

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ALL HALLOWS CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

Farnham

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 125315

Headteacher: Mrs Elizabeth Lutzeier

Lead inspector: Dr David Benstock

Dates of inspection: 20–23 September 2004

Inspection number: 268729

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:	Comprehensive
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of students:	11 – 18
Gender of students:	Mixed
Number on roll:	1221
School address:	Weybourne Road Farnham Surrey
Postcode:	GU9 9HF
Telephone number:	01252 319211
Fax number:	01252 28649
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Tim Bradley
Date of previous inspection:	12 October 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

All Hallows Catholic School is an 11 – 18 mixed, comprehensive school, and larger than average size. It is a voluntary aided Catholic school with a strong Christian ethos. The number on roll is around 1220, of which approximately 160 are in the sixth form. It is situated on the border of Farnham in Surrey and Aldershot in Hampshire, and the school draws students from a wide area. Many travel to and from school by bus. The school has been awarded the status of Specialist Technology College. It has also gained the Sportsmark Award and International Schools Award in 2003. The broadly average socio-economic background of students reflects a wide range of family circumstances. In the wards surrounding the school, the proportion of families having experience of higher education is average and there is a higher than average number of households in high social class. However, the LEA postcode analysis indicates that a significant proportion of students live in areas of high social deprivation. The number of students who leave or join the school at other than the usual times is typical for a school of this size. The school is popular and oversubscribed, serving largely the Roman Catholic community. Approximately 90 per cent of students have white British heritage, three per cent are of Asian, Black or mixed heritage, and the remainder have a range of different backgrounds. The number of students whose first language is not English is slightly higher than in most schools but the number at an early stage of language acquisition is low. The percentage of students eligible for free school meals is well below average. The percentages of students identified as having special educational needs and of those with statements of Special Educational Needs are below the national averages. Standards on entry to the school are above average in English, mathematics and science. Standards on entry in most other subjects are average. Attainment on entry to the sixth form is broadly average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20243	David Benstock	Lead inspector	
9189	John Horwood	Lay inspector	
17923	Michael Shaw	Team inspector	Mathematics
3958	Maureen Cawdron	Team inspector	English
5241	Cyndi Millband	Team inspector	Science
19043	David Lewis	Team inspector	Chemistry (sixth form)
10941	Renee Robinson	Team inspector	Information and communication technology (ICT)
15051	Lynne Kauffman	Team inspector	Design and technology
24142	Sylvia Argyle	Team inspector	Art and design
2032	Christopher Polyblank	Team inspector	Music
22042	John Challands	Team inspector	Physical education (11-16)
23004	Christopher Taylor	Team inspector	Geography
19152	Richard Merryfield	Team inspector	History
27226	Richard Cribb	Team inspector	Citizenship Physical education (sixth form)
32414	Michele Messaoudi	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages French (sixth form) English as an additional language (EAL)
13122	Stephanie Matthews	Team inspector	Business education Work related learning
17530	Mary Cureton	Team inspector	Drama Media studies (sixth form) Special educational needs (SEN)

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Ltd  
Demeter House  
Station Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 2RS

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS</b>	
Standards achieved in subjects and courses	
Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>15</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES</b>	<b>26</b>
Work-related learning	
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>56</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **OVERALL EVALUATION**

**This is a good school with some very good features.** It has a good sixth form. It gives very good value for money. Students achieve well. The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching and learning are good and the use of assessment is being enthusiastically developed. Support and guidance for students is good and the overall provision for care and welfare for them is very good. Parents are very supportive and opportunities to work with the community are extensive. Excellent links are established with main primary schools. The school is very well led and well managed by enthusiastic and effective teams. Governors are supportive and committed to improving the school.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The percentage of students gaining five or more GCSE grades A\*-C has risen greatly in 2004, compared with previous years, as a result of very well-considered, targeted support to meet the needs of the students and their resulting increased motivation.
- Students achieve very well in design and technology, music and history owing to the very good, consistent teaching in these subjects.
- The very good leadership and good management of the school have a marked impact ensuring good achievement of students, their positive attitudes and enthusiasm for school and recruitment of strong teams of teachers.
- Provision for information and communication technology and the achievement of students in Years 10 and 11 in this area of the curriculum are currently unsatisfactory, although new leadership is beginning to impact on learning. The use of computers in subjects is inconsistent.
- The rigour in the monitoring of teaching and learning, and in the use of assessment data to track students' achievement, whilst good overall, is inconsistent between departments.
- Very good opportunities are provided for extra-curricular activities and enrichment in both the main school and the sixth form.
- Very good provision is made for the care and welfare of students.
- Insufficient management of the behaviour of a small minority of students causes others in some lessons to make less progress than expected.

Since the last inspection the school has improved in many ways. Teaching and learning have improved because they have been a major focus for all staff. Financial management has been embedded and students' behaviour has improved. Despite variations from year to year, standards overall in both Year 9 and 11 have been rising at a rate in line with the national trends. Average point scores in the sixth form have fallen over three years; however, in work seen there is evidence of improvement this year. Accommodation has greatly improved after much effort by governors. In the previous report provision for ICT and modern languages was highlighted as a concern. Current provision in ICT is unsatisfactory but that in modern languages has improved. Although teachers are more rigorous in matching work to the ability of students, there is still inconsistency in the use of assessment data to monitor students' achievement. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching has improved but again remain inconsistent between departments.

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED**

**The achievement of students overall in the school is good.** It is good in most subjects, including English, mathematics and science, and very good in design and technology music and history. Achievement is unsatisfactory in ICT in Years 10 and 11. It is satisfactory in physical education and modern languages in Years 7-9. Standards seen in lessons and students' written work in Year 11 are well above average in science, music, history, design and technology and drama. They are above average in English, mathematics and geography. Otherwise they are average. The achievement of students with special educational needs, and of those who are gifted and talented, is good. Students with English as an additional language progress as well as other students. In 2003 the average point score per student at GCSE was well above the national

average. In the sixth form students' attainment varies according to individual ability, but overall their achievement is good.

Performance compared with:		all schools			similar schools
		2001	2002	2003	2003
Year 11*	GCSE/GNVQ examinations	-	A	A	C
Year 13	A/AS level and VCE examinations	B	B	C	

\*Based on average point scores at GCSE taking best 8 subjects

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

**Students' attitudes, values and personal qualities overall are good.** The ethos for learning in the school is good. Overall, students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and contributes significantly to the quality of personal development. Attitudes and behaviour are good. Attendance is very good and students are punctual to school. Students' involvement in school life and willingness to take responsibility are good.

### QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The quality of education provided by the school is good.** Teaching and learning are good overall in both the main school and the sixth form. They are very good in music and design and technology and in history in Years 10 and 11, and satisfactory in modern languages and mathematics. In all others they are good. Teachers plan carefully and engage students in their learning very well. Assessment is satisfactory overall but the use of data is inconsistent between departments. Assessment in ICT is unsatisfactory overall and poor in Years 7 - 9. The curriculum offers a broad education and opportunities for extra-curricular activities are very good. Vocational courses are offered and provision for workplace learning is satisfactory. Support and guidance of students are good and arrangements for care are very good. Links with parents, the community and other schools are very good.

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**Leadership and management of the school overall are very good.** The Catholic School ethos underpins much of the work of the school. The leadership of the headteacher and senior staff has been particularly focussed on raising the quality of teaching and achievement. Leadership of key staff overall is good. There is total commitment to ensuring all pupils are included and valued. Management overall is good but there are inconsistencies in the use of performance data and monitoring of teaching by heads of department. Support for new and training teachers is very good. The governing body provides good support and commitment. Financial management is secure.

### PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is very popular and is over-subscribed. The majority of parents are very comfortable about approaching the school with any concerns. A few parents raised concerns about behaviour and the quality of reports. Students enjoy being at the school, where they feel they are well taught and trusted and have to work hard.

### IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise the extent to which computers are used in subjects and the overall provision for ICT.
- Increase the consistency in the rigour of monitoring of teaching and learning and the use of assessment data in departments.



- Continue with work on the management of the behaviour of a small minority of students causing disruption in lessons.
- and, to meet statutory requirements:
- Ensure all subjects fully meet the National Curriculum requirements for ICT and omissions from the Governors' Annual Report to Parents are addressed.

## SIXTH FORM

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**The sixth form is good** and is cost-effective. It is a smaller than average sixth form, although the number of students has been increasing over recent years as the range of courses increases and its reputation spreads. The majority of the students in the sixth form have entered from the main school. Teaching in the sixth form is always at least satisfactory and mostly good, and a large proportion is very good or excellent. Results over the past few years have been very variable but in 2003 were in line with national figures. In 2004 results overall were similar at advanced level but significantly improved at advanced subsidiary level.

The main strengths and weaknesses are:

- There is very good and caring leadership in the sixth form.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good and often very good leading to good learning.
- Smaller tutor group sizes and very good monitoring systems enable very good support and guidance to be given.
- Ongoing formal assessment within departments is not consistently developed.
- Very good induction processes ensure the students study appropriate courses.
- Very good and often excellent relationships, attitudes and behaviour throughout the sixth form result in a very good learning environment.
- There needs to be a more coherent and consistent approach for the provision of ICT across all subjects of the curriculum.
- There are very good links with the community and with other educational establishments, which enhance the opportunities available to students.

### QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES OF THE CURRICULUM

Judgements about the provision in the subjects and courses inspected in the sixth form are shown below. They are based mainly on the quality of teaching and learning and how well students achieve. Not all subjects in the sixth form were inspected.

Curriculum area	Evaluation
Mathematics	Provision in <b>mathematics is good</b> . Teaching and learning are good. Students achieve well in a well-led and managed department.
Science	Provision in <b>chemistry is very good</b> . A consistent approach to teaching and learning leads to very good progress, which helps students to do as well as they can, often achieving beyond expectations.
Business	Provision in <b>business studies is good</b> . Standards are above the national average. Students are achieving well because of the good quality of teaching and assessment. Existing resources are used well but limited access to computers sometimes affects learning.
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	Provision in <b>physical education is satisfactory</b> . Standards are close to the national average. Teaching and learning are good but marking of students' work is inconsistent. Overall, students' achievement is satisfactory.
Visual and performing arts and media	Provision in <b>art and design is good</b> . Teaching and learning are good. Students' achievement is satisfactory as a result of

basic skills not having been acquired in earlier years.

Provision in **media studies is satisfactory**. Leadership and management are good. Teaching is good but the lack of resources at the present time is limiting learning.

## Humanities

Provision in **history is very good**. Results in recent years have been below average. Current standards are much better; students are now opting for the subject in increasing numbers. They learn very well and achieve well because of very good teaching.

## English, languages and communication

Provision in **English language is satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are good but students have limited skills of independent working and their achievement is only satisfactory.

Provision in **French is good**. Students achieve well as a result of good teaching and learning.

Other subjects in the school were sampled including **psychology, sociology, law, design and technology, leisure and tourism, photography, ICT and citizenship**. Teaching and learning in all these lessons was at least **satisfactory** and mainly **good** or **very good**. An **English literature** lesson was also seen where teaching and learning were **excellent**.

---

*The curriculum areas are broadly common across all post-16 education and training. They do not necessarily correspond with subjects and courses taught by the school. Inspectors make judgements in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor.*

## ADVICE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

The student care and welfare are very good. The dedicated pastoral team have very good relationships with the students which, together with the very good monitoring carried out by the sixth form management, enable them to provide very good support, advice and guidance. Students' progress is monitored carefully in relation to their targets and, where necessary, appropriate support provided; within departments, however, the assessment procedures are not always fully established. Students receive very good preparation for, and information about, later stages of education.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SIXTH FORM

**The leadership and management in the sixth form are very good**. The students' interests are central to the aims of the sixth form, where they are encouraged to study appropriate courses. The day-to-day management of the sixth form is very good, with very good communications between all staff and students. The current accommodation is well managed and adequate for the increased numbers but may require extension if numbers continue to increase as the school hopes. Finances are well managed and, as a result, the sixth form is cost effective.

## STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM

Students are very supportive of the sixth form and the opportunities it is able to offer. They enjoy being in the sixth form, which they think is very well run. They are particularly supportive of the current head of sixth, who has built up an effective team. They find the teachers very accessible and helpful and they are treated fairly and with respect. A minority of students identified concerns on the questionnaires about the lack of advice on subject choices and about the suitability of the

courses. Students interviewed during the inspection were, however, all very satisfied with these areas.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS**

#### **Standards in subjects and courses**

Overall, standards in the work seen are above average in Year 9 and Year 11. They are above average in the sixth form. Achievement is good throughout the school.

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

- Very good achievement in design and technology and music in all years, and history in Years 10-11 results from very good teaching and students' positive attitudes in these subjects.
- Standards seen are above average in the core subjects of English and mathematics and well above in science in all years, reflecting overall good achievement.
- Standards seen are below average, and achievement is unsatisfactory, in ICT in Years 10 and 11.
- Results at the end of Year 9, in 2003, were well above the national average and above average compared with schools having students with a similar prior attainment on entry.
- GCSE results overall in 2003 were well above national average and broadly average compared with schools with a similar prior attainment in Year 9.
- The percentage of students gaining five, or more A\*-C grades has risen very considerably in 2004, compared with 2003 and earlier years after very successful support strategies were put in place.
- The average point score in GCE advanced and advanced subsidiary level has fallen over the last three years. In 2003 the figure for A and AS level results was in line with the national average, and in 2004 the point score was lower. However, overall standards seen reflecting the nine subjects focussed upon during inspection are above average.
- Chemistry in the sixth form showed very good achievement.

#### **Commentary**

1. In the National Curriculum tests for Year 9 in 2003, the overall performance of students, as measured by their average point score, was well above the national average. The percentage of students gaining target Level 5 or higher was well above average in English and science, and above average in mathematics. The 'value added' score, which is a measure of progress from the end of Year 6 in primary schools, was above average compared with all schools.
2. The performance of Year 9 students in 2003 was above average compared with schools where the attainment in national tests taken in Year 6 was at a similar level. In English the

performance of students was well above average compared with such similar schools but in mathematics it was below.

