

INSPECTION REPORT

BEVERLEY SCHOOL

New Malden

LEA area: Kingston-upon-Thames

Unique reference number: 102608

Headteacher: Mr P Templeman-Wright

Lead inspector: Mr I Hodgkinson

Dates of inspection: 29th November - 2nd December 2004

Inspection number: 268748

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Modern (Non-selective)
School category: Foundation
Age range of students: 11 - 18
Gender of students: Mixed
Number on roll: 500

School address: College Gardens
Blake's Lane
New Malden
Surrey

Postcode: KT3 6NU

Telephone number: (020) 8949 1537
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of Mrs L Hayes
governors:

Date of previous January 1999
inspection:

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a small school for boys located on the south-eastern boundary of Kingston-upon-Thames. Locally there are many selective schools that attract a lot of the higher-attaining students. Generally, therefore, students enter the school with attainment that is below, and in some years well below, the national average. The number of students on roll has fallen considerably from 665 to 500 since the last inspection, and Year 7 enrolment declined seriously to just 57 students in September 2004. This decline has weakened the school financially at a time when it is already receiving considerable support from its local education authority to cover the cost of restructuring and stabilising its staffing. The school roll has, however, increased by 5.3 per cent since 2003, partly because of improved enrolment into the sixth form and partly because the school accepts a very high proportion of students who join after the usual time of first admission at the start of Year 7. The capabilities of the students who join later than usual are generally below those of the students already at the school, and many come with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties, including some who have been excluded from other schools. A quarter of students are on the register of special educational needs, which is above average. The proportion with statements of need is average. Of those requiring support beyond that which can be provide by the school alone, most have specific learning difficulties/dyslexia or emotional, social and behavioural difficulties.

Students are drawn from a wide geographical area, with some travelling a long way because of the school's locally strong reputation for sports. Socio-economic conditions in the area are more favourable than average, but the students generally live in more deprived circumstances than usual, with nearly a quarter entitled to a free school meal.

Three students are in public care. Just over half of students on roll are White British. The largest minority ethnic groups, at just over seven per cent in each case, are Asian or Asian British and Black African. Most other ethnic groups are represented by small numbers of students. There is a high proportion of students – around a third – for whom English is not their first language. Sixteen students are beginners in English.

The school works in close collaboration with Coombe Girls' School in a sixth form partnership. This has led to the replacement of a general boys' sixth form at Beverley with a mixed vocational centre, specialising in Level 2 (equivalent to GCSE grade C or above) courses. Beverley boys who wish to go on to take A or AS level courses can do so at the Coombe Girls' School Advanced Centre.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20588	Mr I Hodgkinson	Lead inspector	Business studies Work-related learning
12775	Ms J Goodchild	Lay inspector	
12191	Mr C Moxley	Team inspector	English English as an additional language
20527	Mr B King	Team inspector	Mathematics
5241	Dr C Millband	Team inspector	Science
8503	Mr A Allfree	Team inspector	Art and design
1782	Mr A Lyons	Team inspector	Design and technology
32221	Mr K Williams	Team inspector	Geography
15029	Mr K Davitte	Team inspector	History
18032	Ms I Randall	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Special educational needs
30888	Ms Walsh-Nelissen	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
15472	Mr P Andrews	Team inspector	Music
30198	Mr R Chick	Team inspector	Physical education
13734	Mr H Davies	Team inspector	Religious education Citizenship

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Beverley School's effectiveness is satisfactory. It fosters good relationships between students by bringing together boys from diverse social, ethnic and cultural backgrounds and providing them with good care and a good education. Students' personal development is good and their academic achievement is satisfactory. The school has received high levels of funding in recent years to improve its recruitment and retention of staff and the quality of education; this spending has been largely successful and so the school gives **satisfactory value for money.**

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school is very well led and managed by the headteacher and senior team.
- Attainment is below average, and constrained by weak skills in reading and writing, but students achieve well in Years 7-9, as a result of good and well-organised teaching.
- While attendance overall is in line with national averages, the achievement of a significant proportion of students in Years 10, 11 and 12 is constrained by too much absence from school. Punctuality to school in the mornings is unsatisfactory.
- The provision for physical education and citizenship is very good
- Support for students with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language is very good.
- The school's curriculum prepares students well for later life, but weaknesses in provision for music and design and technology lead to unsatisfactory achievement in these areas in Years 7-9.
- ICT is not used as required to support learning in mathematics, art, geography, English, modern languages, history and design and technology.
- The quality of accommodation varies across the school, but in art and design and technology, it is poor and constrains standards.

The school has made satisfactory improvement since its last inspection in January 1999. Overall attainment has remained similar in relative terms to that at the last inspection. Attendance has improved considerably, and is now average. Teaching and learning have improved markedly, with nearly a third of lessons seen now judged very good or better. Satisfactory progress has been made against the key issues of the last inspection, particularly those related to the quality of teaching and learning and the consistent implementation of school policies. The school has not, however, moved forward enough in improving provision for design and technology or for ICT across subjects. Collective worship now occurs regularly though not on a daily basis.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Performance compared with:		all schools			similar schools
		2002	2003	2004	2004
Year 11	GCSE/GNVQ examinations	E	E	E	D
Year 13	GCE A/AS/VCE examinations	E*	E*	n/a	n/a

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

Standards achieved overall are satisfactory. Attainment is below average by Year 9 and Year 11. Students achieve well across Years 7-9. GCSE results have been too low, largely because of staffing difficulties in a number of subjects and students having their learning disrupted by being absent from lessons too often. GCSE results are reduced by the high proportion of students who join the school after the usual time of first admission in Year 7. Now that staffing is more settled and attendance improved, students' achievement by Year 11 is satisfactory. Students for whom English is an additional language achieve well at all years and gain GCSE results which are in line with the national average. Achievement in the sixth form Vocational Centre is satisfactory overall.

Students' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good overall. The personal, social, and health education (PSHE) programme is very good: it contributes significantly to the respect that students accord to beliefs and cultures different from their own. Students' attitudes to school and their behaviour are satisfactory overall, and they respond very well where teachers' expectations of their behaviour and performance are high. Overall attendance is in line with the national average, but a significant minority of students miss too many lessons, and too many are late to school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good overall, with real strengths in teachers' planning and in the methods they use to stimulate students' interest. Learning support assistants work very effectively with teachers to support the learning of those with special educational needs or English as an additional language. An innovative curriculum meets individual needs well and is enhanced by an increasing range of vocational and work-related courses in Years 10 and 11 and the sixth form. Weaknesses in curriculum planning and resources, however, adversely affect achievement in design and technology and music and statutory requirements are not met in these subjects. There is a generally good range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities, especially in sport. Students have access to good advice, support and guidance. The school has good links with other schools, colleges and community organisations to broaden and enrich the curriculum available to students. Students do not use ICT enough to support their learning in many subjects.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The leadership of the headteacher is very good: well supported by his senior team, the head has shown a great deal of energy to remain focused on a clear vision for school improvement, and this has yielded success. Very effective management systems have been set in place to measure performance and assure the quality of education. Governance of the school is satisfactory. Governors are well informed about school developments, but the present governing body is newly reconstituted and has many new members, and has yet to ensure that all statutory requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and students have a positive view of the school: in particular, they think the teaching is good and the school is well run, although they say that achievement has been

adversely affected by frequent changes of staff in some subjects in recent years. Parents' main current concern is over the quality and regularity of homework. Inspectors agree that homework arrangements are unsatisfactory.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Continue to take action to improve students' standards of reading and writing.
- Improve the punctuality of students to school in the mornings and take more rigorous action to raise the attendance of those whose attendance is below 90 per cent.
- Improve the quality of provision for design and technology and music.
- Improve the use of ICT to support learning in all subjects.
- Improve the quality of accommodation for art and design and technology.

and, further to meet statutory requirements:

- Seek ways of extending the act of collective worship to a daily basis, as required.
- Teach religious education in the sixth form.

THE SIXTH FORM AT THE COOMBE VOCATIONAL CENTRE

A small sixth form run in partnership with the much larger Coombe Advanced Centre.

OVERALL EVALUATION

Coombe Vocational Centre Sixth Form has 71 students compared to the national average of 186, but it is part of a collaboration with Coombe Girls School which houses an Advanced Centre with over 400 students. The Vocational Centre provides a **satisfactory** education for its students and is **cost effective**.

Standards vary according to students' prior attainment but are currently average overall in comparison with students aiming for qualifications of the same level (mainly Level 2 of the national qualifications framework and equivalent to GCSE grades A*-C). Students' achievement is satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The sixth form is well led and students receive good support and guidance from staff. It is not possible to assess improvement since the last inspection as the framework of the provision has completely changed in the last two years. Retention rates are good and in line with the Learning Skills Council targets.

The main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Students have access to mostly well informed guidance and advice.
- Students are happy in the centre; they are treated as young adults and feel that senior management listens to their views.
- Strategic planning for the development of the Vocational Centre is forward looking and innovative.
- The Vocational Centre is well led and there is very good liaison with the Coombe Advanced Centre.
- Provision for students and teaching and learning in business studies are good.
- Provision in GCSE mathematics is unsatisfactory.

- Overall, the attendance and punctuality of students are unsatisfactory and these weaknesses adversely affect their achievement.
- Accommodation is satisfactory overall but unsatisfactory in art.
- Religious education is not taught to all students in the sixth form, as required.

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 in detail. Those inspected in detail are shown in **bold** type.

Curriculum area	Evaluation
English, languages and communication	Satisfactory in GCSE English language . Standards are below average but achievement is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are also satisfactory.
Mathematics	Unsatisfactory in GCSE mathematics . Standards are low and achievement is unsatisfactory. Teaching is insufficiently focused on the individual needs of the students.
Information and communication technology	In intermediate GNVQ ICT, a lesson seen was satisfactory.
Visual and performing arts and media	Satisfactory in intermediate GNVQ art and AVCE art . Results at Intermediate GNVQ were good in 2004, with students achieving well in relation to their attainments on entry to the course. Currently, teaching, learning and achievement in both courses are satisfactory. In media studies, lessons seen varied from satisfactory to very good.
Business	Good in intermediate GNVQ business . Teaching and learning are good: the teaching is very well organised and makes very effective use of resources. Students achieve well.
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	In intermediate GNVQ leisure and tourism , teaching seen was highly effective and learning was very good. Assessment criteria were used well to guide pupils' learning.

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. Excellent and very good are equivalent to the judgement 'outstanding' in further education and sixth form college reports; poor and very poor are equivalent to 'very weak'.

ADVICE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

Students receive generally good support and guidance during their studies, but the demands of resit courses in GCSE English and especially mathematics are too great for some, and they might be better suited to a key skills qualification which relates more directly to their main vocational courses. Students find their teachers and tutors helpful and approachable when they need extra help. There are one-to-one mentor interviews held on a regular basis and the head of the centre also meets all students individually to discuss their progress. Regular reviews of progress are made and helpful targets are set to assist students to raise the standard of their work. Teachers mark work regularly and provide good advice on how to improve their work, but in both art and business studies, students' progress through units of work is not tracked clearly enough. Guidance on careers and further education is good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SIXTH FORM

Leadership and management are good. Strategic planning for the development of the Vocational Centre is forward looking and innovative. There are constructive relationships and regular management meetings between the directors of the Vocational Centre and the Advanced Centre. Leadership in most of the focused subjects is satisfactory and good in business studies; it is unsatisfactory in mathematics. There is mutual respect between tutors, subject teachers and students. Students are asked for their views and, whenever possible, appropriate action is taken. Students are encouraged to participate in the life of the school and in the management of the Vocational Centre. Greater attention needs to be given to ensuring better attendance and punctuality of students.

STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM

Students enjoy life in the Vocational Centre. They find it friendly and are appreciative of the opportunities available. They consider their teachers to be knowledgeable and helpful. Teaching and social facilities are considered to be good. They are treated as young adults and their views are sought and considered. They express faith in their teachers, who want them to achieve well. In a number of interviews, they said that teaching is challenging and enables them to develop independent learning skills. They appreciate the opportunities the collaboration with Coombe Advanced Centre provides for them in relation to their future ambitions. They feel that courses generally meet their needs and contribute to their career plans. They also appreciate the growing links and opportunities to work with younger students at Beverley School.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

Standards achieved overall are satisfactory. Students achieve well in Years 7-9 as a result of good and well-organised teaching. Underachievement in GCSEs has been the result of staffing difficulties in a number of subjects and of students having their learning disrupted by being absent from lessons too often. GCSE results are reduced considerably by the high proportion of students who join the school after the usual time of first admission in Year 7. Now that staffing is more settled and attendance improved, students' achievement in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory. Achievement in the sixth form Vocational Centre is satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 9 test results in mathematics in 2004 were strong, and test results overall indicate that students make good progress from Years 7-9.
- Overall GCSE results have been unsatisfactory.
- Students achieve very well in physical education in all years. They also achieve very well in citizenship and German in Years 7-9.
- Students for whom English is an additional language achieve well in all years and gain GCSE results which are in line with the national average.
- Students underachieve in music and also in design and technology in Years 7-9.

