produce freer and more imaginative images. Several students have created effective abstract work using a variety of media. At the end of every year, the best examples of the students' work is framed, displayed and later sold. Having their art recognised in this way provides a boost to their self-esteem. This year's exhibition included landscapes, famous London buildings, abstract work, and contemporary portraiture.
60. Students enjoy their lessons. They respond well to the clear boundaries, high expectations and opportunities for success. The practice of frequently changing the displayed work is particularly good. It gives students an immediate feeling that their work is being valued and recognised. The lessons have pace and purpose. The students are calm and settled, and usually engrossed in their work. They are prepared to listen to instruction and direction and they take pleasure in their finished results. Although there is an appropriate emphasis on using the correct terminology and using materials for their correct purpose, insufficient attention is given to making the learning objectives clear at the start of the lesson and to discussing fully what has been achieved at the end.
61. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The planning for the subject is in place, but poor attendance makes it difficult to adhere to a scheme of work. In one lesson, no students from the class were in school, while many others regularly miss the first half hour of the school day. This makes it hard to sustain a continuity of learning. Priorities for development for the subject have been identified and the subject leader has recently established links with an outside adviser. Students' skills are assessed and their potential for future progress is carefully noted.

Music

There was insufficient evidence to form a judgement about provision as only two lessons of music were seen during the inspection, one of which was mostly interrupted by a fire alarm.

62. A part-time tutor has recently joined the staff to broaden the curriculum of the centre by the introduction of music. The focus of the teaching has been DJ skills and the opportunity to create music using computer software programmes. Students have responded well to the subject and several are beginning to show competence with 'scratching' skills, while a Year 11 pupil showed that he could develop an interesting drum piece, with the aim of adding other instruments at a later stage. The tutor's intention is to develop the students' understanding of beat and co-ordination, while helping them progress in their social skills and ability to work collaboratively with each other.
63. The students enjoy their small amount of time in the music room and quickly become engaged with the activity. The tutor demonstrates the different techniques and the students are always willing to try and practice them. There is a clear understanding of what they can already do, and the next step is carefully judged to ensure continuing success. Students are encouraged to save their computer work, in order to have a permanent record of their achievements and progress. Unfortunately, the lessons are constantly interrupted by a succession of other students who want to join the class. Much of the tutor's time is spent sending them on their way

– a task he does firmly, but good-naturedly. The subject makes a good contribution to the improving the self-confidence and self-esteem of the students.

64. At present there is no plan of work or consideration of how music can be developed in the centre. There is, undoubtedly, an interest in a 'new' subject, but insufficient consideration has been given to how the centre can build on the good start that has been made in order to sustain students' motivation.

Physical Education

There is insufficient evidence to enable a judgement to be made about provision in physical education. Discussions were held with subject leader.

65. There are limited opportunities for physical education at the centre. No records are kept of students' achievements and there is little advance planning. Students previously had access to the facilities at a local sports centre and were offered a variety of physical education activities including trampolining and badminton. Currently, students have access to a weights room and an indoor area for playing football. All students have the opportunity to attend sessions at a local boat club and those who choose to attend are able to gain qualifications in a variety of water skills. For example, two students achieved "Powerboat Level 2 (Tidal)" from the Royal Yacht Association and the "Two Star (Kayak) Award" from the British Canoe Union.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

Travel and Tourism

Two lessons were observed. Inspectors looked at students' work and held discussions with them about their work and with the subject leader.

Provision in travel and tourism is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The needs of students of different abilities are for planned effectively.
- Students' behaviour and their poor punctuality impede the learning of others.
- ICT is used effectively to help students' learning.

Commentary

66. Achievement is satisfactory. Students have a broadly based knowledge of the places, routes and features regarded as important by the travel and tourism industry. They have a basic understanding of the development of British seaside resorts and the way seaside towns have changed and developed. Students learn how there has been a change in the provision of leisure, sport and recreation facilities in the U.K. They have also had the opportunity to look in depth at the development of a local sports centre.
67. Teaching is satisfactory and planned well to meet the needs both of the examination board curriculum and the abilities of students, but the completion of a planned lesson is often disrupted by the poor punctuality of students. Although satisfactory, the pace of learning is too often dictated by students' poor behaviour. Teaching is persistent, however, so that students eventually settled to work in the lessons seen. Teaching is based on a sound knowledge of the subject and questioning and discussion are used satisfactorily at the end of lessons to enable the teacher to assess students' progress. Good use is made of ICT to promote students' achievement; students complete work using a computer, print copies for their folders and store their work on a floppy disk.

68. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leader has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and what is needed to bring about improvement.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

One lesson was observed, schemes of work were analysed. No past or present students' work was available for analysis.

Provision for personal, social and health education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Topics covered are relevant to students' needs.
- The new subject leader is very enthusiastic, knowledgeable and a good role model.
- The subject does not yet have an effective impact on students' personal development.
- There is sound support from outside agencies.

Commentary

69. Achievement is satisfactory. The programme of study provides students with satisfactory range of opportunities that include modules about sex, drugs and alcohol education and students' understanding about these topics is satisfactory. Students' learning is supported well by the involvement of outside agencies such as the Youth Offending Team, the Youth Service, a drama tutor, and a local drugs counselling service. These visitors to the centre contribute to a wide range of topics to interest and engage the students with such as work on prevention of vandalism, self and group awareness and drug prevention.

70. In the one lesson observed, teaching and learning were good; the teacher conducted the lesson at a brisk pace and introduced the topic enthusiastically. During the lesson the two Year 10 students who attended talked confidently about the problems faced in keeping their anger under control. They presented their views in a sensible and mature manner. For example, they realistically discussed the triggers which caused them to lose their tempers.

71. The subject leader, who teaches part time at the centre, has only been in charge of the subject since the beginning of term, but has made a satisfactory start to leading and managing the subject. Appropriate priorities for improving the subject have been identified, including the need to ensure that the subject has a more effective impact on students' personal development, especially their attitudes to work and their behaviour. The centre attaches great importance to this area of its work, and allocates to it significant time and staff resources.

CITIZENSHIP

One lesson was observed, schemes of work were analysed. No past or present students' work was available for analysis.

Provision for citizenship is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching in the subject does not contribute sufficiently to students' personal development.
- Students show little interest in the subject and are not gaining knowledge about how they can become responsible citizens.

Commentary

72. Achievement is unsatisfactory. Students have very little knowledge or understanding of their responsibilities as individuals within their local and wider community. The subject has not been planned well and, as a result, students are not provided with sufficient opportunities for them to become informed citizens.
73. Teaching and learning are very poor. In the lesson observed on 'My neighbourhood project', the teacher failed to plan the lesson, the expectations set for the students were very low and, consequently, their learning in relation to the topic was very poor. Students completed too little work and the tasks set for them failed to engage their interest. Despite this, they were compliant and behaved well.
74. The subject lacks leadership and management of it is unsatisfactory. The centre follows a curriculum devised by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, but this is not well resourced and ideas about how citizenship could be promoted within other subjects remain unexplored. The attempt to introduce a student pupil council, for example, was unsuccessful. Overall, the subject is not fostering ways in which students can participate in the life of the centre and wider society.

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	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Students' achievement	4
Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	5
Attendance	6
Attitudes	5
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	5
Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	5
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well students learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets students' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	5
Accommodation and resources	4
Students' care, welfare, health and safety	5
Support, advice and guidance for students	4
How well the school seeks and acts on students' views	5
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
The leadership and management of the school	5
The governance of the school	5
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	5

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

*In a special school such as this, 'standards achieved' are judged in relation to pupils' individual targets and not in relation to national standards.