- Results in 2004 were lower overall than in 2003 but the overall rising trend is in line with that found nationally. The results of both boys and girls were well above the respective averages over the past three years. Girls' performance was nevertheless relatively higher than that of the boys in 2003.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	37.0 (35.5)	33.4 (33.3)
mathematics	37.3 (37.5)	35.4 (34.7)
science	36.3 (35.3)	33.6 (33.3)

*There were 218 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

- In the GCSE examinations in 2003, the point score per student, taking their best eight subjects, was well above average compared with all schools, and below average compared with schools where the prior attainment at Year 9 is similar. The value added from Year 9 to Year 11 in 2003 was average compared with other schools.
- The percentage of students gaining five, or more A\*-C grades has been relatively constant over the years since the last inspection and at approximately 65 per cent was well above average in 2003 and previous years. In 2004 the percentage has been increased to 70 per cent, which is a very significant improvement. The rise has been partly produced by identifying an underachieving group at the end of Year 10, allowing them to drop modern languages, providing regular teaching of study skills, ensuring pastoral support from senior teachers and increasing time to complete course work in other subjects. Students responded very positively, became more motivated and achieved very well.
- Results in GCSE have risen over recent years and at a rate in line with the national trend. Variations in the performance of boys and girls occur from year to year, and in 2003 results were well above average for boys and girls even though the attainment of girls was higher than boys as found nationally. The percentage of girls gaining five, or more A\*-C grades in 2004 was higher than that of boys but to a lesser extent than found nationally.
- In GCSE subjects in 2003, well above average attainment was reached in English, drama, history, music and mathematics, above average in design and technology and geography. Results were high in history and this level of success has continued in 2004. GCSE results in 2003 were well below average in German and even lower in 2004. They were well below average in physical education but are much improved in 2004. Results in the short course in ICT were also low in 2003.

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	65 (66)	52(50)
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	97 (99)	91(91)

Percentage of students gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	99 (100)	96(96)
Average point score per student (best eight subjects)	40.1 (40.0)	34.3(34.7)

*There were 220 students in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

8. In the work seen in lessons and in the evidence of students' writing, standards overall are above average throughout the school. Attainment on entry overall to the school is broadly average and so achievement overall from entry is good. Achievement is very good in design and technology and in music, and in history in Years 10 and 11, where the teaching is particularly stimulating and successful. It is good in most other subjects, excepting physical education and modern languages in Years 7-9, where it is satisfactory. Standards are below average and achievement unsatisfactory in ICT in Years 10 and 11. Achievement is satisfactory overall in the relatively new subject of citizenship. There is little variation found in the achievement of boys and girls. Higher and lower-attaining students achieve well because of the good additional challenge or support that is provided to match their needs.
  
9. There are approximately thirteen per cent of students in the school with special educational needs, including eleven students with statements, one of whom is in the sixth form. The special educational needs include specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia, emotional and behavioural difficulties, autism and visual impairment. Students with special educational needs make the same progress as other students owing to the quality of care and support received. All are entered for a good range of GCSE examinations and attain a grade in each of them.
  
10. Higher-attaining students and those identified as gifted and talented achieve well through Years 7 – 9. In the majority of GCSE courses, the gifted students achieve well. In Year 10, students attaining higher levels in mathematics at the end of Year 9 are also entered for the GCSE in statistics. Their attainment shows that their achievement is very good. In music and sports, gifted and talented students are able to achieve very well, because of the vibrant enrichment programme. In geography, history and science, the individual gifted students are not always sufficiently extended by their work and some underachieve.
  
11. Because all students are well supported by the Catholic ethos of the school, relationships are good and diversity is celebrated. There is no difference between the achievement of students from the many heritage backgrounds present in the school. The 11 students who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language make good progress in a totally inclusive learning environment. Three students who are refugees also make good progress.

### **Sixth Form**

12. In the most recent validated GCE Advanced level examinations, in 2003, the average point score per student was in line with the national average. There has been a downward trend in overall performance. In 2002 the overall attainment was above average. The average point score is lower in 2004 than it was in 2003. In 2003, boys overall, attained higher than girls, contrary to the national picture and the reverse of the previous year. The school is addressing the fall in performance and applying strategies aimed at raising the aspiration and drive of students.
  
13. Small group sizes prevent meaningful comparisons for performance or trends in the A level or vocational examinations in specific subjects. All groups are relatively small and the range of grades from year to year reflects the ability and aptitude of individual students.

14. Standards seen in the sixth form, mainly in the nine subjects focused upon during the inspection, are overall above average. Group sizes are often small so judgements on standards reflect individual ability. Standards are well above average in chemistry and above average in mathematics, history, and business education; otherwise they are average. Students' achievement from entry into the sixth form is very good in chemistry and good in mathematics, history, French and business education; in the other focus subjects it is satisfactory.

### ***Standards in GCE A/AS level and VCE examinations at the end of Year 13 in 2003***

	School results	National results
Percentage of entries gaining A-E grades	84.3(91.9)	89.4(92.6)
Percentage of entries gaining A-B grades	22.6(28.3)	32.6(35.3)
Average point score per student	239.3(256.8)	258.2(263.3)

*There were 43 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

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

Students' attitudes and behaviour are good in the main school and very good in the sixth form. Attendance is very good with punctuality good. Students' personal development is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is no oppressive behaviour throughout the school.
- Attendance levels have risen as a result of very good procedures.
- Students' personal development is good.
- A varied programme of masses, day retreats and year group assemblies makes a very strong contribution to students' spiritual development but, apart from religious education, there is little planned development of students' spiritual awareness in other subjects of the curriculum.
- Sixth form students have very good attitudes to learning and their behaviour is often excellent.
- There is general good behaviour around the school.
- There is some unsatisfactory behaviour in some lessons, which is usually well dealt with.

### **Commentary**

15. Students' attendance at school in 2002/3 was close to, but slightly above, the national average. In 2003/4 the figures improved slightly in spite of the county average falling. During the inspection the attendance was well above these figures. The school monitors reasons for absence very well and has good systems in place to encourage improved attendance. As part of the students' annual report, parents are provided with a detailed analysis of students' attendance including a daily record. Punctuality of students in the main school is also good. Students like coming to school and are very supportive of their school. Students have good attitudes to learning and are keen to work and participate fully in lessons and to benefit from the high quality teaching.
16. Within lessons students co-operate well, are well motivated and show a good level of concentration. Behaviour is generally good and often very good both within lessons and around the school. In a few lessons there were a small number of students, boys and girls, who presented challenging behaviour which distracted others. The number of exclusions has fallen significantly over the past two years and is low for this type of school. The high expectations of behaviour are well known by students and the behaviour management is firm

but fair – in a very small minority of lessons the teachers did not enforce the school's procedures fully. Some parents and students had identified a concern over bullying but none was seen during the inspection and the school has very good procedures in place to discourage it and to deal with it should it become apparent.

## Attendance

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.3	School data	0.1
National data	7.2	National data	1.1

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

## Exclusions

### *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	1054	158	0
White – Irish	13	0	0
White – any other White background	44	2	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	5	1	0
Mixed – White and Black African	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	7	0	0
Mixed – Any other mixed background	23	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	16	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	5	1	0
Black or Black British – African	3	0	0
Black or Black British – any other background	1	2	0
Chinese	6	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
Parent/student preferred not to say	31	0	0
Information not obtained	2	0	0



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

17. The school is committed to developing all students' qualities. The good relationships and support systems result in students becoming mature and confident. There are good opportunities for them to take on responsibilities within class and to be involved in the running of the school through the school council.
18. Students with SEN are equally responsive to their lessons as other students. Their behaviour is good. They are fully involved socially in the school. The school regards social inclusion as a whole-school responsibility, and takes effective measures to promote it.
19. The school celebrates the diversity of its population by giving a high profile to home languages. Over 20 different languages are represented in the school. The race equality policy is in place and is actively monitored.
20. Provision for promoting spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is good and contributes well to students' personal development. Students' spiritual development is very good, overall. The school has a very strong religious ethos, clearly stated at the heart of its Mission Statement, which is very well expressed through a regular programme of masses, year group assemblies and occasional "away-days" for students in Years 7 and 8. Spiritual development is promoted very well during religious education lessons by encouraging students to pray for others and to discuss fundamental issues of life and death.
21. The school promotes the consideration of moral issues strongly in subjects such as history, geography and religious education. There is a good stress on Christian moral values in the school's Mission Statement and these are reinforced through citizenship lessons and year group assemblies. Year 11 prefects enjoy their responsibilities, while Year 10 students act as helpful mentors when younger students join the school. Strong moral teaching is not always reflected adequately, however, in students' behaviour in class. While most students are polite and helpful, a small number do not equate acceptable behaviour with showing respect for others, and sometimes show little consideration for their teachers or other students.
22. Students' social development is encouraged very well by good levels of participation in a wide range of extra-curricular activities, and by an extensive programme of day trips and residential visits both in this country and abroad. Students learn to co-operate well when discussing issues in the School Council, developing role-play in drama, conducting fieldwork in geography, or when playing together on the sports field or in one of several musical ensembles. Visits including exchanges to France and Germany, a concert tour of France, art trips to Barcelona and Beijing, and practical assistance for a school in Uganda help students to develop self-confidence and the ability to get on well with people from a variety of cultures.
23. Students have a good knowledge of local culture and of other cultures around the world, but there is less understanding of the wealth of multicultural variety within Britain. They are encouraged to develop a good understanding of their own culture and other cultures by studying music and art from around the world and by examining North American indigenous societies in history, eastern belief systems in religious education and Japanese work patterns in geography. There is less emphasis, however, on developing a broad understanding of the great wealth of multicultural diversity within our own British society.

### **Sixth Form**

24. Students in the sixth form are very supportive of the school and especially of the teaching and of the leadership. Attendance monitoring follows the main school procedures and students have very good attendance records as well as generally being punctual at lessons throughout the day. The behaviour and attitudes to learning in the sixth form are very good overall and in many lessons are excellent. The very good relationships and attitudes ensure that there is

an excellent learning and community environment in the sixth form as result of the total absence of any oppressive behaviour.

25. Students' personal development in the sixth form is very good and they are mature and sensible. They have their own sixth form council, which is chaired by school council representatives. The operation of the council is very well managed and the meetings are supported by the presence of a tutor to give advice if needed. As part of their enrichment activities many students support students in the lower school. Sixth form students show good responsibility for younger students by helping with swimming and reading, and organise a week of fund-raising events for a range of charities. Students can also take up positions of responsibility such as being a prefect; a 'Head Boy' and a 'Head Girl' are chosen each year.

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

The overall quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good, and the use of assessment is satisfactory. There are inconsistencies in the extent to which assessment is used in departments. The quality and range of the curriculum are good, with very good opportunities for enrichment. There are very good arrangements for care, health and safety. Support, advice and guidance for students are good. Links with parents, the community and other schools are very good.

### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning overall is good throughout the school. Assessment is used satisfactorily to support learning in Years 7-11, and procedures are good in the sixth form. There is inconsistency in the use of assessment data in departments to track students' progress and in teaching to inform students how to improve their work.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good teaching and learning take place in design and technology, music and history.
- Use of assessment is inconsistent; it is unsatisfactory in ICT especially in Years 7-9, but is good in English, mathematics and drama and very good in design and technology and music; it is good also in history and particularly so in Years 10 and 11. In other subjects it is satisfactory.
- Teaching and learning are good in the majority of subjects, the exceptions being design and technology and music, where they are very good, physical education and citizenship in Years 10 and 11, and modern languages in Years 7-9, where they are nevertheless satisfactory.
- Teachers in a number of departments do not use ICT well enough to enhance and support learning.
- Teachers have very good subject knowledge and use this very well to encourage, motivate and raise the confidence of students.
- In a minority of lessons behaviour in class is not well managed.

#### **Commentary**

26. Teachers have a very secure expertise of their own subject areas and use this very well to plan interesting activities, encourage good discussion and involve students. This is seen particularly in Years 10 and 11. Relationships in class are, on the whole, positive and relaxed although in a minority of lessons teachers do not insist on the good level of behaviour found in most lessons. Overall, teachers make a positive commitment to inclusion, supporting all students irrespective of their ability or background.
27. Although there are a significant number of computers available in school, the use of ICT in lessons is inconsistent and overall use of ICT by teachers to raise achievement is unsatisfactory.

28. During the inspection, 158 lessons were observed. Approximately two-thirds were good or better, and one quarter very good or excellent. Eight lessons were excellent due to the high level of challenge, brisk pace and students' attitudes. Five of the six unsatisfactory lessons were in Years 7 – 9, so that eight per cent of the lessons observed in those years had significant shortcomings for a variety of reasons, but most often linked to the management of the behaviour.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 158 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8(5)	32(20)	69(44)	43(27)	6(4)	0	0

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

29. Teaching and learning in design and technology and music are very good. They are very good also in history in Years 10 and 11. Teachers in these subjects have a high level of expertise and understanding of the needs of students. There is a consistent approach by all members of the teams in these departments that ensures very good planning with a range of teaching styles. There is a common sense of determination instilled in students to achieve as highly as possible within an enjoyable atmosphere. There is a high level of challenge that meets the needs of the highest attainers.
30. In the great majority of subjects, the teaching method supports the needs of all students well and most teachers have good classroom management skills. Overall good use is made of the recommendations in recent National Strategies for learning and application of teaching styles. In a number of lessons, for example in English and science, students have insufficient time to evaluate their learning in a suitable plenary at the end of the lesson. Marking is variable; often targets for improvement are not clear. The use of homework is generally good, with opportunities frequently taken to reinforce and extend learning.
31. Relationships with students are very good and contribute to the good achievement and progress made. In most subjects, the management of students' behaviour in lessons is good and often very good but in others low level disruption and poor manners affect the progress made. Lessons are normally brisk and include a good variety of activity that maintains the students' interest and enthusiasm. ICT is not used enough in most subjects with opportunities lost.
32. Teaching and learning of students with special educational needs (SEN) are good. Teachers are aware of SEN issues and individuals' specific difficulties and needs. Departments link effectively with the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and targets are systematically addressed. Support assistants help students in the organisation of their homework and ensure it is written in their journals. Small group teaching is well focused and effective.
33. Overall achievement of gifted and talented students is good as a result of good provision. In mathematics, art and design, design and technology, citizenship and history, work is well matched to the needs of these students and tasks are well planned to extend their learning to higher levels. The opportunities for gifted musicians are very good. Expert teaching at centres of excellence in football and tennis lead to performance and achievement at high levels. However, the challenge in science, history and geography lessons was insufficient, because work was not matched to the needs of the individual student. The leadership team is working hard to ensure that all departments provide effectively for these students.

34. Teachers are aware of the needs of students learning English as an additional language and provide for them in mainstream lessons. Students feel totally included and they achieve well considering their starting point. Only one student was at Stage 1 of learning English as an additional language and was given extra support in withdrawal sessions in 2003-2004. However, specialised support is needed for students at more advanced stages of learning English, particularly in the sixth form, if they are to meet the demands of the course fully.
35. Since the last inspection, there has been a significant improvement in day-to-day assessment. Teachers mark work using a school grading system. Students are aware of the overall quality of their work relative to national expectations and they are involved regularly in evaluating what they have done. Whilst there are inconsistencies between subjects, the best practice is in design and technology, music and history where teachers use assessment information very effectively to track students' progress. All departments analyse their test and examination results in an attempt to improve future performance. However, there is considerable inconsistency by departments in the application of the school assessment procedures to track students' progress.
36. All teachers are provided with a detailed analysis of students' performance that identifies them as gifted and talented. Departments are able to nominate individuals who they believe are capable of high attainment. This enables teachers to plan activities to address the needs of these students more appropriately and measure their performance against school-based targets. The monitoring of this planning and delivery in each department needs to be more rigorous.
37. The headteacher, who has specialised expertise, assesses students learning English as an additional language when they join the school and oversees their progress. The school has analysed the achievement of students by ethnic group very carefully and refined the method used to obtain more meaningful data for comparisons. Results show that the vast majority met or exceeded their targets in 2003-2004. Those who did not had learning difficulties and were on the register for special needs. There are no differences between the various ethnic categories. This was confirmed during the inspection. In some departments, the data needed for the analysis of underachievement by gender and ethnic group have not entered the tracking system yet.