Commentary

1. The attainment of the current Year 7 students on entry to the school was well below the national average. In particular, very few students attained higher National Curriculum Levels 5 or above in their national tests in English at the end of primary school, and a relatively high percentage of students did not attain a level. Over time, the attainment of consecutive Year 7 groups on entry has fluctuated between below and well below average, and there have always been relatively few higher attainers. Higher attainers locally tend to go to the many selective schools in the borough.
2. National test results for Year 9 students in 2003 were below the national average for all schools and below the average for schools who take students with a similar level of prior attainment. In 2004, results strengthened: against the national data currently available, mathematics results in 2004 were well above the average for similar schools and science results were above average. Against boys' results in all schools nationally, mathematics results were average, and science below average. Higher attainers did well in mathematics in 2004: results at the higher National Curriculum Level 6 and above were well above the average for similar schools. National results for English are not currently available for comparison, but the school's 2004 results represent steady improvement since 2000.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
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English	31.0 (31.0)	n/a (33.4)
mathematics	35.2 (33.6)	35.5 (35.4)
science	31.2 (31.8)	33.1 (33.6)

There were 78 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- The school's Year 9 national test results indicate an encouraging rising trend in recent years. Over a five-year period, the school's improvement has been below the national trend, but over the last two years, improvement has been stronger. Results indicate that students generally make good progress from Year 7 to Year 9: the rate of improvement which students made from their test results at the end of primary school to their results in tests at the end of Year 9 in 2003 was in line with the average for all schools nationally and better than the average for similar schools. In 2004, mathematics test results strongly exceeded the school's statutory targets, while English and science results fell a little short. However, when targets are adjusted downwards to take due account of the student mobility factor noted in the 'Characteristics of the School' at the start of this report, all three tested subjects exceeded their targets.
- When measured against all secondary modern schools nationally, overall Year 9 national test results were broadly average in 2003. Against secondary modern schools which take students from similar social and economic backgrounds (as measured by their entitlement to a free school meal), test performance was above average.
- In most other subjects by Year 9, standards of attainment are below those seen in schools nationally, but students make good progress from low standards on entry and achieve well. This is largely because of good, well-organised teaching which deploys effective methods to engage and motivate students. The key exceptions to this picture of good achievement are in design and technology and music, where weaknesses in the curriculum and resources, and also accommodation for design and technology, make for low standards by Year 9 and lead to students underachieving. In physical education and German, however, standards are above those expected nationally by Year 9 and students achieve very well. Students also achieve very well to get to nationally expected standards in citizenship.

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	35 (34)	52 (52)
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	85 (80)	91 (91)
Percentage of students gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	90 (89)	96 (96)
Average point score per student (best eight subjects)	233.9 (28.2)	282.5 (34.8)

There were 91 students in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. The points scoring system changed in 2004 to incorporate a greater range of qualifications. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- GCSE results have fluctuated considerably over time. In 2001, the school's highest proportion of students gaining five or more GCSEs at grade C or above (36.6 per cent) was achieved. Results in 2002, however, were weak and fell back considerably.

Since that time, results have improved consistently. The 2004 results were well below the average for all schools nationally, and below the average for similar schools, including those schools with students who gained similar Year 9 test results, and other secondary modern schools. The results were also below those of boys nationally, but in line with the national percentage for boys gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A*-G.

7. Underachievement by students at GCSE is indicated by measures of progress which students make from their Year 9 tests to their GCSE results. This measurement of "value added" shows that in both 2003 and 2004 students' progress was well below the average for all schools nationally and that for similar schools. The school's target grade analysis indicates that a high proportion of students did not achieve their target grades in most subjects, and the whole school was well short of meeting its statutory targets at GCSE. However, the basis for target setting, by subject and for the whole school, leads to targets that are not appropriate and, in many cases, unrealistic. They are therefore neither well understood nor properly valued by staff. They are set by using projections of performance based on the progress made by all students nationally from their Year 9 test results, and not adjusted to take account of the gender of the students, their individual circumstances, or the particular local circumstances of the school.
8. "Casual admissions" (students who join after the usual first time of admission) have a very significant impact on the school's GCSE results. Excluding all casual admissions from the analysis of GCSE results improves the proportion of students gaining five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C rate to 40.3 per cent, which is below the national average but above the average for similar schools. Of particular note is that the proportion of students gaining one GCSE or more passes rises from 90 per cent to 98.4 percent (well above average), indicating that the high proportion of students who do not get a GCSE at the school are most likely to have joined the school after the usual time of admission.
9. At GCSE, there has been a considerable variation in performance by subject. Results have been above average in recent years in science and physical education. In 2004, results were also above average in history, and average in art and design and German. ICT results improved from very low levels in 2003 to a little below average in 2004. In other subjects, results were below or well below the national average. In English, results were below average for all schools but in line with the national average for similar schools; in mathematics, results were well below average compared to all schools and below average compared with similar schools. Results in design and technology were well below average. GCSE short course results in design and technology, German, French and ICT were all weak and reflected difficulties in managing those courses in a short time.
10. Achievement by Year 11 has been adversely affected by the high degree of staffing turbulence experienced in the school in recent years. Now that staffing is more settled, the achievement of the current Year 11 cohort is satisfactory. This is the case, for example, in mathematics, where parents indicated that achievement had been significantly disrupted by a high turnover of staff and much use by the school of temporary supply teachers. There has been a considerable improvement in standards in mathematics now that staffing is more settled, new initiatives have been

introduced, and the strengths of teaching and learning from the programme in Years 7-9 feed through.

11. The achievement of a significant minority of students by Year 11 has been and continues to be adversely affected by their absence from lessons, which is affected by a number of factors, including a high incidence of fixed-term exclusions and poor punctuality to school. The school does not make planned provision to provide "catch-up" support for students who miss lessons when out on valuable college or work placements.
12. Achievement in design and technology is satisfactory but constrained by poor resources and accommodation. In music, the achievement of students is unsatisfactory because of the weak provision they have received in the subject over the years. Achievement is very good in physical education in Years 10 and 11; it is good in English, German, science, history, art and design, and citizenship.
13. The school analyses examination results and other assessments in considerable detail to monitor performance of groups of students by ethnicity, English as an additional language, the more able, those with special educational needs, and those "casual admissions". Such analysis does not reveal significant differences in performance between such groups over time by Year 9. By Year 11, however, there are some notable differences by group. The 31 students with English as an additional language did well in 2004 in relation to the whole school: 55 per cent gained five or more A*-C grades and their overall results were much higher than for students in the school as a whole. Inspection evidence confirms that students with English as an additional language make good progress across all years in the school, and are well supported to do this. Asian students from other than Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi heritages tend to perform better than the other main ethnic groups in the school. The ten more able students did well in that all gained five or more grades A*-C, and A*-A grades were achieved in a number of subjects including business studies, history, ICT, mathematics, physical education and science; but half or more did not achieve their target grades in all subjects other than physical education and science. Inspection evidence suggests that, while higher attainers make satisfactory progress over time in the school, there is insufficient planning in lessons in a number of subjects to challenge them and extend their learning.
14. The achievement of students with special educational needs is good in Years 7 to 9 and satisfactory in Years 10 and 11, in line with that of other students. This achievement is shown in their normal lessons. Those who are withdrawn for specific learning support achieve well by improving their literacy and numeracy. Students make good progress in relation to their individual education plans.

Sixth form

15. The status and organisation of the Beverley School sixth form totally changed in September 2003, so that comparisons with the standards achieved in the summer examinations in 2003 do not have their usual validity. In 2003, the last students taking AS and A2 courses completed their courses. Standards achieved by very small numbers of students were significantly below the national average. The very small numbers of students in all subjects make national comparisons difficult. Results 2003 in VCE leisure and recreation were below average.

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	58.8 (52.4)	89.4 (92.6)
Percentage of entries gaining A-B grades	11.8 (3.7)	32.6 (35.3)
Average point score per student	96.7 (79.4)	258.2 (263.3)

There were 12 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

16. In 2003-2004, all students in the Vocational Centre were involved in Intermediate GNVQ Level 2 courses in art and design, business studies, ICT and leisure and tourism, plus re-sits in GCSE mathematics and English. Pass rates were above average. All subjects achieved pass rates above 83 per cent and in leisure and tourism it was 100 per cent. Across all subjects, only one student failed to obtain a pass. This represents good achievement.
17. Standards in re-sit GCSE mathematics and English were, however, well below the national average in 2004. Achievement in these two courses was unsatisfactory.
18. At this relatively early stage in the year, current standards of attainment are average overall when compared to students taking courses at a similar level nationally. Students' achievement on their courses is generally satisfactory, and achievement is good in business studies. Students still mainly aim for a qualification in one of a range of GNVQs at intermediate level, although a higher level (Level 3) Vocational Certificate of Education (VCE) is now offered in art and design. In the GNVQ/VCE courses inspected in detail, standards are in line with those in schools nationally in GNVQ business and in VCE art and design. They are currently below average in GNVQ art and design where many students have started the course with little recent experience of art. In GNVQ subjects where lessons were sampled, attainment is above average in leisure and tourism, average in media studies, and below average in ICT (although sixth form students generally have sound ICT skills which support their learning).
19. Over half of the students who follow GNVQ programmes also take courses which enable them to resit their GCSEs in English and mathematics, and these were inspected in detail. Standards are below average in English, and well below average in mathematics. Given their attainment when starting the courses, students' achievement is satisfactory in English. Students underachieve in GCSE mathematics: they have an insecure grasp of the subject, partly because the whole-class teaching is not sufficiently adapted to meet students' individual needs and partly because too many students' attendance is irregular.
20. Students in the Vocational Centre with English as an additional language reach average standards in line with all students. This represents satisfactory achievement since Year 11.

STUDENTS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND OTHER PERSONAL QUALITIES

The attitudes and behaviour of students are **satisfactory**. The spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of students is **good**. The attendance of students is **satisfactory** and

punctuality is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The respect accorded by students towards each other's beliefs and cultures is excellent.
- The improvement of behaviour within the school is having a positive effect on students' learning.
- There have been no permanent exclusions for four years, but incidents of fixed-term exclusion are still high.
- A significant number of students have attendance levels below 90 per cent.
- Many students are late arriving for the start of the school day.

Commentary

21. The attitudes of students towards school and their studies are satisfactory. When stimulated by lively and interesting teaching, for example in citizenship and physical education, students' attitudes to learning are good and sometimes excellent. They become interested in their studies and are able to sustain their concentration well. Where teaching is less effective, and students' interest is allowed to deteriorate, they demonstrate a lack of enthusiasm for their work, with the consequent lack of progress in learning during the lesson. Some students do not always see the value of gaining educational qualifications because there are many employment opportunities and the need to gain qualifications is not always high on their agenda. Teachers have to work hard to engage the attention of these students in lessons and enthuse in them a desire to learn.
22. The behaviour of students is satisfactory. Parents expressed concern about the standard of behaviour within the school. The new behaviour regimes are effective and behaviour in lessons was generally good. Students and parents state that the standard of behaviour has improved since the headteacher came into post. Relationships between students are particularly strong, and are manifested in the high degree of co-operation they show in organising their highly competitive games of football and basketball before school and at breaktimes. They respect each other's beliefs and cultures and support each other well in many ways, such as acting as interpreters in lessons for those whose first language is not English. There is a good degree of racial harmony in the school. Students and parents report that bullying is not an issue in this school.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of students

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	Number of students on roll	Number of fixed-period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	271	41	0
White – Irish	2	1	0
White – any other White background	30	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	5	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	9	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	2	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	15	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	75	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	4	1	0
Black or Black British – African	37	2	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	14	7	0
Chinese	4	0	0
Any other ethnic group	12	10	0
No ethnic group recorded	6	0	0

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

23. No students have been permanently excluded this term or for the last four years. The number of fixed-term exclusions, however, is high. The number of fixed-term exclusions has declined over time but too many students are externally excluded. This affects the continuity of their learning. Currently, there is no provision for internal exclusion of students. The school accepts students who are considered at risk of exclusion from other schools because it does not have a full roll. These students account for a small number of exclusions. The student support centre has effective strategies to successfully reintegrate these students into mainstream education. Those who fail to respond are usually in need of a placement at a specialist establishment. The exclusion statistics above show a disproportionately high rate of exclusion for black pupils from backgrounds other than African or Caribbean: these students had all breached the school's code of conduct on swearing and were automatically excluded, in line with the school's policy which applies to all students.
24. The attendance of students is satisfactory overall in that attendance in the year 2002-2003 was in line with the national average for all schools. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. However, 26 per cent of students still have an

attendance level below 90 per cent. The high incidence of exclusion affects these figures. The school is supported well by the education welfare officer who works particularly with students who have low attendance. They have been successful in retaining most of these students in mainstream education who might otherwise have fallen out of the system. Procedures to monitor and improve the attendance of students who are falling below the 90 per cent threshold are not rigorous enough. Letters are sent home to parents at the end of each term to notify them of concerns and first day phone calls home for identified students have been started. Still, there are too many students failing to attend on a regular basis and this has an adverse effect on their overall levels of attainment. The punctuality of students is unsatisfactory. Large numbers of students arrive late in the morning. Last week the school introduced a late arrivals room for students arriving after the start of period 1 so not to disrupt lessons. Detentions are given for being late. This is still an area of concern because students are now missing out on what they should have studied during period 1.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.6	School data	0.3
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.

25. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is good overall. It is not consistently planned for in all subjects and opportunities are missed to reinforce this aspect of students' education. The high quality personal and social education programme provides the backbone for moral and social development. Issues such as relationships are taught and contribute significantly to the respect that students accord to beliefs and cultures different from their own. There are opportunities for students to take responsibility in the school community, for example, by acting as prefects or serving on the School Council. Students take these responsibilities seriously and discharge their duties well. The School Council, led by a member of staff, is a forum for the expression of students' views. Students have to make a speech to their peers before being voted onto the Council. Students' cultural development is generally good. Whilst some subjects, such as religious education, English and art, have a well-planned element of multicultural education in lessons, other subjects have not approached this in a systematic way. Spiritual development is satisfactory. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection. The religious education syllabus, and teaching, provides good opportunities for the spiritual development of students. Opportunities do exist in other subjects but they are not highlighted to raise students' awareness. In some morning tutorial sessions there is a moment of reflection but this is not a consistent feature. Collective worship occurs frequently through morning assemblies but the school does not fully meet the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship.

26. Students with special educational needs are well integrated into lessons and into the life of the school. They work well when supported by teaching assistants. There is clear improvement in the attitudes and behaviour of students with emotional, behavioural and social difficulties, with the majority attending most lessons with their

peers. Students in the Student Support Centre respond well to teachers' and teaching assistants' careful match of activities to their needs.

27. Students with special educational needs benefit from the wide range of activities designed to develop their self-confidence and self-reliance, for example, self-defence and canoeing courses. They react well to being given responsibility, for example, when a group visited a bookshop to choose library books for the school.

SIXTH FORM

28. The attitudes of students in the sixth form are satisfactory. Most show a positive and responsible attitude towards their studies. However, the attendance and punctuality of sixth form students are unsatisfactory. Systems to monitor their attendance and punctuality are not rigorous enough. Some students have been taken onto courses with a history of poor attendance. Behaviour of students is good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education provided by the school is good. Students are well taught by staff who use effective methods to engage and motivate the students. Students therefore learn well. A satisfactory curriculum is organised with flexibility to meet individual needs and is enhanced by an increasing range of vocational and work-related courses in Years 10 and 11 and the sixth form. The school's good work-related provision draws on good support from local partners. There is a good range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities: good in sport, but weak in music. Students and students have access to good advice, support and guidance and there is good care for students' welfare and safety. Students' views are taken seriously through an active School Council.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

The quality of teaching and learning is **good**. Assessment systems are **satisfactory** overall, and they are very effective in some subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very well planned, with an engaging range of activities to enthuse and motivate students.
- Teachers mostly plan well to support the development of students' skills of literacy and numeracy, but students have insufficient opportunities to use ICT to support and develop their learning.
- A high proportion of lessons seen were very good or excellent in physical education, English, citizenship/PSHE, business studies and drama.
- Teachers and learning support assistants work very effectively together.
- Work is not always adapted well enough to challenge and extend higher attainers in some lessons.
- The quality of homework and the extent to which teachers follow up its completion, vary too much between subjects.
- Some subjects in the sixth form do not track students' progress clearly enough against assessment criteria.

Commentary

29. Students join the school with generally low attainment compared with other schools and a significant minority have very weak skills of literacy. The diverse nature of students' needs can present a real challenge to teachers, but teachers' highly effective planning and generally consistent implementation of school policies for classroom management and behaviour ensure that students make good progress in lessons and develop an enthusiasm for learning. Teachers incorporate many of the principles of the National Key Stage 3 Strategy into their planning. This ensures that students are clear about what they are learning and why, that they are enthused by a very good variety of activities and approaches which are well suited to their abilities, and that they review their progress regularly.
30. Lessons incorporate good opportunities to develop and apply students' key skills of literacy and numeracy so that over time many students overcome some key barriers to their learning and work with greater accuracy and precision. Teachers make good use of available resources to get their messages across and to keep students' interest. There are very effective displays in many classrooms which are actively used by teachers to support current learning in the subject and students' literacy skills. Where they are available, in English and mathematics, for example, teachers use interactive whiteboards very well to make their explanations clear. However, there is insufficient use of ICT to support students' learning in many subjects, and this constrains the opportunities for students to develop their skills for learning independently. In a number of subjects, students' learning is very dependent on the direction of the teacher. In others, most notably physical education, innovative methods have been devised to help students learn independently and to develop highly effective skills of evaluation.
31. Good use of the school's system of rewards and sanctions helps to ensure that in most cases classes are orderly and learning can proceed without disruption. However, in the few instances seen by inspectors where teachers were not as crisp in their application of the system's rewards and sanctions, students took advantage and poor behaviour slowed learning.
32. Nearly a third of lessons seen were very good or excellent – much more than at the last inspection - largely because of the pace of learning which resulted from well-planned lessons to well-managed classes. Very good or excellent teaching was seen in most subjects. In physical education, all lessons were very good or excellent, and a high proportion of lessons were very good or excellent in English, citizenship/PSHE, business studies and drama. In the seven per cent of lessons where teaching and learning were unsatisfactory, poor or very poor, the lessons either lacked clear enough explanations or the lesson content and activities were not pitched at an appropriate level to suit the needs of the students. Where either occurred, students lost interest, became disengaged and, in a few cases, disruptive.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 124 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
9 (7.3%)	31 (25.0%)	46 (37.1%)	29 (23.4%)	7 (5.6%)	1 (0.8%)	1 (0.8%)

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.

33. A key strength of teaching and learning in lessons is the highly effective way in which teachers work together with the learning support assistants who have been deployed to their classes either for students with special educational needs or for those with English as an additional language. The assistants work very flexibly, supporting target students when appropriate but able to deploy quickly to other individual students or groups as appropriate. The support given by assistants is frequently well planned in advance of the lesson. This has recently become more effective as teaching assistants are linked to departments so that they take an active part in departmental and lesson planning. Teaching in the Student Support Centre caters well for students' social and emotional needs.
34. Students with English as an additional language are supported well in class by teachers and assistants. Teachers provide good materials to structure their learning, particularly in English, physical education, religious education and citizenship. However, those who are beginners in English make slower progress than others because they do not have specific teaching to address their needs. They use bilingual dictionaries and translation machines well.
35. There is not always enough planning for students with special educational needs in classes without the presence of a teaching assistant. Similarly, in many subjects, teachers do not always plan sufficiently well to extend and challenge higher attainers in lessons.
36. Assessment of students' work and the use made of assessment information are satisfactory overall but vary considerably in their effectiveness between subjects. At a whole-school level, the school has a highly transparent system for tracking students' progress against National Curriculum or GCSE assessment criteria, which is completed termly in all subjects and much valued by students and parents alike. The targets set for students are, however, set by the school with reference to national data and are not well understood or valued by staff. Too often, students are set targets which are either well in excess of or well below their actual capabilities in the subject. Some subjects, including science, ICT, history, and physical education, have developed effective systems for tracking students' progress and using assessment data to help students improve.
37. Parents expressed a concern before the inspection that the regularity and general quality of homework were weaknesses of the school's provision. Inspectors support this view. The actual setting of homework is now monitored by the senior management team, but homework is not always sufficiently challenging and the completion of that homework which is set is not followed up rigorously by all teachers. Some students, therefore, do not always complete work set or do so to an acceptable standard. The quality of marking of students' work varies considerably between subjects in the way in which it helps students identify how to improve. Overall, assessment is a strength in English, German, ICT, history, music and physical education; but it has weaknesses in mathematics, geography and art.

Sixth form

38. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in the Vocational Centre. Four subjects were inspected in detail. In these subjects, teaching is good in business education. It is satisfactory in art and design and English. In mathematics it is unsatisfactory. In the sampled subjects, teaching was very good in leisure and tourism and satisfactory in media studies and ICT.
39. Teachers have good subject knowledge and in most subjects prepare students carefully for examinations. Explanations are clear and questions used well to develop students' understanding. Teaching methods are generally satisfactory and good in business and leisure and tourism. In English, there is good teaching of speaking and listening, but teaching of the more able students is only satisfactory. In art, there is an appropriate balance between structured teaching and the provision of opportunities for students to take charge of their own learning. Reviewing students' work and identifying short-term targets for improvement are also good in art. In business, learning objectives are communicated with clarity and lessons are well organised. Very good use is also made of resources to help understanding and motivate students.
40. Teaching is unsatisfactory in mathematics. Whole-class teaching is insufficiently focused upon individual needs and pace and challenge in lessons are not rigorous enough.
41. Most students' positive attitudes to their studies and their good relationships with teachers aid their progress. Lateness to lessons and absence, however, significantly restrict the progress of some students
42. Assessment is satisfactory in most subjects but unsatisfactory in mathematics. In mathematics and English, assessment information is not used effectively to determine the suitability of students for the courses or to plan to support their progress. Students are set targets in all their subjects and their overall progress is monitored carefully by the head of the Vocational Centre. In art and business, teachers plan lessons well to meet individual unit requirements. There is good ongoing oral assessment and sound marking in business. More efficient systems of recording students' assessed assignments to enable progress to be tracked clearly are however required in art and business.

THE CURRICULUM

The curriculum is **satisfactory** overall, and good in Year 10 and 11. It does not meet the statutory requirements for design and technology and music in Years 7-9, for the use of ICT in many subjects, and for religious education in the sixth form. There is a **good** range of enrichment activities. Overall, the sufficiency of accommodation and resources to support the curriculum is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school has an innovative approach to curriculum planning which has allowed it to design a curriculum well suited to the needs of most of its students.
- The curriculum prepares its students well for later life; the work-related curriculum and careers programme are good, and the citizenship programme is very good.
- The curriculum for music and for design and technology in Years 7-9 is unsatisfactory.

- The school has largely overcome some severe staffing difficulties, but resources and accommodation to support learning remain unsatisfactory overall.
- Not all statutory curriculum requirements are met.

Commentary

43. The school has adopted an innovative approach to curriculum planning so that the curriculum can more directly meet the specific needs of the boys who attend the school. The identification of a "Green Group" of lower-attaining students by Year 8 allows them access to a curriculum which has a greater practical component through food technology, and some extra study support. This is appropriate to students' needs, and the school is bowing to student pressure to introduce an examined course in food technology in Year 10 to allow continuity of study. While special arrangements are made for those on the "Green Route", other students follow a curriculum which prepares them to study a good range of GCSEs in Years 10 and 11.
44. Students are well prepared for working life through a good careers programme, a well-planned programme of work-related learning, and an increasing range of applied and vocational courses which allow students to opt to follow vocational pathways from age 14 to 19. These programmes are much in line with recent national initiatives to strengthen work-related provision in schools, and with forthcoming changes to the national framework for the education of 14-19 year-olds. Students have "taster" programmes of vocational courses as early as Year 9, when they move between units of work in business, media, art and leisure and tourism, so that they can make informed choices between these subjects when selecting their GCSE options. In a "taster" lesson sampled, students had made good progress in understanding business in a few weeks of study. Around 30 students in Years 10 and 11 attend further education college courses in either ICT or motor vehicle engineering as part of the nationally funded *Increased Flexibility Programme (IFP)*.
45. The programme for personal, social, health and citizenship education is very well planned, and makes a significant contribution to students' good personal development when in the school. Students do not experience a daily act of collective worship as required. The assemblies which students attend on a number of occasions during the week often feature reflection and collective worship, although sometimes opportunities for this are not taken. Similarly, in some form registration periods there is some excellent follow up of recent assembly themes which really make students think and reflect, but this is not consistent and in some registration periods, little valuable activity occurs.
46. There are weaknesses in the curriculum for Years 7-9 which undermine its overall quality. In design and technology, a severe shortage of resources, a relatively low allocation of curriculum time, poor accommodation and some inexperience in curriculum planning all contribute to a curriculum which falls a long way short of meeting statutory requirements. The severe shortage of resources and low curriculum time also mean that students do not receive their full entitlement to their programmes of study in music. Resources for learning generally remain unsatisfactory, as they were at the last inspection, and the school's plan for financial recovery at present offers few prospects for substantial improvement. While there have been many more computer facilities installed in recent years, students in many subjects do not use ICT

as they should to support their learning. Another significant recent improvement has been in the new learning resource centre, which is now a very attractive environment and is increasingly well used by teachers and students. At the time of the inspection, it had only been open for a few weeks: at this early stage the book stock is low and only a small percentage of students have borrowed books, but there are good plans in place for the learning resource centre to play a key role in promoting literacy and independent study.