### **Sixth Form**

38. The good quality of teaching and learning extends into the sixth form. Behaviour management is not an issue and students are conscientious, aiming to do well. Teachers have very good subject knowledge to ensure the appropriate level of challenge. However, there is not always the determination for students to seek out knowledge or to be proactive in their own learning. Insufficient change of activity sometimes results in lack of pace, for example in English and mathematics, and marking is inconsistent.
39. Of the 44 lessons observed in the sixth form, approximately one-third was judged to be very good or excellent, and approximately four-fifths were at least good. No lessons were unsatisfactory. In almost all cases good learning resulted from the good teaching.
40. The strongest teaching and learning in the sample of subjects inspected in depth in the sixth form are in chemistry and history where almost every aspect is very good. Excellent activities are adopted. Key skills are developed well in chemistry.
41. Specialist subjects such as business studies and media studies are taught well. Good planning is in place and good use is made of available resources. Teachers' knowledge of the subjects is very good.

42. Assessment in the sixth form is systematic and well managed. Procedures enable teachers to mark work thoroughly and form tutors to track students' progress and personal development. Assessment details are used to show students how well they are progressing and, at its best, assessment helps teachers and students to identify challenging targets for improvement.

### **The curriculum**

The overall quality and range of the curriculum is good. There are well-planned broad and balanced learning opportunities for students from Years 7 to 11. Vocational and work-related learning are satisfactory, but developing well. The extensive range of extra-curricular opportunities is a very strong feature. Sixth form provision is good and wide-ranging. The quality and quantity of accommodation are satisfactory and resources are good.

### **Main strengths and weakness**

- The very good extra-curricular programme raises standards, enriches students' learning and contributes strongly to their social and personal development.
- Students' all-round development needs are well addressed by the curriculum and enrichment opportunities.
- Provision in design and technology and music is very good.
- The lack of provision in Year 11 for information and communication technology courses limits opportunities for progression into GCE Advanced Level and vocational courses in this field.
- The school has addressed the needs of several Year 11 students well through the pathways and work placement programme, but the number of vocational options and work-related courses is limited.

### **Commentary**

43. The curriculum in Years 7-9 meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, and has good breadth and balance. Students are able to study two modern languages from Year 8. ICT is taught to all Year 7 to 9 students, which enables them to use their skills satisfactorily to develop work in other subjects of the curriculum. Students in Years 10 and 11 are offered a wide range of GCSE courses. The programme of work related learning (WRL) is developing well, but at present the range available only provides satisfactorily for students' needs. Provision for ICT in Year 11 is unsatisfactory and the cross-curricular use of ICT is also unsatisfactory, although there is very good provision for this in design and technology. Work experience placements support the curriculum and work-related learning (WRL). Insufficient time is allocated to careers education in the tutor period.
44. There is a well-planned programme for personal, social, health and citizenship education, which includes modules on drug abuse, health and sex education. The programme is co-ordinated well across all subjects with particularly strong contributions in religious education, history and science. Visits by guest speakers such as the local MP and MEP, a project in the local magistrates' court, and participation in the World War II commemoration competition run by the Imperial War Museum and charitable activities supplement the programme of study very well.
45. Provision for the gifted and talented students is good. In mathematics gifted students in Year 10 are entered for GCSE statistics to widen their opportunities. Provision for SEN support is also good. In 2004, a group of Year 11 students were placed on a flexible pathways programme, which reduced their GCSE load and provided them with study skills support. This proved very successful for those involved.
46. Extra-curricular provision is extensive and very good. A variety of sports activities and team games are well supported. Talented sports players have good opportunities to develop high-

level skills through work at local centres of excellence. Outstanding activities in music and visual art attract large numbers, and 16 per cent of the school's population receives instrumental tuition. Concerts and the Advent service are highlights of the school year. The work of professional artists and students is displayed in and outside school. There is a drama club, and dance activities are very popular. There are geography field trips to Swanage, and history visits to Normandy and the Western Front battlefields. The school has a strong profile of international exchanges.

47. Students with special educational needs have all the curriculum opportunities enjoyed by the other students. Grouping of students for catch-up lessons, from which they are withdrawn from classes, is well considered so as not to adversely affect the continuity, breadth, balance and entitlement to the curriculum. Those disapplied from MFL receive additional literacy support. Access to extra-curricular activities is possible for all students with SEN, and they join other students in the full range of activities on offer.
48. Provision and planning ensure that the gifted and talented students are given work which stretches them intellectually in the majority of their lessons. In mathematics gifted students in Year 10 are entered for statistics GCSE. In addition, the provision of extra-curricular opportunities for gifted and talented students is very good in music, citizenship and physical education. There is a wide range of activities available to interest and challenge the gifted and talented in the weekly programme available to all students. Good links with external centres of excellence are particularly beneficial to these students.
49. Good quality support is given to students at Stage 1 of learning English as an additional language. Curriculum enrichment in history, geography, sociology and personal and social education raises students' awareness of other cultures. The school monitors the participation in extra-curricular activities by gender and ethnicity well.
50. There is a good match of number, qualifications and experience of teachers to the demands of the curriculum. Teachers are well qualified and knowledgeable about their subjects and there is a good balance of youth and experience. Non-teaching staff make an important contribution to the life and work of the school. Technical support is very good in design and technology and science.
51. Accommodation is good overall. It has improved significantly in many areas since the last inspection. Very good management and an imaginative and successful approach to accessing funds in a variety of ways are the main reasons for this improvement. The sports facilities have been transformed and now provide a very good working environment for students. Provision is also good in design and technology (food), geography and science, where recent refurbishment has created very good working areas. There are now several dedicated areas where students can access computers. The library has also improved considerably since the last inspection. It provides a good working space for students, is well organised, has been restocked and has an appropriate number of computers available for students. Good liaison with most departments has ensured that students have textbook support in most subject areas.
52. Space, however, still remains at a premium in many areas of the school. Several of the corridors and stairways are narrow and create problems of access and movement when lessons change. Space is restricted in art and music, where the practice rooms lack soundproofing. Some of the design and technology 'resistant materials' rooms do not provide the appropriate facilities for the subject. Accommodation for special educational needs is unsatisfactory, as one room serves the requirements of all staff and students. The school is accessible to wheelchair users only in some areas.

53. The buildings are kept very clean and are well maintained. Display in several areas of the school is good and overall the school is providing an appropriate working environment for the students, which is meeting the demands of most subject areas.
54. Resources for learning are generally good and have a high quality, although there is insufficient number in MFL. Students have access to required textbooks in all subjects. The ratio of computers to students is below the recommended level and the management of the access to computers to facilitate use in all subjects has compounded this problem. The school is in breach of its statutory obligation to use computers across the curriculum. Resources for special educational needs are good and include very good interactive computer programs. The school works hard to successfully produce specialist learning resources of high quality for those students with visual impairment.

### **Sixth Form**

55. There is a good range of A level courses and recent developments enable students to study a wider range of courses such as law, photography, theology and work-related programmes. The vocational options include General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ intermediate) leisure and tourism and Advanced Vocational Certificate in Education (AVCE) Level in business and in leisure. Since the previous inspection, the school has extended the curriculum by including the Surrey Graduation Certificate to promote students' key skills. Religious education is timetabled for all students. There is a clear personal and social education programme, in which citizenship is a strong element. A very good European dimension is built into the curriculum through the Europroject.
56. The sixth form's varied and high quality enrichment programme has included an important visit to a Ugandan school as part of the World Challenge programme. Students are involved in many activities, including work in the community and Diocese; and visits abroad through the Euro project, which involves partner schools in many EU countries, are an exciting feature for students. A recreational physical education afternoon is timetabled and, as a result, both male and female sixth form students participate in local competitive games fixtures. There is also a variety of opportunities for students to take an active part in charitable events, such as the sixth form rag week, which contribute strongly to their social, moral and personal development. Careers guidance, preparation for higher education and monitoring of progress are very good.

### **Care, guidance and support**

There are very good arrangements to ensure students' care, welfare, health and safety. The support, advice and guidance provided for students are good in the main school and very good in the sixth form. The school's involvement of students by seeking their views is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Students' welfare is very well provided for in a school where health and safety is a clear priority.
- There are very good induction processes to ensure that students settle quickly into school routines.
- The school councils ensure students have a good opportunity to express their views.
- Whilst the health and safety policy is very good, it does not yet fully identify links with other policies such as the risk assessment policy.

## **Commentary**

57. Health and safety procedures within the school are very good, with a very good approach to risk assessments. All safety checks are carried out by qualified staff within the maintenance team or by external services. The governors' premises sub-committee works closely with the school staff in supporting health and safety. A strength of the system is the 'on-line' reporting system which makes it easy for staff to identify defects or concerns quickly. Child protection systems are fully in place and the school has very good systems to support 'looked after' children.
58. Welfare and care systems are very good. There is an allocated welfare area, which is very central and very well resourced. The school employs a full time matron, who is supported by a qualified first-aider. The dedicated medical room is very well equipped and has good surrounding areas for students to rest. Very good records of incidents and treatments are maintained. The pastoral system, organised into upper and lower school, is very well structured and the caring staff know the students well and have built up good relationships with them.
59. Arrangements for the support, advice and guidance of students are good. The assistant headteachers who are responsible for this area work very closely together so provision is consistent throughout the school. A new system of monitoring, involving termly assessment information from subjects and an individual joint student-form tutor review has just been introduced, the results of which are fed back on a termly basis to parents. This new development has the potential to be very good but it is currently too recent to judge how successfully it works in practice. Students receive good advice to assist them in the selection of their GCSE subjects from the very clear options booklet provided.
60. Care, guidance and support for students with special educational needs are excellent. Arrangements for carrying out strategic reviews are good. Students attend school regularly. Behaviour issues are very well addressed. Achievement of students with SEN is effectively monitored. Students with behavioural problems are regularly advised both by a range of educational professionals and the school's chaplain. The statement in the previous report that students always have someone to turn to continues to hold good.
61. Students who learn English as an additional language, refugees and ethnic minority students are well cared for through sensitive induction procedures and appropriate training given to all new staff as part of the induction programme, as well as during whole-school training days. Teachers who have concerns about students request extra support. However, the expertise currently available in the school, notably that of the headteacher, needs to be extended more to other staff.
62. The induction of Year 7 students is very good. The excellent partnership the school has developed with the five main feeder primary schools has enabled effective departmental and pastoral links to be developed. Both students and parents are fully involved in preparation for the transfer and the initial period at the school – attendance at the 'welcome mass' held during the third week of term was over 400.
63. The school has a whole-school council, which meets regularly and through which students can express their views.

## **Sixth Form**

64. The welfare provision for the sixth form is the same as for the main school. The induction process into the sixth form has just been revised and is very good. Most of the students currently in the sixth form have transferred from the main school and so already know the



staff and the school's expectations. During the summer term there is a series of events including an introduction to the sixth form during an assembly, an open evening, a taster day and an interview to discuss the suitability of courses. If a student's application is successful he/she is given some work to start on over the summer holidays.

65. Arrangements for the support, advice and guidance of students in the sixth form are very good. The head of sixth form introduced a now well-established system of target setting and monitoring which is clearly understood and very highly valued by students. Students report that they are very well known and supported by sixth form tutors who give generously of their time. They are very positive about and highly appreciative of the quality and availability of advice to support them with university applications.
66. There is a very good retention rate between courses in Year 12 and 13 and, once started, students tend to remain for the duration of the course. Each tutor group has two members on the sixth form council, which meets regularly to discuss school and sixth form matters. It is very well managed and ensures that the views of the whole sixth form are represented and that they have information on outcomes given to them.

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

The school has very good links with parents, with the community and with other educational establishments.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school has excellent links with the five main feeder primary schools.
- Parents receive very good information about the school and their child's progress.
- The school has very good links with the Catholic community.
- As a technology college the school has developed very good links with the community.
- Although mentioned in the prospectus, not all parents are made sufficiently aware of how to contact the school about any concerns they have.
- The information provided in the governors' annual report to parents does not fully meet requirements.

### **Commentary**

67. Parents are supportive of the school. They are pleased that students are expected to work hard and that they do make good progress as a result of the good teaching. They think that the school has good arrangements to help students settle in and that the school encourages their children to mature. The majority of parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with a concern but a few parents at the meeting were not fully aware of how to follow up their concerns. There were some concerns about the behaviour and bullying within the school, which they think is dealt with well, and they would like more opportunities to be consulted and to be given more information about the homework their children are expected to do. The positive views were confirmed during the inspection and the areas of concern investigated and the inspection team's views are contained in the appropriate section of the report. Individual comments made by parents were all considered and contribute to the findings of the report.
68. Parents are provided with very good information on progress through high quality reports and parents' meetings. There are additional meetings at important transition points and parents can communicate regularly with tutors through the students' journals, which are checked regularly by the tutors. Attendance at all meetings is very good. The school provides very

good course information booklets for parents to know what students will be studying and the annual reports present the information on progress and how to improve very clearly.

69. The information provided to parents about the school is very good through the very well produced newsletters and prospectus. The governors' annual report to parents does not contain all the information it is required to with omissions of information about examination target grades, the special educational needs policy progress and about admission and accessibility for disabled students. Parents provide very good support to the school through a very active 'Friends of All Hallows' association as well as by providing direct financial support for special projects. The school carries out regular consultation with parents through questionnaires.
70. Parents of students with special educational needs are kept well informed of the progress of their children. They are appropriately involved in annual reviews and consulted over individual education plans (IEPs). No use is yet made of outreach support.
71. There is a very good partnership with other educational establishments both at management level and at operational levels. The partnership with the five main feeder schools is excellent and the school has developed strong curriculum links with other local providers. The school is working with an increasing number of schools through its technology college status. The school is an integral part of the Catholic community, with which it has very good links. Students benefit from the community, including the business sector, in many ways including sponsorship, work experience opportunities, visits (for example to art galleries) and from visiting speakers. Many students have the opportunity to visit the wider community through educational trips. A significant amount of charity fund-raising is carried out to benefit the community, who also make good use of the school facilities.

### **Sixth Form**

72. The school continues to work very well with parents of sixth form students and keeps them fully involved and informed. Students are encouraged to take an active part in the community and this is recognised through 'The Surrey Graduation Certificate' qualification, which has recently been introduced into the school to incorporate both the key skills and the general studies aspects of study. Many students work with the local old peoples' home or with the local primary schools. Sixth form students have also provided very good support to other schools overseas during organised visits.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The quality of leadership and management is very good overall. Governors provide good support for the school and are committed to its development. Good procedures are in place to manage the finances.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Leadership and management of the head-teacher and the leadership group promote the values of the Catholic Church and ethos for learning where 'every student matters'.
- Good self-evaluation is in place through departmental reviews but there are inconsistencies in the rigour with which heads of department monitor teaching and learning.
- The headteacher drives change through her role model and dedication to the school.
- Assessment data is not used consistently well enough in all departments to track students' progress or affect planning of the curriculum.
- All staff are exceptionally well supported in their professional development.

### **Commentary**

73. The headteacher is systematically putting her clear direction for the future of the school into practice in close co-operation with the very effective, diverse leadership group. Her vision is set in the context of the school's specialist status and the school's Christian community.

Weaknesses identified in the 1998 inspection, when the headteacher had just been appointed, have been grappled with over the past four years. The school is moving into a phase where developing assessment is addressing the previous issues on target setting. Curriculum opportunities are being imaginatively expanded; however, vocational courses are an area at an early stage of development.

74. The headteacher and governors have focused on teaching and learning as their main purpose. Previous problems with staffing have been resolved through the headteacher's proactive links to Oxford University and the British Council. In addition, rigorous interview techniques do not shy away from continuing to advertise until the right person for the post is found. This has resulted in a strong, knowledgeable staff including many technical and support staff with effective experience or training.
75. The overall leadership of key staff, including heads of department, is good. The leadership group and subject leaders are part of a good department review programme. All teachers are observed but there is inconsistency in the quality of feedback at middle management level and the sharing of good practice. The headteacher delegates a high level of responsibility and expects a professional response from all staff. However, not all subject leaders are rigorously monitoring teaching. Music, history and design and technology are very good examples of delegated management working very well. In these subjects the subject leader has used the school policies such as those on assessment and behaviour management and modified them to fit in with department nuances – making a successful impact on learning and keeping parents well informed of their child's development.
76. The use of performance data to track students' achievement or modify planning is inconsistent. It is very well done in design and technology and music, but is unsatisfactory in art and design and poor in ICT. In most departments it is satisfactory.
77. The special educational needs department is well led. Teamwork and monitoring within the department are significant strengths. Management is satisfactory. The headteacher and governing body has set out a good policy, which promotes a positive approach to SEN to include staffing, funding and the monitoring of provision. The role of the SENCO could be developed further, however, as she has significant teaching responsibilities in another curriculum area, and this limits what she can do for SEN. Currently, support staff lack formal basic qualifications in learning support, although they are well experienced and effective. They have some additional training needs, which have not yet been addressed.
78. The importance of extending the gifted and talented students is well understood and the leadership team is working hard to ensure that the curriculum provision fully extends each child to his or her full potential. In the sixth form, students are encouraged to aim high and Oxbridge entry is encouraged. The management of this area is effective in informing all teachers about students' levels of attainment and identifying those who are gifted. Systems for departmental review are identifying curriculum areas where good practice is in place for addressing these students' needs well. There is good awareness that some subject areas do not yet address the individual students' needs well enough.
79. Experienced teachers new to the school, newly qualified teachers and those in training are exceptionally well supported in their professional development. Staff development procedures are sharply organised. Recruitment has been difficult in some areas of the curriculum but there is now a good match of number, qualifications and experience of teachers to the demands of the curriculum. There is a good balance of youth and experience. Teachers are well qualified and knowledgeable about their subjects. Non-teaching staff make an important contribution to the life and work of the school. Technical support is very good in design and technology and science; less use is made of it in art and design. Provision of learning support assistants is broadly satisfactory.

80. The school makes very good provision for experienced teachers new to the school, newly qualified teachers and for those just entering the profession. 'Beginning' teachers and those newly qualified regularly meet with their mentor and follow a very good induction programme, which involves regular reflection about teaching. All recent appointees value the help they are given within departments and by other colleagues. Staff benefit significantly from established links with the local education authority in training potential teachers, because their professional development is especially extended from very good specialist mentor training. However, professional development varies across departments. Application for training is clearly organised, although, occasionally, needs are remain unfulfilled due to time constraints.
81. Performance management is well established. It has contributed to improved teaching because teachers' targets tie in with those for the whole school and also their own professional development. Most staff observe each other teach and share good practice. There is scope for further developing this skill in its focus and analysis of teaching and learning.
82. The school has introduced workforce reform and administrative tasks are starting to be methodically delegated, to support departmental administration. This has raised the issue of performance management for non-teaching staff, a target addressed in the development plan. Performance management has been identified as a priority. There is, as yet, no career structure for SEN support assistants, although their involvement in lessons looks set to increase. Lack of time for liaison limits the effectiveness of all support staff.
83. The headteacher and all her colleagues take care to ensure the school can and does meet the needs of the full range of students. There is a focus on students with English as a second language and provision for students with special needs are given good support to help them meet their personal targets.
84. The governors have made significant improvements to their organisation since the previous report. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are able to offer a good balance of support and challenge. Governors have worked closely with the headteacher to build effective relationships with the students, parents and the community. The governors and headteacher are well supported by a dedicated personal assistant/governors' clerk, who aids the smooth operation of management meetings.
85. The governing body ensures that parents are informed that their child has special needs. A governor has been appointed to oversee the school's provision. The report of the governing body to parents informs them of the implementation of the SEN policy, but fails in its duty to inform them of the allocation and use of resources. Statutory requirements with regard to reviews are fully met. Support from a wide variety of outside agencies is well managed within the school. All teachers are aware of students with SEN but there has been no substantial in-service training, although issues are mentioned in all staff meetings and some briefings. There are currently sufficient staff and teachers to meet the needs of students, but provision is dictated by funding limitations, which constrain the development of provision.
86. Financial management is good overall. Budget problems have been resolved through the effective co-operation between the headteacher and the governors. The bursar and the finance committee of the governing body carefully monitor finances. Imagination has been used to address certain issues, such as cover for absent teachers, and expenditure is well linked to the school's development plans. Detailed planning beyond a period of one year is not, however, sufficiently undertaken.
87. The school receives less money per student than the national average and since achievement is good the school provides very good value for money. There are good procedures to ensure the school gets the best deal in its expenditure. The school puts major contracts to tender,

although governors have not set a level beyond which tenders have to be sought. Some consultation has been undertaken, for example when planning the sports centre. However, governors do not yet use data to compare patterns of expenditure with those from similar schools.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	3,995,555	Balance from previous year	199,155
Total expenditure	4,034,543	Balance carried forward to the next	160,167
Expenditure per pupil	3,296		

#### **Sixth Form**

88. The management of the sixth form is seen very much as an extension of the practice developed in the main school. Leadership in the sixth form is very good. The use of data to monitor students' progress against set targets is very well developed in the sixth form and more extensively applied in departments than in the main school. Support and guidance, including careers guidance provided for sixth form students, is very well managed. Many opportunities are created to develop sixth form responsibilities. The sixth form is subsidised financially slightly by the rest of the school but is, nonetheless, cost-effective.

#### **OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES**

##### **WORK-RELATED LEARNING**

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

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

- Work experience placements meet individual needs well.
- Some students in Year 10 and 11 benefit from good college links to provide a more appropriate option alongside a full range of GCSE subjects and courses.
- Design and technology department makes a good contribution to work related learning but most departments have yet to identify their involvement.
- Insufficient time is allocated to careers education in the tutor period.

##### **Commentary**

89. Students benefit from good work placements, business links and links with local colleges and schools. Provision is flexible and varied to meet individual needs, although the school plans to extend these opportunities in the future. All Year 10 students have a two-week period of work experience and individuals can take up further placements on a weekly basis if appropriate. Placements are also planned for students on vocational courses in the sixth form. Provision is well managed by the school and Trident ensures that health and safety requirements are met. Students are able to reflect on the value of these placements and say that they found them really valuable.
90. The school has developed an increased flexibility programme for students in Years 10 and 11. College links enable some students who are at risk of exclusion to remain in school and most

continue with a full range of GCSE courses. although the majority do not take modern foreign languages and take some private study time in the library. Students are acquiring a range of skills and vocational qualifications in areas such as motor vehicle maintenance, construction and hairdressing.

91. Two double award applied GCSE courses in business and leisure are open to all students through the option system but the timetable allows less than the required number of teaching periods for these double award courses. The advanced vocational courses available in the sixth form provide good progression and continuity from Year 11.

92. Work related learning is enhanced by college, community and business links. Teachers visit students on placements or workshop based courses. Some departments particularly design and technology and business studies, make a very good contribution to WRL but the potential for contribution from other subject areas has not been explored as yet. The school is working through a consortium of other school to improve and develop WRL provision.
93. Careers education is being taught in the rolling tutor programme and the Real Game and Steps activities are planned for but limited time is available for this because of the other pressures on the tutor period. Careers and higher education guidance is good because of the quality of support from Connexions and the good management within the school.



# PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

## SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 and 4

### ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

#### English

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students in recent years have achieved well above average results in Year 9 tests and GCSE examinations.
- Good teaching and students' positive attitudes help to maintain good standards of achievement.
- Good leadership has created a cohesive, committed team of teachers.
- There are some inconsistencies in the quality of marking and in teachers' approach to lesson planning.

#### Commentary

94. Results in the tests at the end of Year 9 in 2003 were well above average, in relation to results in both all schools and to those in similar contexts. Results have fluctuated but overall they have risen in line with national trends. Girls perform better than boys, and English results are a little better than those in other core subjects. Results in 2004 showed a slight decrease. In both GCSE English and GCSE English literature results in 2003 were well above average, both subjects showing a slight improvement in 2004. Girls again performed better than boys.
95. Current standards in the work seen were above national expectations, both in Years 7 to 9 and in Years 10 and 11. Much of the work seen reflects the fact that, at this very early stage in the academic year, many students have not yet received the targeted support that raises standards to well above average. Students write fluently with a good standard of accuracy, and there is much lively, interesting descriptive and narrative writing in Years 7 to 9. Analytical skills develop well in Years 10 and 11, and there are many examples of enthusiastic personal responses to texts in literature. Some weaker students, who make perceptive comments in class discussions, have difficulty in writing in appropriate formal style. Overall achievement from Year 7 to Year 11 is good. There is little difference in the relative achievement of boys and girls: many boys are particularly articulate in oral work. Students with special educational needs achieve well: the quality of support in class is good. Students with English as an additional language achieve in line with their peers, as do those who are gifted and talented.
96. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Students achieve well because of teachers' thorough preparation, sound assessment procedures and very good questioning skills, which probe for further depth of thought. Teachers make their expectations clear and have very effective classroom management, so that there is usually good behaviour and a productive working atmosphere in most classrooms. This is enhanced by the good relations with students and by students' own positive attitudes evident in most lessons. When teaching is less successful, this is sometimes because of weaknesses in lesson timing, which mean that students have no opportunity to evaluate their learning. The quality of marking is variable: targets for improvement are not always clearly shown, and some comments are brief rather than detailed.
97. Leadership and management are good. The head of department, who is a very good role model for her staff, has a clear vision of the aims for the work of the department and has

created a co-operative team who are committed to self-review and improvement. Appropriate priorities for development have been identified. New staff are well supported. Some good monitoring procedures are in place, but these are not all sufficiently rigorous to ensure greater consistency in teachers' practice.

98. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. New schemes of work have helped ensure that the primary curriculum is not repeated, while there is now much more effective use of assessment data to track students' progress.

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

99. Standards of literacy across the curriculum are good. Oral skills are strong in science, art, music and ICT, although there are insufficient opportunities for speaking in modern languages. Reading skills are well developed in most subjects, but could be encouraged further in art. Detailed, technically accurate extended writing is seen in history, geography and English, but in some subjects such as science and mathematics, teachers do not pay enough attention to spelling, punctuation and grammar. Although there is a whole-school literacy policy, few departments have developed their own strategies for the promotion of literacy, and practice is inconsistent.

### **Modern foreign languages**

Provision in modern foreign languages, French, German and Spanish, is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Examination results at GCSE in the past two years in German were well below average but standards seen indicate significant improvement.
- Staffing changes have led to good teaching enabling students to achieve well in Years 10 and 11.
- The language department is well led by its new head to raise standards.
- The quality of teaching and learning is well monitored.
- Classroom management is ineffectual in some classes and hinders learning.
- Resources are insufficient to support the curriculum and insufficient use is made of ICT.

### **Commentary**

100. The 2003 GCSE results in French were below average. They were just above the national average for girls and well below for boys. The 2003 GCSE results in German were well below the national average for boys and girls. The 2004 results in French and German were lower than 2003 and the trend has been downward.
101. No German lessons were seen in Years 7 – 9. Standards seen in French in Years 7- 9 are broadly in line with the national expectation. Achievement overall is satisfactory but girls achieve better boys largely because behaviour of boys in some groups is not always well managed.
102. In Years 10 and 11, standards seen are broadly in line with national expectations in French and below in German. Achievement overall is good. Standards show improvement compared with the results in the recent examinations. Year 10 students have made a satisfactory start in Spanish where standards are average but students achieve well considering they have just started this language. Overall, girls achieve better than boys in French. Students with special educational needs, ethnic minority students and gifted and talented students make progress similar to their peers.

103. Up to Year 9, teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and good in Years 10 and 11. All teachers have at least good command of the languages they teach. The main features of effective teaching are careful planning, high expectations, consistent challenge, good relationships, ongoing assessment and good use of time and resources. Inadequate class management and methods are the main features of less effective teaching, especially as the poor attitude and behaviour of a core of students in a few classes place more demands on the teacher. Years 10 and 11 teachers are very focussed on raising achievement but do not extend students' speaking skills as much as they could. Across the school lower attaining students find listening tasks the most difficult. Curriculum arrangements affect standards in German adversely as it is not taught in Year 9. The introduction of Spanish is very popular as students welcome an alternative to French or German.
104. The new head of department and her deputy have worked hard in a short period to raise standards. They have clearly identified priorities on which to focus when monitoring the quality of teaching and learning and have improved curriculum provision by introducing Spanish and a modular examination course. Students' achievement is not monitored rigorously enough and language-specific targets are not clear. Language clubs, school trips in Years 7 and 8, the reward system in place in German in Year 7 and email links with a Spanish school make valuable contributions to the curriculum. The department is housed in a pleasant suite of rooms in a bright, new building but is under-resourced and information and communication technology as a learning tool is limited. There are still not enough French books and no foreign language assistants.
105. The language department has suffered high staff turnover since the last inspection, which has had a negative impact on standards because of lack of continuity, more so in German that was the most affected. The present full-time teachers have joined the school over the last three years.
106. Improvement since the last inspection is good overall. The head of department has the vision to improve the curriculum further by offering a carousel of languages to all students in Year 7 in the near future.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Attainment at GCSE is well above national average.
- After a lengthy period of having difficulty with recruitment of teachers, the department now has a full, well-qualified team of teachers of the subject.
- Students achieve well in examinations as a result of good teaching and good revision programmes.
- The department provides a good range of courses that match the interests of students.
- Tasks in some classes do not always match the attainment of students.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT to enhance students' learning.