47. The curriculum is well adapted to meet the needs of students with special educational needs, with the Green Route providing a modified curriculum with a stronger focus on life skills. The Student Support Centre meets very well the needs of those students referred to it by continuing their academic work if that is appropriate, but more usually by planning specific activities based on their assessed needs. The school makes very great efforts to reintegrate students withdrawn from some lessons or excluded for a time, so that they continue to experience normal school life. Students for whom English is an additional language do not have a specially adapted curriculum but receive effective support in class and can attend a weekly homework club for extra help. The school identifies its more able students and is making increasing special provision for them with extra-curricular seminars. These seminars are offered through the *London Challenge* initiative which sponsors partnership between state and independent schools. A few subjects, including English, science and art, have clubs or additional lessons for more able students. Lessons in many subjects, however, are not always planned systematically to extend and challenge more able students in class.
48. The formal taught curriculum is enhanced by good enrichment opportunities across a range of sporting, arts and other activities. Teachers give a generous level of support outside the school day, including art classes on a Saturday morning. There is a wide range of field trips, theatre visits and drama and media activities. Numerous outside speakers enhance the delivery of the religious education, citizenship and personal and social education curricula. Enrichment activities for boys with special educational needs and those who find the formal curriculum too demanding are very good. The programme of trips, visits and recreational activities helps build their confidence and self-esteem. Participation in sport is good, including a series of intra and extra sporting activities. Many departments run out-of-hours study support classes. Enrichment activities are mostly well attended, but musical activities are not on the whole well supported and there has been a low take-up of instrumental lessons.
49. Considerable difficulty has been experienced in recruiting and retaining well-qualified teachers. Currently, the school is fully staffed and the majority of teachers are on permanent contracts. This period of uncertainty has been well managed and the recruitment of overseas trained teachers has ensured sufficient teachers are in post in shortage areas such as design and technology and modern foreign languages. These teachers are doing on-the-job training but the lack of detailed knowledge of the National Curriculum in design technology is a weakness. Recruiting and retaining well-qualified teachers for ICT has proved difficult, and has had a negative impact on standards and in ensuring ICT is embedded in all subjects of the curriculum. The number and quality of staff supporting students and the work of teachers are satisfactory. Teacher assistants are well trained, well deployed, and effective in supporting teaching and learning for students with special educational needs.

Technical support is satisfactory overall, but the lack of permanent on-site technical support for ICT is a weakness.

50. At the time of the last inspection, there were considerable issues about the condition of the buildings. They were poorly maintained, with a number of safety hazards, and the overall standard of cleanliness was unacceptable. These have in the main been addressed, with support from the effective site manager and his team of efficient workers. However, a number of key weaknesses in the school's accommodation remain. The canteens and external art rooms suffer from a structural defect, although there are plans to replace them. The design and technology accommodation and attached art room are poor and inadequate for current best practice. Assemblies and examinations have to take place in the sports hall because the school lacks an assembly hall. Since the last inspection, some of the accommodation has been taken out of teaching service but is used effectively for other purposes and, for example, part is used for the chapel and another section for storage. One of the surplus rooms is used as the 'late room'. Currently the school has far fewer students than planned, and in consequence its shortage of quality accommodation only really impacts on design and technology, art and the canteen. However, if the school were to be returned to its former size, the shortage of accommodation might seriously impact on a wider part of its provision.

Sixth form

51. The Vocational Centre curriculum is satisfactory. From the establishment of the Coombe sixth-form collaboration in September 2003, the curriculum has been focused on Level 2 vocational subjects and resit GCSE courses in mathematics and English. There is currently, however, a limited range of vocational courses and the curriculum would benefit from the inclusion of courses such as health and social care and technology vocational courses, as and when staffing and budget resources allow.
52. There are no key skills courses at the moment and, as inspectors report, the reliance on GCSE resit courses does not suit all students. The key skills approach in literacy and number needs to be considered.
53. The enrichment programme is satisfactory and developing. There is a recreational sports afternoon and students at the Vocational Centre have the opportunity to join activities at the Coombe Advanced Centre, for example, the annual rag week. There are visits in subjects and students can work with other students in the Beverley main school.
54. The Vocational Centre is not meeting statutory requirements to provide sixth form students with their entitlement in religious education in accordance with the recommendations of the Kingston Agreed Syllabus.
55. Accommodation for the sixth form is satisfactory overall. The Vocational Centre facilities are good but accommodation for art and design is poor. The match of teachers to the needs of the curriculum is good and resources are satisfactory.

CARE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

The provision for students' care, welfare and health and safety is **good**. The support, advice and guidance, based on monitoring, students receive is **good**. The involvement of students through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Key Stages 3 and 4 pastoral administrators are strongly committed to high quality pastoral provision for individual students.
- A high quality personal and social education programme contributes significantly to students' personal development.
- Support for students with special educational needs and for those with English as an additional language is very good.
- There is good academic support for Year 11 students through to their GCSE examinations.
- Good careers guidance helps students make informed choices at both the end-of-year and for post-16 options.
- The use of tutor sessions in the morning is variable: some sessions provide excellent support and guidance, while in others there is little valuable activity.
- Thorough academic screening is not carried out for students entering the school on a fresh start scheme.

Commentary

56. Key Stages 3 and 4 pastoral administrators have a strong commitment to providing high quality pastoral support for students. They have a good knowledge of their students and a good understanding of what needs to be done to support them to raise their level of achievement. Tutors stay with their year group throughout their time in school, but because of significant staff turbulence over the last few years, this has not always been possible. They are able to build strong supportive relationships with the students and their families. Use of the morning tutorial session is variable. Where good practice is evident, a range of activities prepares students well for their studies and provides support. Others are often used as social time for students to chat to their friends. Students interviewed were confident that they would be able to ask members of staff for help, either academic or personal.
57. The responsibility for monitoring the academic progress of students, to identify underachievement, lies with subject teachers. Progress statements are issued each term that show progress students have made against their predicted target grades. All students in Year 11 are allocated a staff mentor who helps plan their revision and deal with any other concerns students may have. Additional revision classes are available to support students' preparation for GCSE examinations. Unlike many schools, students do not have study leave prior to taking their GCSEs but are taught right up to the start of examinations.
58. The induction arrangements for students entering the school in Year 7 are good. There are opportunities for primary students to visit the school prior to transfer and they benefit from an induction day in the summer term before they transfer. Students new to the school are assessed and supported initially by the Student Support Centre. However, thorough academic screening to identify any areas of learning that might not be secure, through missed education, is not routine. This is particularly relevant

for those students joining the school who are being given a fresh start to ensure that they feel capable and confident to join in with mainstream lessons.

59. A high quality personal and social education programme contributes significantly to students' personal development. A good careers guidance programme, well supported by Connexions, prepares students well for option choices at the end of Year 9 and post-16. All students in Year 9 benefit from taster lessons in optional subjects they can study for GCSE. Vocational education is provided at a local college of further education for those students who would benefit from these courses.
60. Arrangements for students' care, welfare and health and safety are good. Child protection procedures are in place and meet requirements. Welfare and first aid arrangements ensure that students are well cared for. The procedures to monitor health and safety are generally good and ensure the safety of students. The testing of portable electrical appliances has not yet been fully completed.
61. For students with special educational needs, teachers and teaching assistants carry out and regularly modify close and well-focused assessment of students' progress towards their targets. All teachers are given copies of these and have good access to the students' detailed individual education plans. Literacy and numeracy progress is monitored by subject specialists as well as by teaching assistants who work with students withdrawn for extra support. Thus there is good up-to-date evidence of students' needs, with weekly discussion of the need for modification of provision. Students with English as an additional language receive very effective in-class support from teachers and teaching assistants, and they are well equipped with bilingual dictionaries and translation machines to support their learning. There is good support in lunchtime sessions to help them with homework and coursework.
62. The involvement of students in seeking and asking their views is good. Students' views are sought through an active school council and through the school's own self-evaluation initiatives. Their peers vote for representatives to the school council. However, the school council is run by a teacher and this reduces its opportunities to become responsible for organising the running of the council and selecting the agenda.

Sixth form

63. Students receive good support and guidance in the vocational centre. Students meet their tutors regularly and find all the staff to be approachable and helpful. They are set performance targets for Year 12 and Year 13 and have regular interviews with their tutors as well as on the recently introduced review days to discuss their progress. These arrangements are effective and are appreciated by students, who are clear about what they need to do to reach their targets.
64. The head of the vocational centre form works closely with tutors and subject teachers and also with the Director of the Coombe Advanced Centre to provide guidance, advice and support for students. They receive helpful guidance when applying for advanced courses at the Coombe Advanced Centre or for employment. The Vocational Centre also provides for students' wider needs and they are encouraged to take part in enrichment activities. Students are assisted to study independently in most subjects and are given opportunities to learn how to work in teams. The involvement of sixth

form students in seeking and asking their views is good. They run their own affairs through the sixth form committee, which meets regularly with the head of the Vocational Centre and manages the common room and organises social and charity events. Most students very much enjoy life in the vocational centre and would strongly recommend it to others.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS, OTHER SCHOOLS AND THE COMMUNITY

The effectiveness of the school's links with its parents is **satisfactory**. The quality of the school's links with the community is **good**. The school's links with other schools and colleges are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The collaborative sixth form arrangements are very good.
- Good partnerships have developed with primary schools.
- There are good relationships with the local community.

Commentary

65. The school's partnership with its parents is satisfactory. They like the school and are particularly pleased with the communications between the school and themselves. They feel well informed about their sons' progress through annual reports and the termly 'positional statements'. Parents feel able to contact the school easily and the use of email for communication is increasing. Their views are surveyed on a regular basis to find out what they think of the life and work of the school. Consultation days give parents the opportunity to discuss progress with tutors and set targets for improvement with their child. At present there are no curriculum-related events to give additional information to parents about what their child is studying. The Parents and Staff Association has been re-launched and runs a range of events to support the school. Recently they ran a competition for students to design a label for the Christmas puddings they were making to sell at a fund-raising event.
66. The quality of the school's links with the community is good. The school premises are well used by its community. The McMillan Cancer Relief charity has opened a drop-in centre on the school site for the use of local residents. There are strong links with local churches and students help them run a range of events such as the Christmas Day lunch for the lonely. The school sponsors the lunch jointly with the Rotary Club and students help to serve lunch and clear away afterwards. The school's programme for work-related learning is supported by many locally-based businesses and agencies.
67. There is a good partnership with other schools and colleges. There is a commitment to continue to develop these partnerships. The induction arrangements with primary schools for Year 6 students coming into the school are good. An effective partnership has been developed with the primary feeder schools. Teachers take lessons in primary schools, which helps the transition of students into the school. The sports co-ordinator scheme, although in its infancy, has promoted further links with primary schools and the school is planning to host the annual primary schools sports day. Collaboration with the Coombe Girls School extends beyond the sixth form partnership and now supports teaching and learning in mathematics in Year 11. Weaknesses in the school's music provision are offset to some extent by a link with a local specialist school which

allows Year 11 students access to composition software. Kingston Further Education College offers vocational courses to students in Years 10 and 11.

68. The school uses the assistance of a wide range of agencies and partner organisations to support students' needs. As a result they write well-informed reviews attended by relevant experts, parents, teachers and teaching assistants. Individual education plans are therefore detailed and helpful. There are good links with Kingston Refugee Service for the support of refugee students who speak English as an additional language to be helped with their homework there.

Sixth form

69. The Vocational Centre has good links with other schools and satisfactory links with the community. Links with the main school at Beverley School, the community and with Coombe Advanced Sixth Form Centre are growing. In business education, there are work placement links with local firms, for example, with the John Lewis Partnership. In leisure and tourism, there are visits to local amenities and firms such as McDonalds as well as visits to the Malden Centre. In addition, an increasing number of opportunities are provided for students to work with younger students at Beverley School. These include a project with Year 9, to produce an induction pack for new students. Other sixth formers work in the special needs support club. These opportunities have a positive impact on students' confidence and personal development. A junior sports leader course is planned for later in this academic year. All students in the Vocational Centre have the opportunity to use the amenities at the Advanced Centre.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good** overall. The leadership of the headteacher is **very good**, and the leadership of other key staff, including senior and middle managers, is **good**. The effectiveness of the management of the school is **good**. Governance of the school is **satisfactory**. The governing body is newly constituted and most governors, including the chair, are newly in post.

Statutory requirements are not met in respect of the curriculum for design and technology and music in Years 7-9, the use of ICT in many subjects, religious education in the sixth form, and a daily act of collective worship.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher is a dynamic innovator with a clear vision who aspires to a high standard for his school.
- The newly reconstituted governors are inexperienced but determined to play a decisive role supporting the headteacher in shaping the future direction of the school. They understand the school's strengths and weaknesses and have a good knowledge and understanding of the diverse community.
- The senior management team shares the headteacher's aspirations and ensures they are realised by regularly monitoring the performance of all managers in the school.
- The school has managed many changes over the last three years, including a whole-staff re-structuring and a continuing refurbishment programme for teaching areas.
- The governors have not yet ensured that all statutory requirements are met.