### **Commentary**

107. In 2003, in national tests taken in Year 9, students' results, based on their average point scores, were above average when compared to all schools but below average compared with schools with a similar prior attainment on entry. Girls' results were better than boys'. From 2001 to 2003, the trend in these results for the school has been below the national trend but results have improved considerably in 2004. GCSE results in 2003 were well above the national average and above the average for similar schools. Girls gained higher grades than

boys at GCSE. The school's GCSE results have improved in line with the national trend. GCSE results in 2004 were similar to those for the previous year.

108. The standards of work of students of all ages seen during the inspection were above national expectations. The standards seen show good achievement. Standards of students in Years 10 and 11 were not as high as those in the recent GCSE results at the time of inspection. This is considered to be because many of the teachers seen were new to the school and were still establishing their relationships with students and assimilating school procedures.
109. Girls achieve more than boys. This is because they have more mature attitudes towards their work. At all ages, students with special educational needs achieve as much as other students. Students for whom English is an additional language also achieve at the same rate as other students because they have no language difficulties with the work. Students from minority ethnic groups achieve well because they play a full part in lessons. Higher-attaining students achieve more than other students because the work is more suited to their needs and they display more positive attitudes to their work. As at the time of the previous inspection, students are less skilled at using and applying their mathematics than they are with other aspects of the subject.
110. Teaching and learning observed during the inspection were satisfactory. However, a well-planned and systematic programme of revision and preparation of students for GCSE examinations consolidates the learning and leads to considerably higher levels of knowledge and understanding as the examination is reached. As a result, the overall teaching and effectiveness of the provision is good.
111. Learning is at its most effective when teachers recognise the range of achievement within a group. Year 11 students learnt very effectively about trigonometry because the teacher had provided additional, more challenging tasks for the highest-attaining students whilst he provided a student who had been absent with additional material to help understanding. By contrast, Year 10 students did not learn effectively about negative numbers because the work was not at the right level. In most classes students are keen to learn but in a minority of classes too many students display immature approaches to their work and teachers are not fully effective in eliminating such behaviour. Although some use is made of computers, learning would be more effective if students used ICT more in their work. When marking work, some teachers provide helpful comment on what has been achieved and how to improve. For other classes, comment is less detailed.
112. Leadership and management of mathematics are good. As a result of considerable efforts, the school has now been able to recruit sufficient teachers with a good knowledge of the subject. Good support is provided to new teachers. Teachers new to a class do not always have sufficiently detailed information about what students have already learnt. Teachers do observe each other teach but there is no structured link between this activity and the development of the subject.
113. Good use is made of the range of examinations. Higher-attaining students take GCSE statistics as an additional subject, in which they do well. Lower-attaining students take the lowest level of GCSE in Year 10 so that, should they do well, they can seek to improve their grade on a higher paper in Year 11. Improvement overall since the last inspection has been good overall. Standards in national curriculum tests in Year 9, which were declining relative to national averages, are now rising. Results in GCSE examinations have risen considerably. Staffing is now settled after the difficulties in recruitment.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

114. Students are competent in the use of mathematics and so readily meet all the demands of their other subjects. In science, Year 11 students draw lines of best fit to investigate electrical resistance. In physical education, when learning how to perform a headstand, students considered the geometrical importance of the points of contact with the floor. More use is

made of mathematics in some subjects than in others. The school has a policy for the use of mathematics across the curriculum but the work is not co-ordinated and hence not monitored. In consequence, insufficient use is made of mathematics in ICT.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Many students achieve very well because of their teachers' very good knowledge and drive to share it with them.
- Skilful support of assistants and technicians contributes greatly to the work of teachers.
- There is a good team approach to raising standards but some teachers do not creatively involve students in imaginative starter and end of lesson activities.
- Students have good opportunities for using numeracy but not enough for applying ideas and justifying evidence.
- Learning targets for individual students are not sharply identified.

### **Commentary**

115. Year 9 test results were well above average in 2003 and above average compared with similar schools. This represents good achievement for many students in relation to when they started at the school. They achieved above the average at the higher Levels 6 and 7. Girls performed better than boys. Provisional results for 2004 were above national expectation, but lower than for the previous year, especially at the higher levels. Achievement was satisfactory. Teachers' assessments did not closely match test results. GCSE results were above average at grades A\*-C and at the highest A\*-A in 2003. Boys and girls performed equally well; achievement, overall, was satisfactory. Results at grades A\*-C were similar in 2004 to the previous year's.
116. Standards in Year 9 are, overall, well above average. Achievement is good for many students, including those with special educational needs. The actual rate of progress is related to how deeply teachers expect students to understand ideas, for instance, books show that Year 7 students quickly deepened their understanding of particle theory as they explained the erratic zig-zag movements of smoke particles in terms of 'Brownian Motion'. Low attainers in Year 9 widen their technical vocabulary as they measure fitness, and high attainers do so by looking at joints. They all have good opportunities for practising numeracy but not enough for applying ideas and presenting diagrams well.
117. Standards in Year 11 are well above average and achievement, overall, is good. There are pockets of underachievement, notably in Year 10, where work does not match the level that students are capable of achieving. Low attainers in Year 11 keenly followed their plans to successfully separate a mixture, swept up after a bottle of copper sulphate had been dropped. They made good progress in this technique because they wanted to learn and, from strong teamwork between their teacher and support assistant. From observing and measuring changes in mass of sultanas soaked in different sugar solutions, other students clarified complex ideas about osmosis. The very highest attainers critically analysed results well in explaining equilibrium; others needed more practice, without guidance, in identifying anomalies and justifying their comments.
118. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers show very good knowledge in their questioning and explanations. When stimulating resources are used, students' interest is captured, topics 'come alive' so they better understand new ideas confronting them. Camera shots through the trachea to the lungs certainly firmed up links between cigarette smoking and disease for Year 9. Good teaching is briskly paced; time is not wasted to thwart progress. A strong feature of good lessons was students' eagerness to learn, which played a major part

in raising standards. Progress slows down as they answer leading questions from textbooks rather than constructing their own titles and justifying conclusions. There is scope for wider use of interesting resources, more creative involvement of students throughout lessons, and imaginative starter activities and plenaries.

119. Leadership and management are good. Inexperienced, unqualified and new teachers are supported well. Technical and support staff are used well to help students learn. The handbook is detailed and the action plan well prioritised, although not fully costed with specific time deadlines. Improvement has been good. More students achieve the highest levels and grades, textbook provision is good, there is a spacious preparation laboratory and the accommodation is being thoroughly refurbished. Classroom observations and analyses of students' work are not routinely used to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Assessment information is used well to check general progress of students but not well enough to identify specific targets, which focus sharply on learning particular aspects of science.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- New department leadership and good teaching seen during inspection is encouraging good student learning.
- Teachers ensure a supportive learning environment and consequently students' attitudes are very good.
- Assessment and recording is poor – it has not been established and embedded for ICT.
- Monitoring of performance data to track students' progress is unsatisfactory.
- Statutory requirements are not met because many subjects, including mathematics, geography and modern foreign languages, do not ensure that students make sufficient use of ICT in their work.

### **Commentary**

120. Students enter the school with a wide range of levels of skills in using ICT. Overall, attainment at the beginning of Year 7 is average.
121. The GCSE results in 2004 in information and communication technology were well below the national average. Standards by the end of Year 11 were below average in 2003. This was in the main due to staffing changes. Girl students attain a higher percentage of A-C grades than boy students. The short GCSE information and communication technology course is completed in Year 10 and Year 11 students do not have any specific formal ICT lessons. Their use of ICT in other subjects is very limited. Students are not receiving their entitlement to information and communication technology experiences and the school is not meeting statutory requirements.
122. Standards by the end of Year 9 are at the national average, reflecting satisfactory achievement from students' attainment on entry to the school. By the end of Year 9, current students are competent in a variety of computer applications including word processing and Internet research. Higher-attaining students have some understanding of how to apply different packages to different situations. Lower-attaining students have satisfactory technical skills but do not always complete work thoroughly. In lessons, gifted and talented students readily help others and students with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, particularly when given extra support.

123. By the end of Year 10, students studying a short GCSE course in ICT are competent users of word processing, the Internet for research and databases to process information. Coursework shows that higher-attaining students are able to explain the development of their work. Lower-attaining students usually complete the tasks set but have a limited understanding of what they have learnt.
124. Overall, teaching and learning seen during inspection are good and clearly reflect a significant improvement since last year. Teachers are secure in the knowledge of the subject. The use of seating plans has encouraged focused work and very good attitudes of students. Lessons are well planned and structured to use a wide range of activities to capture students' interest. The pace of learning is brisk because teachers set specific time limits for tasks to be completed. Teachers make good use of the computerized projector to improve the quality of teaching and this helps students' learning. In the best lessons teachers establish very good practice for learning, for example insisting on students switching off their monitors so that they can give their undivided attention to the teacher explaining the tasks to be completed. More attention is needed to ensure that the tasks set for students match and build upon students' existing ICT skills. Assessment has been poor and target setting is not yet used for students in Years 7 to 9, or for students studying the GCSE short course. Plans are in place to establish properly this important aspect of provision.
125. Leadership and management are now satisfactory. Although a number of staff including the head of department have been in post only two weeks at the time of inspection there is a clear vision for improvement of ICT. Already good teamwork is developing in the department. Teachers provide good role models. The accommodation and resources are good and have improved significantly since the previous inspection. In Years 7 to 9 some class sizes are large for a practical subject. Technical support is inadequate, as it is not specifically allocated to the ICT department. Students in Year 11 do not have adequate lesson time for the subject and this has impacted negatively on their progress.
126. There has been unsatisfactory progress since the previous inspection. The issues raised in the previous report have not been addressed, although plans are clearly in hand under the new leadership. The issues of cross curriculum provision for ICT and progression in Years 10 and 11, assessment, recording and reporting still remain.

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

127. Few teachers are consistently using ICT to improve the quality of teaching. Most students are competent users of ICT and yet their skills are not being recognized or built upon in their learning across the curriculum. Opportunities are missed to use ICT to support learning in mathematics, geography, modern foreign languages and other subject areas. ICT is well used in art and design, business studies and design and technology. GCSE history coursework on Winchester Cathedral uses word processing and photographic material well to illustrate changes in construction over time. Computerised projectors are used effectively to present information to students in ICT lessons. However, although computer resources have improved significantly since the last inspection the opportunities to use ICT on a regular basis to support learning are not taken.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Geography**

Provision in geography is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**



- Good teaching in the majority of lessons ensures that most students achieve well.
- There is insufficient challenge for the most able students.
- Good use of a variety of resources maintains students' concentration well, but there is insufficient use of ICT for individual research.
- Local fieldwork and residential field trips greatly assist students' learning.
- Monitoring of teaching is not rigorous enough.

## Commentary

128. Standards are broadly average when students join the school, but are above national expectations by the end of Year 9. This represents good achievement. Students in Years 10 and 11 continue to achieve well. Standards in GCSE are well above the national average and have been consistently high over the past few years. There is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls. Students with special educational needs receive suitable support and achieve well, but higher-attaining students do not make as much progress as they might because their work is not always challenging enough. Students from all ethnic backgrounds, including those with English as an additional language, are fully included in discussions and activities, and achieve well as a result.
129. Most teaching is good and this promotes effective learning. Students benefit from warm relationships with knowledgeable teachers. They concentrate well because most lessons move briskly and good use is made of a wide variety of resources. In Year 11, for example, the teacher used a variety of maps, cartoons, textbook diagrams and video clips very successfully to stimulate students' interest. Overall, students' good attitudes to work help them to learn quickly. Occasionally, however, when teaching is not as effective, there is too much misbehaviour by a small minority of students, which prevents other students from achieving well. Most students benefit from careful lesson planning, but, too often, the work set is not challenging enough for the most able students and assessments of students' skills are not used effectively to plan suitable work for the highest achievers. Students enjoy carrying out fieldwork projects in the local area, and this provides them with the skills needed to complete their own GCSE coursework successfully. Students use their ICT skills when presenting individual coursework assignments, but there are not enough opportunities for students to use ICT for individual research during lessons. Homework is set and marked regularly in all years and is used effectively to reinforce and build on work covered during lessons.
130. The subject is well led by an experienced Head of Department. Regular use of different writing styles, including note-taking, newspaper articles, letters and reports, helps develop students' literacy skills, while numeracy skills are developed well when drawing and interpreting graphs and charts. Management of the subject is satisfactory. Students' work is monitored informally and their progress is assessed regularly. Monitoring and support of teaching is not sufficiently rigorous, however, to ensure a consistently high standard of teaching. Accommodation is good. Since the previous inspection, resources have improved and there are now sufficient textbooks. However, too little action has been taken to ensure that assessment is used effectively so there is sufficient challenge for the most able students.

## History

Provision in history is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE grades A\* to C have consistently been well above national averages in recent years.
- Consistently very good, and sometimes excellent, teaching enables many students to learn very well.
- Very good classroom relationships, attitudes and behaviour make a significant contribution to achievement in many classes.
- Very good leadership is playing an important role in the subject's performance.
- Students' independence and self-reliance in their learning are underdeveloped.
- There are insufficient opportunities for using ICT in lessons.

## Commentary

131. Overall results in terms of grades A\* to C have been well above average in recent years. In 2003, the latest year for which national comparisons are possible, the proportion of students obtaining the highest A\* grade was over twice the national average. The equivalent figure for girls was over three times the average and only ten per cent of candidates did not achieve a pass at A\* to C. In 2004 results were similar to, but slightly lower than, the previous year's.
132. In Year 9 standards are above expectations and students achieve well. Many complete detailed, well organised and well-presented work on trench warfare and have a good knowledge and understanding of the techniques involved. Literacy errors often mar the work of lower-attaining students and there is scope for improving the source analysis and evaluation skills of all students.
133. In Year 11 students of all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs and from ethnic minorities, achieve very well in reaching standards well above the norm. They recall and deploy prior knowledge and understanding well and use subject specific terminology confidently in frequently practised GCSE style questions. Students word-process coursework competently although there are currently too few opportunities for using computers on a class basis. A significant role in their achievement is clearly played by students' very good behaviour and the highly positive way in which they respond to each other and their teachers.
134. The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good overall, although it is better in Years 10 and 11 than in earlier years. Significant strengths include very good subject knowledge and planning and very high expectations. Class questioning is very well used to probe, extend and consolidate students' understanding, and they are continually challenged to explain, link and justify in their answers. Lesson aims, as opposed to the immediate objectives, are not consistently shared with students so they are not always aware of the skills that they are acquiring and therefore not as independent in their learning as they otherwise might be.
135. The head of department plays a pivotal role in ensuring the continued success of the subject. Her perceptive and evaluative approach is evident in her detailed analyses of examination performance, and her energy and enthusiasm are much appreciated, and also replicated by her colleagues. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

## TECHNOLOGY

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good procedures in Years 7 to 9 ensure all national initiatives are utilised in teaching
- The specialist technology college status of the school is clearly reflected in the quality of provision in the department.
- Limited concentration by some students in a minority of lessons restricts learning.
- Very good teaching and expert technical support leads to very good learning.
- School policies are adapted excellently to ensure departmental procedures are consistently applied, for example in managing behaviour.

## Commentary

136. Limited design skills on entry make students below national expectation at the start of Year 7. This is not secure because there is no formal baseline data for the subject. Students' performance by the end of Year 9 is above average illustrating very good achievement. Girls'

performance is better than boys'. High-achieving students make good progress but last years staffing difficulties caused the rigour for these students to fade , this is now being addressed very well by the structure module booklets and the very well planned schemes of work.

137. In 2003 GCSE results, compared with national averages overall, were well above average. The girls were above average and the boys well above average. However school comparative data show boys performed less well in relation to performance in their other subjects in the school, with girls exceeding their performance in other examination subjects. There is an upward trend in standards.
138. Students with special needs make good gains in relation to their individual education plans, but despite teachers planning to meet their needs some elements of design, involving literacy, present problems. Students from different ethnic backgrounds match the very good performance of their peers because of the practical nature of the subject, which helps their communication skills.
139. The very good achievement at Years 7 to 9 is accelerated by the natural use of assessment as one of the tools to raise attainment. Teachers' assessment analyses teaching and learning and negotiates targets for students' next stage of development. Students understand their own achievement and the healthy strategy of using personal targets on each module challenges students self-motivation. During the GCSE course students make very good use of the examination criteria as part of their assessment. Teachers' feedback, as constructive comments on 'post-its' guide progress, these influence the girls more than the boys. The portfolio presentation of some boys lacks attention to detail on techniques and highlights problems with time management.
140. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teamwork, the consistent use of varied teaching styles and constant reflection at department meetings on how to improve focuses on raising attainment in an enjoyable atmosphere. The best lessons challenged independence and freethinking about design, the less successful failed to give students the full opportunity to take an active part in consolidating their learning at the end of lessons.
141. Leadership is excellent. The team leader has created a 'dream team' who share ideas and are constantly striving to raise the profile of the subject. It is an inclusive and visionary team with a very positive outlook on students taking responsibility for themselves, for example, the departments modification of the school behaviour policy gives total support to teachers and students while keeping parents well informed. Management overall is very good. . Very good improvement from the previous report has addressed issues in an innovative style to drive the department forward.

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS**

### **Art and design**

Provision in art and design is **good**

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Students achieve well because of the good teaching and their very good attitudes; they enjoy learning in this subject.
- Students have very good opportunities to visit galleries and museums and to work with artists.
- Teachers are enthusiastic and know their subject well.
- Drawing skills are not taught methodically or with enough rigour.

- Students are involved in evaluating work but their progress is insufficiently monitored.
- There is an excellent display gallery but cramped teaching space.

### **Commentary**

142. In 2003, students' attainment at the end of Year 9 was very high against national expectations. A majority reached higher levels, as they did again in 2004, but marking was over-generous. GCSE results were below the national average in 2003, though they improved in 2004 with the best results for three years.
143. Students enter the school with different experiences in art and previous experience can be limited. However, achievement from Years 7 to 9 is good and standards reached in Year 9 are above average. Students understand how to use colour effectively in paint, print and collage. They use clay and other materials to extend their ideas in three-dimensional work. Students make good connections between their own work and the work of artists. In their homework, students use their sketchbooks for research and planning but their observational drawing skills are under-developed.
144. In Year 11, standards are overall above average. Students spend much time on their artwork and they continue to achieve well. Good individual guidance from teachers helps students gain confidence in experimenting with media and scale. Higher-attaining students' work is imaginative and personal and teachers encourage those with special talents to extend their work. Regular reference is made to the work of artists, art movements and other cultures. Older students have very good opportunities to visit galleries and exhibitions in Britain and Europe and enjoy art activities beyond the classroom. In addition, students have opportunities to meet and work with artists visiting and working in the school. These extra activities give a rich dimension to students' work. Students reflect on and explore issues of spirituality and morality, which contribute very well to their personal development.
145. Teaching is good in all years. Teachers' good subject knowledge promotes high expectations and results in good and sometimes very good learning by the students. Lesson topics allow students to develop their own interests. A strength is the individual dialogue between teachers and students that takes place. A weakness is students' limited preparation, planning and technical skill. Teachers mark work so that students know how well they are doing but do not monitor progress rigorously enough. A start has been made in students formally assessing their own and others' work, which promotes a good critical approach.
146. Leadership offers a keen sense of purpose and teachers give their time generously. The department is enthusiastic and dedicated to raising standards. The display of artwork around the school offers a stimulating visual environment. Gallery space is excellent. However, the lack of space for whole classes in two out of three studios is a constraint on what students can do and on what teachers can store. The department is inventive in using resources including ICT and has helpful technical support. Monitoring of attainment and achievement to track students' progress is unsatisfactory. Since the last inspection, most strengths have been maintained. With staffing difficulties and changes in examination criteria, GCSE results deteriorated, but they now show an upward trend.

### **Drama**

Provision in drama is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Students achieve well as a result of the good teaching.
- Students consistently reach high standards.

- Lessons are carefully designed to maximise the improvement of students' practical skills.
- Accommodation is limited and has to be shared with other departments. This affects achievement.

### **Commentary**

147. Students in all years reach standards well above the national expectation. Achievement is good in all years, although girls do significantly better than boys. Those with SEN, students from ethnic minorities and those for whom English is not their first language do equally well.
148. Teaching is consistently good. Lessons are carefully planned to provide a variety of learning activities well designed to improve students' practical skills. "Warm-up" sessions serve to improve students' concentration on the task in hand. Improvisations set in a "haunted manor" in one Year 7 lesson, caught students' interest and helped them to extend their imagination. Knowledgeable and sensitive teaching helps them to achieve well in their tableaux and improvisations based around a theme. Skilful questioning helps students to arrive at a process of self evaluation which enables them to achieve very well in their polished improvisations, which are based on character and relationships. Lessons are well controlled to ensure students' concentration. The systematic development of communication skills helps them to learn well in a variety of groupings. Well chosen texts such as an extract from Pinter's "The Birthday Party" allow all the students to develop their knowledge of characterisation. In a Year 11 lesson, they used good, practical techniques of portraying tension to interpret character in a sophisticated way. Students co-operate effectively to plan, rehearse and present their work. Ensemble work is a strong aspect of their learning.
149. Leadership and management are good. The head of department is determined to achieve the best standards possible, and has the expertise in both teaching and management to achieve this. Liaison with some English staff who teach some of the younger students is good. Their contribution to the subject is well monitored. Careful monitoring of the standards of all students has helped to maintain the high standards seen during the inspection. Accommodation for drama is satisfactory, but space is shared with other departments.
150. The department has made a good level of improvement since the last inspection. High standards have been maintained. Curriculum time in Years 7, 8 and 9, although low, is no longer shared with English. Good opportunities for public performance continue to motivate students and improve standards and achievement.

### **Music**

Provision in music is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Excellent leadership and musicianship combine with very good teaching to promote students' progress in music.
- The high standard of extra-curricular activities contributes to the strong enthusiasm from students.
- Use of ICT by students in their learning is insufficiently developed.
- Accommodation is poorly soundproofed and is a constraint on learning.

### **Commentary**

151. At the end of Year 9, standards for all students are well above national averages. This is very good achievement as standards on entry to the school are only average. Students are developing their musical skills as performers, and composing is a very good feature. In a Year

8 class, students demonstrate their musicality by improvising variations using pitched percussion, and in Year 7 all attainers are beginning to compose and improvise well.

152. GCSE results have been very high since the last inspection, although the 2004 results, with 60 per cent achieving A\*-C grades, represent a dip in standards. This was due to staffing difficulties which are now resolved. In the large GCSE groups standards in composing and performing are well above average. Students invariably use correct musical vocabulary. In a Year 10 class students assess fluently the performance of a girl student demonstrating singing with different dynamics. High attainers show considerable skills as performers, and a talented girl singer, accompanied by a boy pianist, performs her own composition in a Year 11 assembly. Students' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good, with students working well together in classes and rehearsals.
153. Teaching and learning are very good and frequently excellent. Teachers' musicianship and teamwork, planning for lessons, and awareness of differentiation give challenge to all attainers. The department has adopted the school's assessment policies and sets realistic targets for all students, including those with special educational needs, who achieve equally well in music lessons. All students catch the energy and enthusiasm of the teaching. The use of singing as an integral part of the curriculum is helping to lay strong foundations for future work. Instrumental teaching is good and a large number of students, nearly twice the national averages, receive tuition in a wide range of instruments. The programme of extra-curricular activities is outstanding, and attracts large numbers of students. The school has a promising string orchestra and concert band providing foundations for future orchestral work. Choral work produces singing of real quality. Excellent concerts illustrate the high profile music is acquiring in the school and its value to the community. Music makes a significant contribution to the liturgical life of the school.
154. Leadership is visionary and the management is very good, promoting good teamwork. Staff support one another and manage the cramped and poorly-soundproofed accommodation well. Since the last inspection improvement has been very good. Standards have been maintained and are now more consistent with achievement being more uniform. Students' skills in pitched percussion and keyboards are now very good and teachers' use of time and resources are all greatly improved. Further training for teachers in information and communication technology will be needed now that resources have been improved.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE results have improved significantly in the last year.
- A very good range of activities after school supports and enriches work done in lessons.
- Problems with the management of the behaviour of a significant minority of students in some Year 10 and 11 lessons is restricting the progress of students.
- An inconsistent approach in lessons to the development of the fitness of students and their understanding of the importance of exercise has restricted progress.
- The allocation of time for students in Year 11 is insufficient to cover the National Curriculum in appropriate depth.

### Commentary

155. GCSE results in 2003 were well below the national average. although results in 2004 indicate a significant improvement. Students achieved at least as well in physical education in 2004 as they did in their other subjects.

156. Standards observed in the inspection are broadly average by Year 9. This represents satisfactory progress overall during their first three years in the school, given the average attainment of students on entry to the school. Standards obtained by students in Years 10 and 11 who are not on the GCSE course are in line the national average overall. Students in a Year 10 netball lesson have a good range of accurate passing skills and are able to apply them to a competitive game situation. Evidence from GCSE course-work indicates standards that are above the national average. Students have a sound understanding of many aspects of the course including physiology and anatomy and the acquisition of skills. The ability of students to observe and analyse performance in all year groups is variable but in lessons where it was used such as Year 7 swimming it had a significant impact on achievement. There are limited opportunities for students to take responsibility in lessons and some opportunities to develop planning skills are being missed. An inconsistent approach in lessons to the development of the fitness of students has restricted progress in this area and many students have a limited understanding of the importance of exercise.
157. The quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory overall. In many lessons a secure knowledge of the subject is regularly conveyed to students through perceptive observation of performance, appropriate intervention and good teacher-directed question and answer sessions. Thorough planning, incorporating varied teaching strategies and an appropriate sequence of activities involving both individual and collaborative learning. is also a feature of these lessons.
158. Although relationships between staff and students are often good and students respond with enthusiasm, in some lessons the behaviour of a significant number of students was allowed to restrict the progress of the lesson. In other lessons where teaching was not quite so good lessons started late and individual students were not set clear targets for improvement. There were often limited strategies for extending the higher-attaining students. although students with special educational needs made appropriate progress.
159. The recording of assessment for students is developing and is beginning to involve them in setting their own targets for improvement. It has been particularly effective for GCSE students, who are aware of their target grades and have a good understanding of what is required for improvement, although marking of theory work does not always identify this clearly enough.
160. Information and communication technology is used well by many students in their GCSE course work and opportunities to develop this use in other areas of the course are developing. There is a very good range of activities after school for students of all abilities to support and enrich work done in lessons. The school competes very successfully with other schools in a range of sports and many students achieve representative honours.
161. Leadership and management of the department are satisfactory and a new head of department has made good progress in many areas in a short space of time. There is good communication and co-operation between members of the department and all are good role models for the students. The day-to-day organisation of the department is good. Although the departmental development plan identifies appropriate areas for improvement, there is no longer-term plan. Curriculum organisation is beginning to ensure that students make appropriate progress, although for students in Years 10 and 11 the requirement to develop expertise over the two years in specific activities is not yet part of the process and lack of time in Year 11 is restricting progress. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

## **BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES**

### **Business studies**



Provision in business studies is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards were a little below the national average in 2003. Standards in Year 11 are at the national average.
- Teaching and learning are good and resources have been developed well but access to ICT is limited for some groups.
- The department is very well led with clear strengths in curriculum development.
- Attitudes are good overall but some students have encountered difficulties in completing course work.
- There is insufficient use made of external resources from business and industry in learning.

### **Commentary**

162. In 2003 results were below the national average and boys did less well than girls, whose standards were at the national average. In 2004 of the 72 students who took the subject only 45 per cent achieved the higher grades – fewer than in the previous year but students were taking a new double award course. There was no evidence of differing achievement between boys and girls during the inspection and both higher- and lower-attaining students achieved, satisfactorily. Standards in the present Year 11 are average. This represents good achievement as standards are below average on entry and far more boys take the subject at GCSE.
163. Attitudes are good overall. Students in Year 11 work hard in lessons and during the inspection they benefited from well-structured tasks provided by their teachers. Both year groups have at least sound ICT skills; most use their skills well in producing high quality coursework, although some find this aspect of the double entry course difficult. Teaching and learning are good. Year 11 students understand different ways of making payments and they make good gains in learning because this topic is illustrated and taught well. The highest-attaining students can explain the difference between debit and credit and average students show an understanding of interest charges. Year 10 students enjoy learning about partnerships and sole traders because of the examples provided. Good use is made of case studies but students do not have the opportunity to benefit from visits to business and industry.
164. Teachers have a thorough knowledge of the subject and all have the experience in business that adds an extra dimension to teaching about the business world. The department has good quality resources and they are well used but not all classrooms have ICT resources. Assessment is thorough and a good use is made of available data including information about students. However, the department was not sufficiently well informed about assessment for the double award applied course and students did not meet their target grades in 2004.
165. The good quality of teaching and learning are a result of the very good leadership and effective management of the head of department. Trainee teachers are supported well and curriculum and resource development has been good. The applied GCSE course has been planned effectively and the department has responded appropriately to the problems encountered. The decision has been made to return to the single award course for the present Year 10. Links with local business and industry that provide a valuable resource for learning require further development. The subject was not reported on at the last inspection but it is clear that provision has been much extended and overall improvement has been good.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

### **Personal, social and health education**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good planning enables teachers to deliver a relevant programme for the needs of the students.
- Discussions and written work help students develop their knowledge and understanding of issues that they will face in their adult lives.
- There is a good system of self-assessment to check how students are getting on in their PSHE work.