Commentary

70. The headteacher's vision has led the school through a period of restructuring and curriculum innovation. The introduction of a rigorous monitoring system, an ongoing programme of refurbishment, and the latest initiative to gain specialist sport status indicate that this momentum is gathering force. These factors, combined with the school's willingness to work closely with the local education authority and the neighbouring leading edge school, have resulted in rising standards. The senior management team prides itself on a daily, and highly visible, 'hands-on' approach to supporting staff and students. Throughout the school there is a shared sense of purpose readily voiced by governors, staff and students.
71. Since September 2004, the new governors have been very active in supporting the school and bringing their in-depth community knowledge to support the headteacher's vision. The governing body has been reduced in numbers and newly reconstituted; it has dispensed with a formal committee system and has agreed to monthly meetings of the full organisation. As a result, although most governors are newly in place, all are very well informed about the school's key development issues. There has been a valuable link with the experienced governing body of the neighbouring Coombe School to create a successful vocational sixth form. Governors have well-defined systems in place to link with Area Co-ordinators (heads of faculty) to find out about the strengths and weaknesses of the school's provision. Governors are instrumental in relaying community concerns to this harmonious multicultural school.
72. Governors have yet to ensure that statutory requirements are met in respect of the curriculum for design and technology and music in Years 7-9, the use of ICT in many subjects, religious education in the sixth form, and a daily act of collective worship. Many of these were weaknesses at the last inspection. The school has significantly improved the quality of its ICT provision since the last inspection, but subjects still do not use computers enough. Acts of collective worship are now held regularly through the school's assembly programme, in spite of the difficulties of holding assemblies in the (unseated) sports hall, but there are not daily opportunities for collective worship as required. Weaknesses in the music and design and technology curriculum are linked closely to the school's particular weaknesses in resources, accommodation and staffing, which governors have been working to resolve.
73. The management of staffing is good. The school's now-established system for appraisal and performance management is good. It is based on the line management model, with a new senior and middle management established in September 2003, and incorporating the pastoral administrators in the school improvement forum from September 2004. There is no appraisal for support staff but plans are in place to introduce the local education authority's policy. Regular monitoring by the LEA confirms that the senior management's annual target setting for middle managers is in line with the school development plan. All new staff take part in preparatory induction sessions and newly qualified teachers have the support of an induction tutor as part of their ongoing assessment. In recent years the school has had difficulty in recruiting and retaining specialist staff, but since September 2004, staffing appears more stable. There are some unqualified but able practitioners from overseas who are engaged in gaining qualified teacher status. Present staff feel supported by managers and governors. The school's contribution to initial teacher training has been limited because of the staffing difficulties.

74. The agreed, whole-school development plan is concise and very clear in its identification of priorities and roles. All subject plans are required to reflect these priorities. The quality of subject planning varies but is good overall and is very good in physical education and citizenship. There are effective structures for the management of learning, co-ordinated through the deputy head, assistant head, area co-ordinators, heads of subject and pastoral heads. Students benefit from comprehensive monitoring of their attitudes and academic achievements. On the basis of this information, they are given good support and guidance to enable them to meet their targets. Since the introduction of an informative assessment system, standards in the school are rising. It ensures that appropriate information is available to enable staff to provide focused programmes for all students, including those with special needs, the gifted and talented and those for whom English is a second language. The same analysis extends to subject areas which makes accountability a more accurate process. Senior managers regularly meet with area co-ordinators, heads of subject and pastoral administrators. Both curriculum and pastoral teams are very active in monitoring students' work and the quality of education they receive.
75. The school rightly prides itself on the excellent systems in place for children with special educational needs. The leadership of the special needs co-ordinator is excellent, and has ensured the full involvement of students, appropriate teaching staff, support staff and parents in putting in place appropriate programmes of support for students. The special needs department is very effective in monitoring standards and planning for improvement.
76. The provision for students with English as an additional language is well led, with relevant training for all staff. The management is satisfactory; students are all assessed but their progress is not monitored sufficiently closely. The specific grant for teaching students with English as an additional language is used fully to support them.
77. The school budget was above the national median for secondary schools and it has the highest cost per student in the Royal Borough of Kingston. The resulting substantial deficit is directly linked to staffing difficulties in recent years. This is acknowledged by the local education authority who have given substantial financial support but closely monitor the agreed recovery plan to reach a balanced budget by 2007. The school also receives a leadership incentive grant until 2006. The ethnicity and special needs of the school's student cohort attract funds from the ethnic minorities achievement grant and special educational needs funding. All have been used effectively to improve the quality of education and forge close links with the local leading edge school. In addition, the LEA is supporting the school's bid to obtain specialist sports status. Governors and the headteacher are acutely aware that urgent priority must be given to the recruitment of a greater number of students in Year 7 and students in the vocational sixth form.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	2,213,397	Balance from previous year	-72,436

Total expenditure	2,305,539
Expenditure per student	4,864

Balance carried forward to the next year	-164,578
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78. While the school's unit costs are well above average, it has started to achieve a higher standard of education despite staffing difficulties and limited capital resources. Therefore, taking into consideration the school's exceptional circumstances, Beverley provides satisfactory value for money.

Sixth form

79. Leadership and management in the Vocational Centre are good. The head of sixth form provides clear direction and good leadership. There is very effective and regular liaison with the Director of the Coombe Advanced Centre. Regular meetings take place at both headteacher and governor levels to ensure the effective development of this innovative collaboration between the two schools.

80. Relationships in the vocational centre are good, with mutual respect between teachers and students. Leadership is firm and fair, with clear lines of responsibility. The head of the Vocational Centre works effectively with tutors and subject teachers to ensure that most students benefit from their course. Sixth form performance is regularly reviewed but currently there is no vocational development plan to identify immediate priorities. Attendance and punctuality for some students are unsatisfactory and needs to be tackled even more rigorously. A review of the unsatisfactory provision in the re-sit GCSE mathematics course is required, with perhaps consideration of more suitable approaches to prepare students for their vocational courses.

81. Expenditure on the sixth form is currently very slightly above its income. There is no evidence, however, that resources in the main school suffer unduly as a result and the main school benefits from the sixth form. However, the balance between sixth form income and expenditure needs to be monitored carefully. The sixth form provides satisfactory value for money and is cost effective.

WORK-RELATED LEARNING

Provision in work-related learning (WRL) is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The extent of provision for WRL across subjects and other activities has been carefully audited to ensure that students receive their appropriate entitlement.
- The quality of students' learning from their work experience placements is enhanced by good preparation and debrief through the school's PSHE and citizenship programme.
- Students have many good opportunities to learn about work and to develop skills for work, but there are no opportunities for students to get involved in enterprise activities.
- The programme of college placements has a positive effect on students' attitudes, but there are not appropriate arrangements in place to systematically support students in catching up on work missed when at college.

Commentary

82. The school provision for work-related learning (WRL) is good. It meets the very recently introduced statutory requirements for this area of learning, and the provision which students receive through various subjects and activities in the school has been carefully audited against national guidance.
83. Students are able to learn through their experience of work and working situations. All students benefit from a well-organised two-week period of work experience in the summer term of their Year 10, which draws on the support of many local employers. Students' learning from this experience is enhanced by very good preparatory work and follow-up debriefing exercises through their PSHE and citizenship programme. Around 30 students in Years 10 and 11 attend further education college courses in either ICT or motor vehicle engineering as part of the nationally funded *Increased Flexibility Programme (IFP)*. These IFP courses were not inspected on site but discussions with students and programme managers indicate that they are well managed and have a positive effect on the motivation of students, keeping some in school who otherwise might have stopped attending or developed poor attitudes. The planning of how students will catch up on lessons missed when out at college is not systematic enough, though, and adversely affects their learning in mathematics. Two students also take one-day-per-week work placements linked to their college course as part of their individual learning programme set up by the school to keep these students in education and training.
84. Students have many opportunities to learn about work because many of the courses offered in Years 10 and 11 have an applied or work-related component. Central to this are the strong PSHE, citizenship and careers programmes which look at types of jobs, and people's rights and responsibilities. In a number of subjects, particularly business studies but also in art, science and ICT, students have many opportunities to look at the way businesses operate and the roles people play within them. This is also a feature of the work undertaken in the vocational "taster" programme in Year 9; students seen in a business lesson had acquired a good understanding of the way in which businesses work.
85. There are a number of opportunities for students to learn about the skills required for work. Generally, students' key skills develop well in the school: their communication and numeracy skills are well supported, they have some good opportunities to work in teams, and in some subjects, especially physical education, students are able to develop very good skills for improving their own performance. An Industry Day is held, in which employers come into the school from a range of sectors, including the armed services, public utilities and construction, to lead students through work-related problem-solving activities. The school's audit shows that many subjects of the curriculum emphasise the work-related nature of the skills students apply. In addition, students' leadership skills are encouraged through their applications for the post of prefect and their prefectorial duties, and, for a few, through standing for election to the School Council. Students, however, have few opportunities to develop employability and entrepreneurial skills through business simulations and enterprise activities.

86. Work-related learning is well managed in the school, and has been accorded a high priority in the school's curriculum planning. Co-ordination is shared between the programme co-ordinator for PSHE and an assistant headteacher, and both are able to clearly track the extent of provision across the school. The Key Stage 4 Pastoral Administrator manages the programme of college and work placements effectively in liaison with the LEA's Vocational Development Centre and the Kingston and Merton Education Business Partnership.

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

- Lively and focused teaching is raising standards.
- Interactive whiteboards are used very well in the teaching.
- Students learn well and show respect for one another.
- Students who speak English as an additional language make good progress.
- Computers are not used enough by students in their regular work.

Commentary

87. When students enter the school, their attainment is well below average in English. By the end of Year 9, their results in national tests are below average compared with boys in all schools, and average compared with those in similar schools. Over time, in comparison with boys in all schools, students do better in English than in either of the other two core subjects.
88. At GCSE standards have been below average compared with boys in all schools, and average compared with similar schools. The percentage of students who reached grades A*-C was below average in 2004 compared with all schools, but the percentage reaching grades A*-G was average. Standards seen during the inspection by Years 9 and 11 were slightly below average compared with all boys nationally. Students speak and listen at average levels, whereas their writing skills seen were slightly below average. The standards of students who speak English as an additional language are higher than those of all students.
89. In GCSE English literature, results have been consistently below average compared with boys nationally. They are lower than English GCSE because almost all students have been entered; many schools do not enter their lower-attaining students for this examination.
90. Students achieve well in all years; they make better progress than students in similar schools. In Years 7 to 9, this is because of focused literacy teaching and in Years 10 and 11, it is because they are taught well and learn the examination requirements. Students with special educational needs achieve well because of good support in lessons; those with English as an additional language make good progress because they are supported well by teachers and teaching assistants, and in the homework club.
91. Students learn well because of lively and focused lessons. Their written work and results show that they learn well over time to write for a range of purposes, with a good knowledge of different genres and of media texts. Whereas teaching is good overall, some very good and outstanding lessons were seen. The latter had pace, challenge, a variety of activities, and exceptionally good use of students' personal whiteboards. Teachers used interactive whiteboards very well to illustrate texts and focus students' attention. Higher-attaining students use computers very well for presentations in PowerPoint about their reading, but generally students make insufficient use of computers to support their learning in their lessons. Students'

learning is enhanced by their good relationships and respect for one another's cultures and traditions; however, the lower attainers in Year 7 do not behave well enough to enable sufficient progress to be made. Students learn an understanding of the media well in Years 10 and 11. Reading is taught well through shared texts and class libraries. There is a good programme of induction to the recently refurbished Learning Resource Centre, which was, however, under-used at the time of the inspection. Assessment is used well to improve learning.

92. The department is very well led and well managed. Leaders model good practice in using interactive whiteboards and in directing students' use of their individual whiteboards. Schemes of work are well prepared. The monitoring of assessment is satisfactory. The department has rightly decided not to enter the lowest attainers for GCSE in English literature in future, in order to concentrate on their learning in English.
93. There are very good extra-curricular opportunities, including theatre trips, Book Review competitions and the Rotary Public Speaking Competition, which enhance the learning well.
94. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Soon after that, standards fell to a low point in 2002; indications from this inspection are that they have regained their former level. The accommodation has been refurbished and resources improved.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

95. Students reach below-average standards of English language and literacy in the whole curriculum. They listen and speak well, but their written skills are less strong. They read aloud well in several subjects, including physical education, information and communication technology and geography. Technical vocabulary is explicitly taught and reinforced through good displays in all classrooms, and particularly well in English, religious education, art and design, citizenship and physical education. There are good links between teachers of English and mathematics to develop logical thinking in language.

GERMAN

Provision in German is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Overall teaching is good and GCSE results in German are good as a result.
- Students achieve very well in Years 7-9.
- Students' attitude towards their work is very good.
- A new subject leader, engaged in gaining qualified teacher status, has established a well- motivated team.
- The low time allocation in German in Years 7 to 9 prevents standards rising further.
- The use of ICT does not meet national curriculum requirements.
- Strategies for supporting classroom management in Years 7 to 9 need reviewing.

COMMENTARY

96. All students study German from Year 7. The department has had many staff changes over the past four years and this has influenced standards and the curriculum. French

was the main language until recently but is being phased out. The last remaining class will take their GCSE examination in French in June 2004. Short courses in French and German were withdrawn in September 2004.