### **Commentary**

166. Discussion with students and samples of their work shows that they achieve well. Their personal and social skills around the school are good. The emphasis on negotiating, with classmates and teachers, the self-assessment of their understanding and knowledge of each topic are good. This, and the further requirement to negotiate new targets with tutors, is helping students develop a good awareness of their progress.
167. Teaching and learning are good. Good planning leads to good achievement by the majority of students. The students' interest in their work is good and this helps them to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills well. For students entering the school in Year 7, there is a good induction and students in Years 7 to 9 all commented favourably on the support that they had received from older students when they started. As students move up the school, work in religious education lessons and tutorials helps them explore many key issues about everyday life and these are dealt with sensitively. The inter-linking with citizenship allows students to explore a wide range of issues such as human rights and responsibilities. They develop good skills of enquiry and communication. All students have good access to activities designed to develop them spiritually, morally, socially and culturally. The religious education lessons are particularly strong in giving students spiritual and reflective experiences and they also explore many moral issues in depth. The good relationships between students and teachers, who know them well, enable open and frank discussions to take place. Those who have special educational needs take a full part in lessons and tutorials. However, the quality of provision for each student in tutorial time is dependent upon the willingness of their tutor to adapt teaching styles and materials to address their needs.
168. The organisation of personal, social and health education is good. It ensures that schemes of work in Years 7 to 11 cover major areas that students need to consider such as settling into the school, health, bullying, smoking, planning work and setting targets. Work from Years 7 to 11 shows a consistent approach to tutorial work across each year group. Monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning is not sufficiently rigorous at present.

### **Citizenship**

Provision in citizenship is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Students learn well because of carefully planned programmes of study.
- Students have good attitudes to their studies so they work well.
- Students have good opportunities to take part responsibly in both school and community-based activities.
- The reporting of students' knowledge, skills and understanding at the end of Years 9 and 11 is insufficient.

## Commentary

169. Students achieve well and their standards at the end of Year 9 are above expectation for their age. They have a sound knowledge and comprehension of how local government and the criminal justice system work. They communicate well in speaking and writing. By the end of Year 11, students' standards are above expectations for their age and they achieve satisfactorily. They are well aware of their rights, responsibilities and duties as a citizen.
170. Good teaching in Years 7 to 9 develops students' self-confidence and their skills in discussion. Their ability to understand and influence other people's views develops well. Teachers make good use of their individual skills to develop students' interest and ensure a positive response to key issues. Every subject is used to promote effective learning about citizenship, PSHE and careers. Religious education, English, history and science are particularly strong in developing this work. Students' thinking, writing and discussion skills are specifically addressed in the planning of citizenship work. The year and the school councils present a good opportunity for all students to take part in a democratic process by electing representatives. The councils give good scope for students to make decisions and take responsible action on a variety of issues.
171. Students assess their work themselves regularly. Tutors keep recorded data based on this of students' knowledge and understanding of citizenship and PSHE. The assessment of work by negotiation with peers and teachers is a good innovation, but students do not have a sufficiently clear picture of their attainment in the subject against national criteria.
172. The introduction of the citizenship programme has been well led. The learning objectives are clear and the National Curriculum citizenship content is adequately covered. A large team of tutors and all subject teachers are involved in the provision of citizenship. Whilst lesson observations are well used to ensure this broad curriculum can be taught effectively, there is a concern that the amount of time allocated to careers in Years 10 and 11 is insufficient.

## SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM

In the inspection, ten subjects and courses were inspected and are reported on in detail. Work in other subjects and courses was sampled and contributed to the overall picture of teaching and learning in the school.

The table below shows entry and performance information for courses completed in 2003.

### *Level 3 GCE A level courses*

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Art and Design	2	100	98.6	0.0	50.2	50.0	87.5
Biology	6	100	96.4	50.0	39.2	86.7	78.6
Business Studies	7	100	98.7	28.6	36.8	82.9	80.1

Chemistry	5	100	97.6	40.0	49.0	84.0	84.9
Economics	1	100.0	98.9	100.0	52.0	100.0	88.3
English/English Language	3	100	99.4	33.3	36.3	80.0	80.9
English Literature	11	100	99.5	45.5	46.5	81.8	86.5
French	1	100	98.8	100	51.5	100	87.6
Design & Technology	8	100	97.8	75.0	35.0	100	77.9
Geography	7	100	98.7	14.3	44.5	77.1	84.0
History	7	100	99.0	0.0	44.6	60.0	84.6
Information Technology	6	100	95.6	16.7	24.6	63.3	69.5
Mathematics	14	100	96.7	35.7	55.6	90.0	88.8
Other Social Studies	19	100	97.4	21.1	42.7	71.6	81.8
Physics	4	100	96.7	50.0	44.6	85.0	81.7
Religious Education	4	100	98.8	25.0	46.7	85.0	85.6
Sociology	3	100	98.2	33.3	44.3	86.7	83.6
Sports/PE Studies	7	100	98.0	14.3	30.9	74.3	75.2

***Level 3 GCE AS level and VCE courses***

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Art & Design	5	80.0	80.1	20.0	23.7	24.0	29.9
Biology	8	25.0	65.2	0	11.1	6.3	20.6
Business Studies	5	100	76.4	0	16.3	30.0	26.2
Chemistry	5	40.0	72.7	20.0	13.9	14.0	24.1
Communication Studies	3	33.3	86.4	0	23.8	13.3	32.0
Drama	2	100	86.5	0	19.6	25.0	30.6
English/English Language	3	100	82.9	0	17.5	20.0	28.7
English literature	1	0	85.9	0	19.1	0	30.2
French	5	100	78.2	0	18.9	30.0	27.6
Design & Technology	5	60.0	74.9	20.0	15.1	18.0	25.3
General Studies	1	0	73.9	0	17.8	0	25.7

Geography	4	50.0	74.3	0	19.8	10.0	26.5
History	9	77.8	80.7	11.1	19.5	26.7	28.6
Information Technology	9	88.9	67.0	22.2	10.9	28.9	21.4
Mathematics	5	80.0	61.9	20.0	17.1	30.0	22.1
Other Social Studies	24	66.7	69.7	20.8	16.7	22.9	24.1
Physics	1	0	68.6	0	14.4	0	22.7
Religious Studies	2	50.0	80.2	0	22.6	15.0	29.8
Sociology	3	0	71.8	0	18.4	0	25.4
Sports/PE Studies	11	90.9	73.2	27.3	11.4	31.8	23.1
Business VCE	8	100	88.6	0	20.6	57.5	60.1

## ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

173. The focus subjects were English language and French.

174. One Year 13 **English literature** lesson was seen. Numbers are low but standards are very high. Students responded enthusiastically to imaginative, challenging teaching, and learning was excellent.

### English

Provision in English language is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students benefit from experienced teachers' secure command of their subject.
- Year 12 students' lack of independent learning skills impedes their progress.
- Year 13 students appreciate the opportunities offered for creative original writing.
- Staffing difficulties have had an impact on recent standards.

#### Commentary

175. This is a relatively new course, with the low numbers in 2002 and 2003 making valid national comparisons impossible. Recruitment has improved considerably, but a decline in A level results was seen in 2004, with no students achieving A-B grades. Since attainment on entry of this cohort was modest, however, the results actually reflect satisfactory achievement.

176. Entries for AS level in 2002 and 2003 were too low to make national comparisons possible. All students achieved a pass although there were again no high grades. There was a significant increase in entries in 2004 and an improvement in the proportion of higher grades, suggesting a corresponding improvement in standards, although no national comparators are currently available. Standards seen in the current Year 12 are in line with national expectations at this stage in the course. Students are acquiring the basic terminology of the subject, but lack confidence in contributing orally and seem reluctant to take responsibility for their own learning.

177. Standards seen in Year 13 are also in line with expectations, and achievement is satisfactory. Students' work shows most have well-developed critical skills, and have used their own linguistic experiences as part of well-researched assignments. Several have produced

interesting creative writing as part of coursework. Many value the opportunity to further their own linguistic interests and improve through reflection the quality of their own writing. Weaker students have a restricted vocabulary and a limited cultural awareness of how language operates.

178. Teaching and learning are good overall. The main strengths are teachers' thorough preparation, clear explanations and secure command of the subject. Teachers provide students with a great deal of background material, and structure lessons carefully, building on students' strengths. Weak planning is a feature of less successful teaching: activities are not sufficiently varied so that pace is slow, and the lack of any conclusion means that students' learning over a long double period is not effectively consolidated.
179. Leadership and management are satisfactory. While the strengths of leadership and management are as in the main school, staffing difficulties have had a particularly negative impact in the recent past and the monitoring of teaching is not as effective as it should be.

### **Communication skills across the curriculum**

180. Students' communication skills are good overall, although there is no formal certification except through the Surrey Graduation Certificate. Students participate well in discussion in most subjects, while their reading and research skills are particularly strong in chemistry. They give confident presentations in business education, but have few opportunities in other subjects. There are strengths in writing and note making in chemistry, English and history, where study skills are well developed.

### **French**

Provision in French is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good and empower students to achieve well.
- The good tracking of students' progress informs planning.
- Students are well prepared for their examinations.
- Students need to have regular opportunities to improve their speaking skills.
- Teaching and learning need to be monitored more rigorously.
- The use of information and communication technology is underdeveloped.

### **Commentary**

181. There was one candidate only for AS level in 2003 and results showed that he had achieved well. There were five candidates in 2004, whose results reflect individual capability. The number of candidates is too small to comment on standards year to year. Analysis of students' achievement since the end of Year 11 shows they make at least satisfactory progress. Standards seen during the inspection relate to three candidates. Their achievement is good in relation to the standards attained at GCSE. Two of these candidates are re-sitting their AS level examination and are given a generous time allocation for effective studying.
182. There was one candidate only for A level in 2003 and results showed that her standards were well above the national average. There were three candidates in 2004 and results show that the percentage of students attaining A-E grades has remained the same at 100 per cent but the percentage of students attaining A-B grades has declined. Again, comparison between their standards at AS level and at A level reveals that they have achieved well. Standards seen during the inspection relate to one candidate and were above the national average; achievement was good in relation to attainment at AS level.

183. Students performed best in reading and listening. Their speaking skills were good enough to present a complex argument but not to sustain a fluent conversation. Their main weakness lay in their insecure knowledge of verb endings and adjectival agreements. Students' very good attitudes and excellent behaviour contributed to their good achievement but a few may not have the study skills required to be successful in their examinations. There were no differences in the achievement of boys and girls. None of the following categories of students were observed: gifted and talented, students with special educational needs and students learning English as an additional language.
184. In the lessons observed, teaching was good overall, which resulted in students' good achievement. The main strengths were the very good subject knowledge of the two teachers involved, the very thorough coverage of grammar and high level vocabulary and the good quality of questioning to encourage students to develop their speaking skills. The main weakness was the insufficient opportunities for speaking for long periods, outside speaking tasks. Furthermore, although the teachers have near native command of French, students need to have the opportunity to communicate regularly with native speakers and the employment of a language assistant would address this issue. The annual exchange with a school in Lyons contributes to supporting the curriculum and the current project of European work experience for Year 12 students provides excellent scope for learning.
185. The department is well led by its new head, who has improved examination preparation by using the close tracking of students' progress to inform planning, familiarising herself with modular examination specifications and purchasing adequate resources. The procedures in place to facilitate transition between Year 11 and Year 12 need to be reviewed to bridge further the gap between GCSE and AS level. The monitoring of teaching and learning needs to be done with more rigour and involve the expertise of an external observer who could act as a 'critical friend'. Information and communication technology is under-used and should be promoted as an effective learning tool and aid for independent learning. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory overall.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Students achieve well because they are well taught.
- The highest-attaining students achieve very well because they can take further mathematics.
- Teachers have very good mathematical knowledge and share their enjoyment of the subject with students.
- Teachers miss some opportunities to allow students to develop as independent learners.

### **Commentary**

186. The standard of work seen during the inspection from students in Year 12 and Year 13 was above national expectations. As students start the course having achieved average standards, their achievement in the sixth form is good. Too few female students take the subject for meaningful comparison to be made of achievement by sex. Students with special educational needs achieve well because their needs are well met. Students speaking English as an additional language and those from minority ethnic groups also achieve as well as other students because they are well motivated and enjoy the challenge of their work. Gifted and talented students achieve very well because they explore the subject in greater depth by taking further mathematics.

187. Students achieve well because they learn well in lessons as a result of consistently good teaching. Teachers have very good levels of mathematical knowledge so they are very well equipped to teach the most demanding aspects of the course. Their delight of the subject is radiated to their students. Year 13 students added to their learning of hyperbolic functions by discussing the importance of elegance of differing solutions to a question. Students benefit from their confidence in the good relationships they enjoy with their teachers by willingly making conjectures without worrying over the consequence of an incorrect idea. Teachers are aware of the need to develop the ability of students to work independently but occasionally opportunities are lost. For example, students in Year 13 were not asked to suggest the next steps when simplifying equations. Work is accurately assessed and students are provided with helpful information on the progress they are making and how to make further improvements to their work.
188. Leadership and management of the subject are good. A good team approach to the teaching of the course has been established. Monitoring of the quality of teaching is not sufficiently rigorous. Offering students the opportunity to take further mathematics provides higher-attaining students with the opportunity to explore the subject in greater depth and provides a very good basis for those students wishing to read a mathematically based subject at university. Good improvement has been made since the previous inspection because standards have risen.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

189. Students have mathematical skills which more than meet the demands of their studies. They display good levels of competence. In chemistry, students have no difficulty calculating the energy of various reactions. In history, students confidently handle numerical data when studying the rise of Nazism and in business studies they analyse complex financial data when studying financial management. In art, the mathematical aspects of the subject are not developed to the full.

## **SCIENCE**

### **Chemistry**

Provision in chemistry is **very good**.

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

- Consistently very good teaching and a well-conceived course designed to appeal to a wide variety of students lead to very good learning.
- Students' attitudes to their learning and to the course are outstanding, which means that they get the most out of their lessons.
- Leadership and management of the course are very good, with a high level of unity of purpose.
- Although resources overall serve the course well, and the refurbished laboratories are good, opportunities to use ICT in support of modern teaching methods are limited.

#### **Commentary**

190. Students come into the sixth form with a variety of GCSE grades. They quickly become used to the increased demands of advanced work, and make good progress. Small numbers make statistical comparisons unreliable, but comparisons of GCSE, AS- and A level grades for individual students show that achievement is nearly always very good, with students of relatively modest prior attainment often gaining grades well beyond expectation.



191. The school uses a national course designed to support the needs of students of all abilities, and the high achievement of students reflects their interest and commitment to learning. Whether in an investigation into the effect of cooking on vitamin C in cabbage, the study of line spectra leading to modern interpretations of atomic structure or categorising chemical reactions at the very beginning of the course, students' response to their teachers is excellent. Assessment is continuous and productive, and students acknowledge that the feedback they get from their teachers helps them to resolve very quickly any difficulties they may have. Support for development of skills that are useful more widely is also very good. Students are expected to prepare thoroughly for lessons, through homework tasks, and they understand the importance of these tasks in helping them to get the most out of their lessons. Clear evidence was seen of the benefits of this approach in terms of students' interest, pace of learning, and enthusiasm for the subject. Overall, teaching is very good, leading to very good learning.
192. Leadership and management of the department are very good. The teacher in charge of chemistry is committed to forming a team of knowledgeable teachers who present a unity of approach, which helps students to learn as well as possible. She monitors the work of the department well, and uses her findings to develop the approach to teaching continually. There is evidence from the recent past of students who have been inspired to achieve well beyond the predictions and go on to reach high levels in their chosen professions. Good links with higher education institutions help further to promote the successes of her students. Resources for teaching chemistry are satisfactory, and the newly refurbished laboratories provide a good environment for learning. However, the departmental policy of continuous improvement in the quality of teaching and learning would be better served by increased access to ICT facilities in laboratories.
193. Since the last inspection, improvement in chemistry has been very good, and has been reflected in the successes of its students.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

194. There were no focus subjects in this area but sample lessons were observed in **ICT**. In these lessons teaching was good from knowledgeable teachers.

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

195. Students have the opportunity to develop their ICT skills as part of their Surrey Graduation Certificate qualification. They use ICT within their studies but there is no formal tracking of the provision.

## **HUMANITIES**

196. The focus subject was history. Sociology, psychology and law were sampled.
197. One GCE Advanced Subsidiary Year 12 lesson in **sociology** was sampled. Although early in the course this average- to low-attaining group learned very well as a result of very good teaching and positive attitudes. Results at GCE Advanced level are high compared to the national average, both in terms of average point score and percentage of A/B grades
198. Two lessons were sampled in **psychology**. Standards are very good as a result of the very good teaching, which is thorough in its planning and preparation. The teaching encourages students to make strong connections between theoretical ideas and real situations.
199. One lesson in **law** was seen, where students achieved well as a result of very good teaching and learning.

## History

Provision in history is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consistently high quality teaching enables many students to learn very well.
- Very good classroom relationships, attitudes and behaviour make a significant contribution to achievement in most classes.
- Students' independence and self-reliance in their learning are underdeveloped.
- Very good leadership is playing an important role in the subject's performance.
- There are insufficient opportunities for ICT in lessons.

### Commentary

200. Results in the A level examinations have fluctuated in recent years, although, in terms of both average point score and the proportion achieving the higher grades, they are usually below average. The 2004 A level results represented an improvement on the previous year and were close to the 2003 average.
201. In work seen, standards are above average. This reflects good achievement as the subject is attracting increasing numbers whose overall attainment on entry is no better than average. Students use subject specific terminology accurately and confidently. They think logically and share, sustain and justify their opinions confidently and effectively in oral work. Their folders reveal developing study and examination skills in note taking from texts and class discussion, and in identifying, highlighting and commenting on significant sections of documents. They make good use of ICT for research and communication purposes and demonstrate growing skills in the planning, drafting and refining of essays. Lower-attaining students have a limited understanding of the extent and variety of the Old Poor Law as they neglect the importance of factors such as location and seasonal unemployment.
202. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Students' individual learning needs are very well met because teachers give freely and regularly of their time. Students are highly appreciative of this, and of the volume of feedback that they receive from marking and feel very well known and supported by their teachers. Teachers have considerable subject expertise and plan their lessons very carefully. History lessons are swiftly paced and characterised by close relationships and the use of humour, although there is scope for greater emphasis on the skills that students are acquiring in order to heighten their confidence and self-reliance.
203. The subject is very well led. The head of department has recently become an A level examiner in addition to her other responsibilities so that her students are able to benefit from additional and well-informed feedback. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

## ENGINEERING, TECHNOLOGY AND MANUFACTURING

204. There were no focus subjects in this area.
205. One lesson in **design and technology** was seen during the inspection. Students achieved well as a result of very good teaching.

## BUSINESS

The focus subject was business studies.

Business studies is taught to GCE Advanced level and Advanced Vocational level (AVCE).

Provision in business studies is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards were above the national average in 2003 at A level and at AVCE; results in 2004 were equally good.
- Teachers have very good subject knowledge and teaching promotes a good quality of learning.
- Students achieve well but they are not sufficiently independent in their learning in some lessons.
- Management of the department is good and leadership is very good.
- There are no computers in some of the classrooms, although other resources, especially student handbooks, have been developed very well.

### Commentary

206. Results at A level and AVCE in 2003 were above the national average and AS results were above average. Results in 2004 were at a similar level. Standards in the current A level and AVCE groups in Year 13 are good. Standards on entry were a little below the national average in Year 12 because of unexpectedly low grades in the applied GCSE course but students are achieving well. More female students are now choosing to take business studies and the subject is increasing in popularity.
207. The good quality of teaching ensures that students achieve well and most stay on to Year 13. There are more male students overall but no evidence of differences in achievement. Teachers' knowledge and the quality of marking and assessment are particularly strong. All students benefit from the availability of high quality study guides. The range of learning styles is extensive and learning is enhanced by the use of well-chosen case studies and apt examples because all teachers have experience in working in business or industry. Students participate well in lessons and they are keen and hard-working, although some are not yet taking enough responsibility for preparing work for lessons.
208. The department has sufficient access to computers overall but some rooms used for sixth form work do not have ICT facilities and this can affect the quality of learning at times. Students make good use of their part-time employment and the Internet to inform their studies but the department has yet to develop a programme of visits to provide examples of business and industry in the real world. Teachers are skilled at questioning, to assess understanding and to encourage students to think for themselves. Year 12 AVCE students develop a secure understanding of the European Union because of the research task set. Well-structured teaching ensures that AS students already show a good understanding of the relationship between supply and demand. By Year 13 students have a good grasp of business theory, although they sometimes find difficulty in applying it. Gains in learning in business finance are excellent because of the quality of teaching and use of resources.

209. The subject is managed well. Teachers work together as a team and information about students and resources are used well. Leadership is very good and there is a clear vision for departmental development. New courses have been effectively introduced and curriculum planning is very good. The subject was not reported on in the previous inspection but it is clear that very good improvement has been made since the appointment of the head of department.

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA**

210. The focus subjects were art and design and media studies.

211. One lesson was sampled in **photography** – this is a new subject in its second year, which provides an attractive option to a number of students. Because of their enthusiasm and informed, good teaching, students are achieving well.

### **Art and design**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good relationships ensure positive attitudes to work.
- Results at A level have deteriorated since last inspection but show improvement in 2004 compared with 2003.
- Students benefit from teaching which is knowledgeable and often inspirational.
- The department's new advanced level course in photography is popular.
- Students benefit from visits to galleries and museums.
- There is an excellent area for display but space for sixth form ongoing work is not well utilised.

### **Commentary**

212. Two students taking A level art and design in 2003 passed and results in 2004 were similar but entries were too small for any valid national comparison. Results in AS in 2003 were below average with a slight improvement in 2004. Results have deteriorated since the last inspection. Whilst there are able students, there are also students, with only average attainment at GCSE, who find advanced work very demanding.

213. The standard of work seen was average overall but with a wide variation. By Year 13, students are producing imaginative and experimental work. They show confidence in using a range of media, for example, printing, painting, three-dimensional work, computer design and animation. Students work conscientiously, building up large portfolios. Higher-attaining students present their work with flair and include good critical reflection and evaluation. Lower-attaining students begin to articulate a personal view of the subject but generally lack a strong foundation of technical and critical skills.

214. Students' achievement is satisfactory. They learn quickly to develop their work along lines that interest them as individuals. Encouraged by their teachers, higher-attaining students gain confidence to take risks and make judgements about what is successful and what is not. Using good reference materials and Internet access, they make connections with a wide range of artists and art movements, both western and from other cultures. The more able take an increasing responsibility for their own learning whilst the lower-attaining students are reliant on teacher support and direction. Although sixth form students have a quiet working area and an excellent display gallery, space for ongoing work is not adequately available.

215. Teaching and learning are good. Students are motivated by their teachers' enthusiasm and commitment. They appreciate the extra time their teachers give them and this helps underpin the very good relationships that exist. Teachers' regular verbal and written feedback in lessons is sensitive and gives good guidance on examination requirements and how to proceed. Students speak highly of this and of how much this helps them develop their own critical awareness and pursue their own style. Teachers use the excellent displays of students' and others' art work as a resource to help learning. Very good opportunities are available to work with practising artists and to visit galleries in London and abroad and this extends provision and offers a rich experience beyond the classroom. Students explore issues of spirituality and morality in a visual form and this contributes very well to their personal development.
216. The quality of leadership and management is good. Communications between the team of teachers are effective in sharing ideas and evaluating work. Numbers currently opting for art and design have increased in Years 12 and 13 and photography, now in its second year, is attracting higher numbers of students.

### **Media studies**

Provision in media studies is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching and learning are good.
- Students are fully engaged with the subject, which helps them to learn.
- The subject is well led and managed.
- Resources were unsatisfactory during the week of the inspection.
- Teachers have some unmet training needs with regard to technical aspects of the course.

### **Commentary**

217. In the GCE AS level examination earlier this year, students' results were below their targets and below average. Value added by the course represented a satisfactory level of achievement for all groups of students. Very few failed to complete the course. In 2003, AS level results were also below average, with value-added broadly in line with that of the school. No students taking AS level in 2003 extended their course into Year 13.
218. The standard of work of current students in Year 12 looks set to reach average standards. Students in Year 13 have reached average standards. Boys and girls do equally well. All groups of students make the same satisfactory level of achievement.
219. Teaching is consistently good. In a lesson in Year 13, students were making significant progress in response to some lively and well-informed teaching. Students were able to make very good progress in the study of audience in this lesson as some challenging technical and demographic concepts were presented to them. The teacher compelled their attention by his anecdotal delivery and extended students' knowledge and improved their learning by reference to up-to-the-minute technical journals, some of them from other countries. All teachers have good command of the theoretical aspects of the subject. They plan their lessons carefully. Their methods catch students' interest and help them to concentrate. Positive attitudes are a strong feature of the learning of all students. Some teachers have not yet gained enough experience in preparing students in a very new course and this is a barrier for learning. Although technical equipment of high quality was being delivered daily during the week of the inspection, additional staff training will be required before it can be fully utilised. Assessment is good. Students' progress is carefully tracked. Marking leaves students in no doubt as to what they must do to improve.

220. Determined leadership has established the subject. Teamwork is a strong feature of provision and teachers share best practice. Management is good. Day-to-day routines run smoothly and support is on hand for all staff and students. Monitoring of teaching, learning and students' work has been successful in raising standards.
221. The current head of department has significant responsibilities in other areas of management. The school is right to address the issue of how this rapidly growing department should be led and managed in the future. The subject had not been introduced at the time of the last inspection.

## **HOSPITALITY, SPORTS, LEISURE AND TRAVEL**

222. The focus subject was physical education. Vocational courses in leisure and recreation, and leisure and tourism were sampled.
223. One lesson of AVCE **leisure and recreation** was observed in Year 13 and one lesson of GNVQ intermediate **leisure and tourism**. Students are achieving appropriately and in Year 12 they are developing a secure knowledge of customer care because of the good examples provided. By Year 13 they have a sound knowledge of marketing, although learning is sometimes affected by lack of Internet access. Teaching is satisfactory and teachers show good knowledge of the vocational areas. Good use is made of information about local leisure and recreation facilities. Some students benefit from following both business and leisure courses at AVCE.

### **Physical education**

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good student-teacher relationships lead to good progress in lessons.
- Students learn well because they are encouraged to work collaboratively and a range of teaching styles is used to develop their interest in the subject.
- Marking does not sufficiently inform students of how to raise their grades.
- Good extra-curricular opportunities are available for students to develop their skills to a high level.

### **Commentary**

224. In 2003, A level examination results were in line with the national average. AS level results were well above average and the students taking this course achieved very well, given their level of entry to the course. In 2004, A level results were similar to those of the previous year, but AS level results have dropped.
225. Students start the course with a range of GCSE qualifications. The standard of work seen during the inspection shows that the current Year 12 students have made a good start to their course and are achieving well. Year 13 A level students are working at a level that is in line with the national average. Their achievement is satisfactory, given their level of entry to the course and their AS level results.
226. Teaching and learning are good. When teaching involves the students in active learning, they respond very well and take responsibility for their own learning, which is good. The range of methods provided by different teachers covering the various modules is generally good. Where students are encouraged to work collaboratively, as was seen in work on skill acquisition, and research independently, as seen in the personal performance profiles, they

achieve well. The learning is less vibrant where the teachers focus on telling students about what they need to know and understand without encouraging research, collaboration, presentations to peers and discussion. The very good teacher-student relationships underpin good individual support in lessons and project work. This generally ensures that students make good progress. They are very appreciative of the support that they receive. However,

the overall pattern of monitoring work varies between teachers. Inconsistent marking in folders sometimes leaves students without a sufficiently clear idea of what they need to do to improve grades.

227. Leadership and management of the department are satisfactory. The new assessment profile and the development of the use of ICT in teaching are strengths. The teachers are good role models. There is a commitment to improve the quality of teaching and monitor its impact on learning. The team is a mixture of experienced and new staff and the impact of their work is still developing. There is not a sufficiently clear, shared vision for the future to guide their way forward at present.
228. Students have a variety of opportunities to participate in enrichment activities, some of which also offer a leadership role when they work with younger students. Physical education is available to students not taking an examination course and the uptake is good. Competitive sports for boys and girls are also thriving and the talented sports players have good opportunities to raise their skill levels through links to sports clubs locally.
229. Overall progress since the last inspection is satisfactory. Examination results have dropped from well above average. The work in recording assessment, the very good relationships between students and teachers, the introduction of competitive sports and the development of ICT work are areas where good progress has been made.

## **HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**

230. There were no focus subjects in this area.

## **PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS**



**Inspection judgement****Sixth  
form  
grade****School  
grade**

<b>The overall effectiveness of the sixth form and the school</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is		2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3	3
Cost effectiveness of the sixth form / value for money provided by the school	3	2

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>		<b>3</b>
Students' achievement	3	3

<b>Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>		<b>3</b>
Attendance	2	2
Attitudes	2	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2	3
Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		3

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>		<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3	3
How well students learn	3	3
The quality of assessment	3	4
How well the curriculum meets students needs	3	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities		2
Accommodation and resources	3	3
Students' care, welfare, health and safety		2
Support, advice and guidance for students	2	3
How well the school seeks and acts on students' views	3	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents		2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2	2

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>		<b>2</b>
The governance of the school	3	3
The leadership of the headteacher		2
The leadership of other key staff	2	3
The effectiveness of management	3	3