97. In 2003 and 2004, GCSE examination results were above the national average for boys in German and below in French. Students achieve higher grades in German compared to most other subjects in the school. In 2004, results in the short course in German were much weaker than those in the full course.
98. On entry, German is new to all students. In 2004, modern foreign language teachers assessed students' attainment as above average by the end of Year 9 and the nationally expected proportion of students were shown reaching higher levels. From lessons and work seen at the end of Year 9 standards overall are above the national average and students' achievement is very good. In oral exercises, students speak confidently in short but accurate sentences. Reading skills are well developed because key words are displayed in classrooms and regularly referred to in lessons. Challenging behaviour by a small minority of students disrupts teaching and prevents other students from achieving their targets. In a Year 9 lesson, enthusiasm reached fever pitch when learning to tell the time. Students particularly enjoy oral work in pairs. Assessment clearly identifies progress against individual targets and shows that students with special educational needs achieve well, as do students with English as another language. Support staff support learning well by working with very small groups.
99. In Years 10 and 11, standards in German are above the national average for boys. Achievement in the four skills of listening, reading, speaking and writing is good. Listening and reading are well developed. Written work produces short, accurate sentences, but higher attainers do not sufficiently extend their writing beyond this. In a Year 10 class, students were able to speak with only a glance at their written preparation and added considerable humour to their role-play.
100. Teaching is good overall, with most lessons observed found to be good or better. Teachers have a good command of their subject. In the best lessons teachers speak in the foreign language consistently and expect students to respond in the same. The majority of lessons are well planned but strongly directed by the teacher and heavily dependent on textbooks and worksheets. In some lessons there is no work especially adapted to extend and challenge the higher attainers. Resources for teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall. Students do not have access to ICT equipment within the department so that, although schemes of work show where computers can be used to support learning and improve communication, in practice this does not happen enough. There is no subject library to provide opportunities for independent research, but there is a good section for modern foreign languages in the new whole-school resource centre for Years 7 to 9. Provision for extra-curricular activity is satisfactory. There are weekly 'drop-in clinics' and a German Café on open evenings. Detailed reports are regularly sent to parents.
101. Improvement since the last inspection is good, with significant improvement in GCSE results in German. However, as a result of the departure of an experienced subject leader of German in July 2004, the modern foreign language section is in an anomalous situation. The present subject leader, an experienced practitioner from

overseas, is currently unqualified in this country and does not teach German at GCSE level. Despite these limitations leadership is satisfactory and management is good.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results and achievement by the end of Year 9 are good, but these standards have not been maintained up to GCSE.
- The listening skills of students are good and assist learning.
- Students do not get sufficient use of ICT in mathematics.

Commentary

102. Results for 2004 in national tests at the end of Year 9 are a considerable improvement upon 2003. The proportion of students gaining the higher levels significantly increased. Results in 2004 were in line with national averages and well above those of similar schools. When standards are compared to those the students had on entering the school, these results represent very good progress as many students raised their standards by two levels. Currently, the standard of students' work by Year 9 is in line with that seen for boys nationally, and their achievement is good.
103. In contrast, the 2004 results at GCSE were much lower than in previous years, with under 30 per cent attaining grades A*-C. This is well below national averages, as is the proportion who gain A*-G grades. There has been a steady drop in standards since 2001. Students have performed relatively less well in mathematics than in their other subjects. Achievement in GCSE examinations, based upon the progress made by students between Year 9 and Year 11, has been unsatisfactory.
104. The staffing of mathematics has in recent years presented difficulties, and goes some way to explain the apparent differences in performance between Years 7-9 and Years 10-11. The learning of many students has been disrupted, particularly in Years 10 and 11, through frequent changes of teacher, often on supply. Staffing this year is more settled and expectations are justifiably higher, though there is a long way to go to significantly raise standards. Improved resourcing is having an immediate impact on the presentation and rigour of lessons, gaining greater pupil interest, and this is being reflected in the quality of their work. The revision and support programmes being implemented for Year 11 students will further aid their progress. Currently, standards by Year 11 are below average, and the achievement of students in Years 10-11 is satisfactory. In Year 10, signs of improved standards are more evident, notably in the thorough treatment of data-handling topics seen in many exercise books.
105. Teaching and learning are good overall in Years 7 to 9 and satisfactory in Years 10 and 11, though some unsatisfactory lessons were seen. The successful lessons are well planned and combine clear instruction, encouragement and attention to presentation of results. A variety of tasks motivates and engages the students, and learning is strongly promoted. This was particularly evident with a lower-attaining Year 8 class using ruler, protractor and compasses for constructions, a similar Year 7

class finding out areas of rectangles, and a higher-attaining Year 11 class dealing with transformation geometry. Student interest is less effectively sustained where there is inappropriate choice of material, insufficient challenge in the teaching, or not enough writing or practical activity.

106. A major stimulus to learning, much enjoyed by the students, is the recent acquisition of interactive whiteboards in each mathematics classroom. These are very effectively used, though teachers are still at an early stage of appreciating their full potential. Students frequently come to the front to demonstrate solutions or ideas. However, the overall use by students of ICT in mathematics remains unsatisfactory. Whilst topic ideas are mentioned in Schemes of Work there is little evidence of ICT being used apart from in some GCSE coursework projects.
107. The attentiveness and engagement of most students is very good. They listen well to the teacher and to each other. They are keen to contribute in question-and-answer sessions but often cannot explain in detail. Many take pride in their work and show all key stages of calculation, and are able to work independently or collaboratively. Students with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress because their needs are suitably recognised, with some benefiting further from in-class support. Homework, when set, is too often insufficiently demanding. Skills therefore get limited reinforcement beyond lesson time, except where teachers make themselves available for consultation, support which is appreciated by students, especially nearer exam times. Some exercise books include helpful comments to the students on how work can be improved; in others, though, the marking of work is insufficiently rigorous.
108. Leadership and management of the department are good. There has been effective strategic support from the Local Education Adviser. The need to deal with staffing issues has slowed progress in other directions. Performance management is undertaken, though few shared observations occur. Schemes of work and other documentation, whilst detailed, might benefit from clearer indication of the depth of work required to meet the needs and abilities of different students. Assessment record-keeping is very good, with detailed tracking of students' performance. Target grades or levels are determined, but students are not fully aware of them, nor know specifically what to do to raise their standard. The innovative sharing of some classes with teachers from Coombe focuses attention on small groups, and the students involved benefit from the arrangement, but teachers from the two schools do not share information sufficiently to help their planning. The learning of those students undertaking college link courses is disrupted because they miss mathematics lessons and there are insufficient formal arrangements in place to help them catch up.
109. Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory. Classrooms are more inviting, with a range of display material. Schemes of Work are significantly better, as is data recording. Results up to Year 9 are good, though not at GCSE. ICT provision is enhanced with the interactive whiteboards but student use of ICT remains unsatisfactory. The staffing situation has improved, though the three full-time and one part-time mathematics teachers are supplemented by small contributions from staff in other departments or from Coombe. If the improvements made by younger students are successfully translated up to GCSE, then standards should rise accordingly.

Mathematics across the curriculum

110. Across the curriculum pupils' use of mathematics is satisfactory. Mathematical skills of students on entry into the school are below average, and well below for many. By Year 9, students' number skills are in line with those in schools nationally, representing good progress. Mathematical competence is below average for Year 11 students. Support is provided through selective withdrawal or in-class help, and through early grouping of students into ability sets. Computer packages to assist learning are not currently used. Few mathematics or other lessons have mental numeracy starters; these might help learning, especially if used in conjunction with student-held mini-whiteboards to provide immediate assessment. Progress in arithmetic develops through, for instance, work on perimeters, areas, sequences and tally charts. Some students are still unsure of number bonds, even by Year 11. Higher-attaining students progress to quadratic equations, trigonometric calculations and statistical concepts of quartiles and box-plots. Even in upper mathematics sets, though, understanding by all is inconsistent.
111. Considerable work has been devoted to numeracy policy since the last inspection, including whole-staff training and production of mini-booklets. An interesting current development is on reasoning skills and 'connectives', linking numeracy and literacy. Across the curriculum, mathematical use is satisfactory but remains restricted in several subjects. Provision of a clearer booklet on key mathematical skills in numeracy and graphicacy might assist all staff in their teaching and students in their learning. Instances of good teaching include number work in German, use of formulae and graphical analysis in science, and life skills analysis in citizenship.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Standards reached by many students as they leave school are above the national average. They achieve well. Younger students particularly benefit from new up-to-date schemes that guide their lessons.
- Thorough analysis of test and examination results sharply judges performance and tracks individual students' progress well to identify where extra support is necessary.
- There are very good features of teaching, but teaching styles are not always sufficiently imaginative and lesson planning does not always centre upon learning.
- Students have very good opportunities for developing language and literacy skills, but there are not enough opportunities for students - especially the higher attainers - to apply ideas.

Commentary

112. Year 9 test results were below average in 2003 compared with all schools and similar schools. Although still below average compared with all schools, in 2004, results improved to become above average compared with similar schools. They were in line with national figures at Level 5 and below at higher levels. GCSE results were well above average at grades A*-C in double science in 2003. Results were well below average in single science. Considering results at grades A*-C, overall, standards were above average, which represents good achievement for many students compared with

their Year 9 test results. Their performance was better in science than in several other subjects they studied. In 2004, results were, again, well above expectations in double science; combined with single science, results at A*-C were above the national average.

113. Current standards in Year 9 are, overall, below average but improving, and the majority are making good progress and achieving well. In top sets, standards are average. Progress made is strongly linked to the quality of a teacher's planning. Where there is imagination, students respond well so learning is encouraged. As campaigners for Greenpeace, students in Year 9 quickly set about a problem that obviously interested them: to present a balanced case to the Government for a reduction in the use of pesticides in agriculture. So they made excellent progress, both in extending knowledge about population dynamics and in developing skills of balanced argument. Students with special educational needs make very good progress because assistant teachers are highly skilled in their support. Teachers follow a well-planned scheme to help their learning. They also constantly focus upon the needs of students whose first language is not English so that they, too, make very good progress through perceptive translations and spelling quizzes. Exercise books show that all students have good opportunities for developing language skills through a widening knowledge of technical words and to practise numeracy, but not enough for understanding how to investigate problems early in Year 7, or for representing diagrams accurately. Expectations about the quality of presentation are too low.
114. Standards seen in Year 11 are, currently, broadly average. Predictions based on work and test results show a significant core of students could eventually achieve above-average results. However, standards in classes, below top sets, in Years 10 and 11 are currently below average. There is also a mixed picture regarding achievement: for many it is good but a notable number are underachieving. Noted by the department, procedures are in place for tackling this under-performance. Attainment is affected by the variable quality of teaching. Students in Year 11 single science class readily identified homologous chromosomes and accurately predicted the nature of particular offspring, because they had a clear picture of these structures in their 'mind's eye'. Their teacher had involved them in well-chosen resources whilst making explanations crystal clear. Interested, their good attitudes helped their very good progress in learning more about genetics. When too little thought has been given to the choice of resources to explain and illustrate concepts, students underachieve because they do not understand. Some books show that homework is too often missed and work incomplete; other work is well presented and the quality very good.
115. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. It ranged from excellent to unsatisfactory and was most effective in Years 7 to 9. A strong feature in good lessons were students' good attitudes towards their tasks, because they were planned for them to tackle in interesting ways. Excellent teaching was markedly imaginative in involving students in illustrating new ideas. The many opportunities given to students to develop language skills is a strength of teaching. There are, however, not enough opportunities for students to apply ideas, and those who learn more quickly than others need more thoughtful, challenging work. Marking is consistent, but where comments are written, checks that students have acted upon them are not routine so good learning opportunities are lost. Where teachers' planning of lessons is at its best, standards are noticeably raised; where it is weak, students underachieve. Learning is

held back during unstimulating sessions caused by narrow teaching methods, where the teacher has 'centre stage' and talks at length about an idea rather than showing it to students.

116. Leadership is good. The relatively new head of department has a clear vision and high expectations for future developments. There is a noticeable drive for improvement through good teamwork resulting in new courses, schemes and testing procedures. The setting of students by ability has been improved and made flexible, to raise students' standards. These initiatives, and there are others in the pipeline, have contributed to the good progress made since the last inspection. Management is good. Thorough analysis of the department's performance is being used well to identify strengths, weaknesses and where students need extra support. Classroom observations have yet to have a full impact on sharing good practice across the teaching team.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are rising as a result of good teaching and leadership by the teacher in charge.
- Teaching assistants work well to support the learning of students with special educational needs.
- Good marking and assessment practices are used to show students how to improve.
- The department does not cover the full requirements of the national curriculum in that students do not learn to control physical movement using ICT.
- ICT across the curriculum does not meet the requirements of the national curriculum.
- Although equipment has improved since the last inspection, some subjects do not have specialist equipment or software to meet their learning needs.

Commentary

117. Standards in Year 11 examinations in 2004 were below average but greatly improved over the very poor results in 2003. Standards in Year 9, as indicated by teacher assessments, were similar in 2004 to those of 2003, but were much higher than those of 2002. Standards are therefore rising throughout the school. Work seen confirms this, in that the work of the higher-attaining Year 11 students is above expected levels while that of the majority is as expected. Coursework of the majority of students is well organised with well-expressed planning and evaluation documentation. Lower attainers have a high level of incomplete work with very sparse planning so that important aspects are not addressed. The teacher in charge of ICT has organised extra sessions in which their work is improving.
118. Standards of attainment by Years 9 and 11 are below average. Achievement in Years 7-9 and that in Years 10-11 is satisfactory as standards on entry to the school are well below expected levels. Although students make good progress in those aspects of the National Curriculum covered by the course, the school is not equipped for them to learn to control physical movement using ICT. Students with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English achieve well because of the good

attention given to their needs, including the use of software in a student's first language.

119. The improvement in standards is the result of the staffing of the department with a knowledgeable teacher in charge and a qualified teacher of ICT. There was still some instability in staffing at the time of the inspection, but teaching and learning in ICT lessons are good overall. Teachers use the National Key Stage 3 Strategy well to plan lessons so that students are required to follow good practice in planning and redrafting their work. Lessons are often varied, with short activities designed to maintain students' interest. Teachers tend to involve higher-attaining students in whole-class discussion as a means of maintaining pace, and so sometimes miss the fact that lower attainers do not grasp the point. However, they give good support to individuals while students are working independently. They create good structures to support learning and expression, for example, paragraph starters or planning tables to guide students' responses. They use high quality information sheets for reference at home or while working individually. Teachers plan tasks well to meet students' learning needs, based on careful assessment of their strengths and weaknesses. In their marking they inform students about where and how they need to improve. When they set homework it is useful preparation for the following lesson. Teachers and teaching assistants work very well together to manage the behaviour and support the learning of students with special educational needs. The instability of staffing has led to some classes having low expectations of the depth and commitment that is required of them, but teachers are working hard to address this by insisting on attention to the task in hand and praise for work that shows improvement.
120. The department is being well led in that the teacher in charge has analysed the reasons for past weaknesses. He has sought and been given help and guidance to address the issues in planning, assessment and organisation. As a result he has successfully adapted the curriculum so that students are learning to apply ICT thoughtfully in well-planned coursework instead of learning processes. Resources have improved since the last inspection with interactive whiteboards in several subjects and with a new suite of computers in the learning resources centre, but there are still problems with the school's main network. During the inspection it was difficult to teach a full class with each student having sole access to a computer as the computers are unreliable and depend on the services of technicians sent from another school.
121. Improvement since the previous inspection is good in that standards have risen and there has been some improvement in the equipment. The curriculum has been revised so students are now being taught to apply ICT to problems rather than simply to follow instructions.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

122. The use of ICT across the curriculum is unsatisfactory, with very little use other than word-processing and Internet searches, except where data logging and analysis is being taught in science. Physical education uses video cameras to records and analyse performance. A number of subjects, for example, music, art and design and design and technology, have too little specialist equipment to cover their National Curriculum needs. Until very recently it has been difficult for departments to book space in computer rooms to allow all of their classes to have equality of access to ICT. The

situation has recently improved with the installation of a new suite of computers in the Learning Resource Centre, and additional equipment in English, mathematics, science, media studies and ICT. Teachers are beginning to use interactive whiteboards well to help students learn. Staff have undergone training to increase their awareness of the potential of ICT and to improve their competence in its use.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have high expectations and a commitment to good achievement.
- There are too few opportunities for fieldwork, group work and extended writing.
- Students' attitudes, motivation and concentration are very good.
- Students make too little use of ICT to support their learning.
- Weaknesses in fieldwork and ICT were evident at the last inspection: improvement in these areas has been unsatisfactory.

Commentary

123. Currently, standards on entry to the school are well below those found nationally. By Year 9, standards are below those expected of students nationally. Attainment in GCSEs has fluctuated over the last four years: it was close to the national average in 2003 but well below average in 2004. Instability in staffing may have contributed to such fluctuations. Attainment by Year 11 is currently below that found nationally for both boys and girls.
124. Students make sound progress from Years 7 to 9 and their achievement is satisfactory. They extend their subject vocabulary, and develop basic skills through the use of maps, graphs and simple data analysis. In a Year 7 class, students were developing a sound understanding of tectonic movements and the more able were making causal links to volcanic and earthquake activity. Lower attainers are weaker in spelling, punctuation, drawing diagrams and basic location, but make satisfactory progress. Progress made by students for whom English is an additional language is at least satisfactory and sometimes good.
125. In Years 10-11, students' achievement is also satisfactory. The majority of students make satisfactory progress in concept formation, and subject-specific language and skills. In a Year 10 class, students showed a clear understanding of erosion processes and made connections to science in the understanding of wave movement. The best coursework showed good use of investigative techniques and data analysis.
126. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, and good in Years 7-9 where students particularly benefit from the high expectations of teachers. Lessons are well organised, teachers' subject knowledge is secure, and classroom management is always good, keeping students on task and checking their understanding. Praise is used sensibly. Teachers do not always share the lesson objectives with students or

link these to learning outcomes, so that students are not always clear about the reasons for the activities they undertake. The use of subject-specific language, reading aloud and correction of basic grammar contributed to students' literacy in a Year 8 lesson on ecosystems, but generally students' understanding might be improved with a greater use of key words, linked to visual images. Teachers' questioning of students draws all students into discussion, but students' answers are too often underdeveloped. There are insufficient opportunities for group and enquiry-based work, including fieldwork in Years 7-9, to help students apply their knowledge and develop their skills. Insufficient use is made of ICT to support teaching and learning.

127. Teacher and student relations are good. Students display positive attitudes and very good levels of concentration. Assessment is not linked explicitly enough to National Curriculum attainment levels or GCSE assessment criteria: students are not clear enough about how to progress to the next level or grade.
128. Leadership and management are satisfactory; the subject leader is conscientious, has high expectations and is committed to raising attainment. Resources are in short supply, especially for ICT, but those available are well managed and a clear vision of how to improve exists. The improvement plan is now well focused. The curriculum makes positive contributions to citizenship, social, moral and cultural development but insufficient contributions to spiritual development.
129. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory. Overall standards have been maintained. However, weaknesses in fieldwork and ICT provision were identified as constraints on standards in the last inspection report and too little progress has been made in these areas.

HISTORY

Provision in history is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- GCSE results in 2004 were well above average.
- Marking of students' work is encouraging and also points out very clearly what needs to be done to improve.
- Teaching is good and uses a variety of methods to interest students but ICT is underused.
- Most students enjoy history but some students in the large current Year 10 GCSE class lack the motivation and drive to achieve their best.

Commentary

130. GCSE results in 2004 were well above average compared with all schools nationally. In 2003, results were just below average although four of the 22 candidates attained A* grades. Recent years have seen a decline in the numbers opting for history and only 15 candidates were entered for GCSE in 2004. That decline has been halted with greater numbers in both the current Years 10 and 11 classes, particularly in Year 10.

131. Achievement by the end of Year 9 is good for most students. In all year groups, whilst higher attainers reach well above average standards, overall attainment is reduced by the substantial numbers of lower attainers in each year group with weak literacy skills. Current standards at the end of Year 9 are therefore just below national averages overall. Year 11 students are achieving well and in some cases very well. In the current Year 11 class, standards are average and better than the targets set for their GCSE examinations in 2005. Enthusiastic Year 11 students have the potential to exceed their targets and a good teacher emphasis on improving students' examination technique is helping to achieve that. By Year 11, skills in handling different source materials are good. Throughout the school the majority of students have a very good empathy with people in history. This was seen, for example, in students' completed written work on the slave trade and class discussion on discrimination leading up to the assassination of Martin Luther King. Higher attainers can write vividly in assuming roles of individuals in history and a substantial proportion of average attainers develop such skills to a good level. Examples of high quality written work by the most able students in Year 8 include mature evaluations of the reign of Henry VIII and the validity of film representations.
132. Teaching and learning are good and some is very good. The assessment of work is a particular strong point. Teaching methods are varied and help in retaining interest. Further interest is generated with some innovative games devised by students and related to topics being studied. The use of ICT is encouraged for investigative work in homework but is not used enough in lessons. Expectations are high for all students, with plenty of opportunities for students to reach their potential. No student is allowed to opt out of learning and good questioning of individual students helps to ensure this, as seen with some uncooperative students in the large Year 10 class who would otherwise have contributed little to the lesson. The size of that class and the great mix of students pose some considerable challenges and are affecting the quality of learning. Except for Year 10, students generally ask many pertinent questions. Learning in Year 7 is benefiting from good basic ground rules being established including in the understanding of key words. Learning also profits from lively teaching but there are occasions when students should be allowed to complete a written task in silence rather than being distracted by other discussions generated. Higher attainers are making very good progress in learning the more difficult historical skills of interpretation, but that is difficult for lower attainers in particular.
133. Leadership and management of the subject are good. Resources are adequate but lower attainers in particular could benefit from more textbooks. It is a department which could also benefit from the use of interactive whiteboards when the school budget allows. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. There have been very positive improvements in assessment, challenge for higher attainers and in the quality of investigative and group work.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **good**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Standards are improving and students achieve well in Years 7 to 9.

- In the good and very good lessons, tasks set effectively meet students' individual needs.
- Leadership of the subject is highly committed and forward-looking.
- There is limited formal monitoring of teaching and learning to share the very good practice, which exists within the department.
- The use of computers is too limited and there are currently no visits to faith communities.

Commentary

134. In recent years, no examination courses have been offered in this subject.
135. When students enter the school, their knowledge of religions is well below average. By Year 9, standards are below average in relation to the expectations of the agreed syllabus, but this represents good achievement for all groups of students. They display a growing knowledge and understanding of the key beliefs and practices of Christianity and other world faiths represented in Britain by Year 9 and are beginning to appreciate the ways in which these faiths affect daily life. Students with special educational needs and English as a second language achieve as well as others. Weak literacy skills, particularly writing skills, hinder the progress of many. In most lessons students work well and listening and speaking skills are improving.
136. Standards by Year 11 are below the expectations of the agreed syllabus but achievement is satisfactory. During the inspection it was only possible to see one Year 10 lesson, however, a large number of Year 11 books were scrutinised. Higher ability boys in particular, have a good knowledge of different theories on creation. They are beginning to understand the importance of prayer to a believer and are able to distinguish the different approaches to prayer in the Christian and Islamic traditions. Many other students show much weaker understanding, for example, when studying the sources of moral authority in Christianity. As in earlier years, weak writing skills hinder progress and students often write limited notes and do not always complete written tasks.
137. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with some good and very good practice. Teaching is accurate, knowledgeable and carefully planned. Tasks are varied and challenging, with clear starts and finishes so that students know exactly what they need to do and why. There is an appropriate range of strategies to meet students' individual needs. In lessons, support is effective and contributes to the progress students make. Occasionally, weaker classroom management and unsatisfactory attitudes on the part of some Year 7 students resulted in underachievement. A significant strength in teaching is the use of resources such as religious artefacts, videos and other visual materials to motivate and develop understanding. There are frequent opportunities to develop paired and group working skills in lessons. Marking is very good, with clear comments on what students have done well and what they need to improve. Appropriate and regular homework is set to consolidate and extend learning. Religious education makes a very good contribution to students' personal development through well-planned opportunities to consider spiritual, moral and social issues and to gain a better understanding of other cultures and faiths.

138. Leadership is very good and management good. The area co-ordinator has a clear vision for the development of the subject and there is shared commitment to raise standards. Teachers are very good role models and work extremely well as a team. More formal monitoring of teaching and learning and sharing of the very good practice present within the department would be beneficial. Currently, while visitors come into lessons to raise students' awareness of religious issues, they are largely from the Christian faith. Visitors from other faiths and visits to places of worship of the religions covered in the syllabus would help to widen students' experience. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Students' progress in all years has improved and the subject documentation to support teaching and learning has improved significantly since September. The use of computers to assist learning is, however, still limited.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

Overall, the quality of provision in design and technology is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Poor accommodation and resources restrict the learning of the students so much that they do not cover the requirements of the National Curriculum.
- The commitment and hard work of the new staff are starting to raise standards.
- Teachers' insistence on very high standards of behaviour enables good attitudes to learning.

Commentary

139. Attainment on entry is below national expectation. As students go through Years 7-9, they work hard and make some progress. However, because of the restricted nature of the curriculum, students fail to get to the nationally expected standards at the end of Year 9 because they do not cover much of the work they should, particularly in developing their capability to design products. In consequence, students' attainment is well below expected levels and their achievement is unsatisfactory.
140. In 2003, the boys' GCSE performance was a little below the national average at grades A*-C, but the proportion of students entered for the exam was less than half of the national average. However, the students entered achieved as well in design and technology as in their other subjects.
141. In 2004, only 14 students were entered for the full GCSE examination. This is a low number compared with most other schools. Of these, 21 per cent gained A* to C grade and 86 per cent gained a grade. Both figures are well below national comparative figures last year. Sixty-five students took the short course and their results were still lower. Current standards of attainment by Year 11 are higher, with coursework in line with national expectations. Current achievement for students by Year 11 is therefore satisfactory.

142. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with many good features. The teachers are overseas trained and are not yet fully conversant with the English National Curriculum, but their well-developed classroom skills enable them to teach basic skills effectively. In the first three years all students achieve similarly because of the way the whole class is taught together. They move forward together, and in consequence the lower attainers and students with special educational needs, as well as students with English as additional language, all achieve equally. However, the impact of this style of teaching is that the higher attainers are not given challenging enough work, or the ability to make speedier progress to match their needs. Students get regular feedback both of their written work and practical work in lessons, and this enables further progress.
143. Teachers are committed to the students, and they recognise this. Additional classes after school and on Saturdays for Year 11 students enable them to get the best examination results of which they are capable. In the GCSE lessons the increasing maturity of students enables them to start taking responsibility for their own work.
144. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour, standards and hard work and they foster students' self-belief. Students listen well. Any off-task behaviour is immediately challenged in a positive way so those who have limited concentration spans are kept fully on task. Teaching assistants and teachers form an effective team to support those who need additional help. There are high expectations. This is leading to the raising of standards.
145. There are many areas of the National Curriculum missing in Years 7-9, like systems and control, computer-aided design and manufacture (CAD/CAM), and modern and smart materials. There is insufficient opportunity for students to explore and develop designs in the range of tasks provided, and they work in too limited a range of materials. There is no equipment to work in plastic materials, so coverage of compliant materials is poor. Overall, this is a very serious weakness in provision. This is further compounded by the poor quality of accommodation and workshop equipment. These matters were raised at the last inspection and unsatisfactory improvement has been made.
146. Day to day management of the department is now satisfactory. The new staff are developing provision in line with requirements. There is still much to do. Strategic leadership of the subject at the whole school level is unsatisfactory as the physical provision for the subject is still poor, although discussions are in place to make some urgent and well-needed improvements.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design and music were the focus subjects for this inspection, but **drama** lessons in Years 10 and 11 were also sampled.

In drama, standards as indicated by GCSE results have been well below average up to 2004 because the subject has only been offered to lower-attaining students. In 2004, those entered passed their GCSE but none gained a grade C or above. However, it is now offered more widely and standards seen during the inspection were in line with those seen in schools nationally. This represents good achievement. Teaching and learning are very

good. Teachers are knowledgeable, students are motivated and learning is very good. There is very good use of self-assessment to help students improve their work. The subject is led and managed very well. There are good opportunities for extra-curricular drama, including a Christmas production.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There has been an improving trend in GCSE results over the last four years – they are now in line with the national average.
- Permanent teachers have ensured continuity of teaching and, as a result, standards are rising.
- Extra-curricular provision contributes significantly to raising standards.
- The work of students in Years 7 to 9 needs to be more rigorously moderated to accurately reflect national curriculum levels
- Poor accommodation adversely affects teaching and learning because there is not enough room for students to work properly.

Commentary

147. Over the past four years there has been an improving trend in GCSE results and in 2004, results were in line with the national averages for boys in all schools. There is no national data currently available for the applied art course' and in 2004 twenty one percent gained grades A*-C. In relation to their prior attainment students, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, achieved well. School analysis indicates that White British students achieved less well than students from minority ethnic groups.
148. Entering the school with widely differing experiences in art, students make good progress in Years 7 to 9 and by the end of Year 9, standards are below those expected nationally. Standards of drawing are in line with expectations for the most able but below for middle and lower-attaining students whose skills in the use of line and of sketchbooks to collect visual resources are below expectations. Students use colour with confidence and when ideas are developed into three-dimensional work, standards are close to expectations. This is also true when students combine different media, as for example in the Year 8 work on collages. Students with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs achieve well.
149. Standards seen in the academic GCSE course were average and in the applied art course, below average. Standards broadly reflect students' prior attainment, with both groups achieving well. Those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are making good progress. Sketchbooks are well used to develop ideas and collect visual information, but are less well used to explore and experiment with different combinations of media. When researching ideas and themes, students do not draw enough from observation and this limits learning. When students work in three dimensions or combine different media in their work standards are higher.
150. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Lessons are well planned, providing students with clear objectives identifying what they are to learn. Key words prominently displayed support the development of literacy. Demonstrations of techniques and processes are well taught, providing clear guidance about how to use media. The assessment of how well students are doing in relation to National Curriculum levels is inaccurate because moderation is not rigorous enough. The assessment of GCSE work provides satisfactory feedback to students but is not effective in helping students identify strengths and areas for improvement because it is not used in a consistent way. A significant factor in raising attainment and achievement is the amount of extra-curricular tuition available, particularly the Saturday morning sessions.
151. The leadership and management of the department are shared between the two full-time staff. This arrangement is broadly satisfactory, but areas of responsibility are not clearly enough defined, particularly in relation to the management of assessment and the overview and review of the curriculum.
152. Accommodation is poor. The two main rooms are too small, there is insufficient display space and the furniture is worn out and in a state of disrepair. There is poor provision for the storage of students' work - all negatively affecting learning. This was reported as a weakness at the last inspection.

153. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Results were well above average at the last inspection but since then the department has experienced significant problems in providing continuity of teaching. There is now a settled team of teachers in post and the standard of work of those students most affected is improving. At the time of the last inspection, the curriculum for students in Years 7 to 9 lacked coherence. Schemes of work are now in place and satisfactorily reflect the requirements of the National Curriculum, with the exception of ICT which is still unsatisfactory.

Music

Provision for music is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The (part-time) Head of Music has a clear vision for the revival of this ailing department.
- The Head of Music's teaching is consistently good or very good.
- The resources of the department are inadequate.
- There is only one timetabled music class for all Year 9 students.
- Only 13 students take instrumental lessons.
- Standards and achievement are low throughout the school.

Commentary

154. This department has been through troubled times since the 1999 inspection and, with few exceptions, students do not achieve well enough in this subject. Numbers of students taking GCSE have been very low in recent years and in 2004 no students took the GCSE examination. Standards are low in class by Year 9 and Year 11; only ten or so students in the entire school are able play instruments at higher-than-beginner level, and there is little active music-making taking place. In this year's GCSE class of 14 students, three or four students are likely to attain passes at A* - C, and although this is well below the national average, it represents an encouraging, if fragile, lifeline to the future. Five students in this Year 11 class have a very poor attendance record.

155. This backlog of low standards and underachievement is the long-term consequence of poor management of the department and ineffective teaching. This department has been allowed to disintegrate over the years.

156. However, there are some encouraging signs. The present head of subject is a very able and determined newly qualified teacher who has already put in strong foundations in a short time at the school. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and very good in Year 11, where the teaching is particularly well organised to fully engage and involve students in their learning. The new subject leadership radiates high expectations, has produced very good schemes of work and procedures, repaired broken equipment, bought in some useful resources with the small amount of money made available, and has brightened up the department with displays and an emphasis on effective learning. Links have been established with a local school to allow Year 11 students to have access to essential computer-based composing

software. Undaunted by the mountain of constraints, the subject leader's highly developed teaching and management skills are being used to good effect to create the potential for success in this department.

157. There is much to be done. Whilst some students have noticed the green shoots of recovery with obvious pleasure, most have yet to establish good work habits and positive attitudes in this subject. Enormous input is required to entice students to take part in the musical production. Students will not, in general, stay after school to take part in extra-curricular music. Parents are not conspicuous for their support; not a single Year 7 student responded this year to the invitation to take instrumental lessons with visiting instrumental teachers. Timetabled provision for music is unsatisfactory, with only 13 Year 9 students taking music lessons.
158. There is confusion about line management responsibilities for music. The highly unusual pairing of the music department with the PE department under the banner of the Physical Expressive Arts does not work effectively and is not appropriate for this department. There is as yet no formal provision for the management of music as an integral part of a dynamic and multi-disciplinary performing arts faculty.
159. Resource provision is very poor, and indeed much the same as was reported in 1999. The absence of appropriate ICT equipment to engage and motivate students is now a serious weakness.
160. Although the new Head of Department is working very hard bring about a sea-change in this isolated department, there are limitations to what she can achieve as a solitary, part-time member of staff. Overall, the school's leadership and management of this department are unsatisfactory; progress since the last inspection has been poor. At present boys are not receiving the quality of music education to which they are entitled; the school is missing out on a much-needed richness of provision.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **very good**, with **excellent** features.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning, which is at the heart of the department's provision, is very good, and promotes very good achievement by boys.
- The very good climate for learning promotes very good attitudes for those boys in attendance.
- The department is very well led and managed. A highly committed team works very hard to maintain very high standards.
- There are no significant weaknesses.

Commentary

161. By Year 9, standards of attainment are above those seen in schools nationally. The vast majority of boys are applying skills with accuracy, precision and control whilst developing technical and tactical awareness. Only a few boys lack co-ordination in performing basic physical skills.

162. The accurate application of skills and well-developed knowledge and understanding of different sports transfers in to Years 10 and 11, and standards are above average overall. Standards in statutory physical education lessons are above national expectations. In GCSE lessons standards are high. In 2004, 65 per cent of boys gained an A*-C grade. All boys entered for the exam achieved a pass. Predicted grades for 2005 based on sound evidence suggest that these high standards will be maintained. Practical and theoretical work is of a high standard.
163. Throughout Years 7 to 11, boys achieve very well, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. They develop a good understanding of how different types of exercise can contribute to their fitness and health. All boys can perform and lead warm ups and they develop a good knowledge of anatomy and physiology. As a result of the great importance the department puts on developing the boys' language and literacy skills, the majority are able, with guidance, to express themselves clearly using subject-specific language and key words.
164. Learning, which is at the heart of the department's provision, is very good. Teaching is also very good: it is innovative and often inspiring, and creates a very good climate for learning. In all lessons seen, teaching was very good or excellent, and it promotes very good progress, along with enjoyment and success for all boys. The department adopts teaching styles appropriate to the boys' levels of attainment. Challenging tasks are suitable to the boys' needs. The teachers who are very good role models have very good and mutually respectful relationships with the boys. This produces lessons of very high productivity and pace. Thus the boys' development of physical skills and their knowledge and understanding of sport is very good. All boys display very good attitudes towards the subject, although attendance in a number of lessons was below national expectations.
165. Assessment for learning is very good. Procedures are thorough reflecting all learning objectives, and used well to respond to individual needs. The department develops the boys' understanding of National Curriculum levels in order that with teacher assistance they can assess their own and others' performance and set targets for improvement.
166. Curriculum provision is good. A good programme of additional activities, including recreational activities for the sixth form, greatly enhances the boys' opportunities for participation in sport. Staff give generously of their time to support the activities. A number gain local and regional representative honours.
167. The department is very well led and managed. Teachers form a very committed team and are determined to maintain very high standards. They have very high aspirations for the boys. Good progress has been made since the last inspection through the development of the Key Stage 3 curriculum and innovative teaching. The department has the vision and determination to raise standards further.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

No subject was inspected in detail in this curriculum area, but **business studies** was sampled.

168. Students' experience of lessons in **business studies**, as with other applied and vocational courses, begins in Year 9. During this year, classes move between vocational and applied subjects to complete short six-week modules as "tasters" before having to choose between them as GCSE courses. A satisfactory lesson was seen in business studies. Students generally favour this curriculum arrangement and their folders show that they have worked purposefully to acquire a sound understanding of businesses and markets. This represents good achievement for students of this age. Teaching in the lesson was very well organised to keep up a satisfactory pace of learning: effective use was made of a variety of resources and the role of a learning support assistant was well planned. However, students' learning in the lesson was disrupted by the distracting behaviour and chatter from a small group of boys.
169. At GCSE, results in business studies at grades A*-C and A*-G in 2004 were below the national average overall, but above average if casual admissions are excluded from the analysis. Two grade As were achieved. A very good Year 11 lesson was sampled, in which a group of mainly higher-attaining students demonstrated a good understanding of the principles and implications of the product life cycle. The teacher made very good use of resources, including inventive use of displays, to stimulate a high degree of interest and involvement among the students. Students' work in exercise books is generally well organised and marked with supportive comments which offer clear criteria for improvement. Students are generally achieving well, although the highest attainers are not yet working to a standard which meets their predicted A grades.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE) AND CITIZENSHIP

170. The personal and social education programme is of a high quality and provides the backbone for students' good moral and social development. Issues such as relationships are taught and contribute significantly to the respect that students accord to beliefs and cultures different from their own. The PSHE programme is managed and delivered in conjunction with the school's very good citizenship course. A high proportion of lessons seen in PSHE and citizenship were excellent.

CITIZENSHIP

Provision in citizenship is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good, with a significant amount of excellent practice: it motivates and engages students and ensures they achieve well.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- The scheme of work fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.
- Very effective teaching strategies develop students' skills of enquiry and communication and encourage the growth of skills of participation.
- The use of computers to gather and analyse information is currently limited, as are visits to legal and governmental places of interest.

Commentary

171. Citizenship is taught in discrete citizenship/personal and social education lessons across all years.
172. Standards in Year 9 are average and students achieve very well, developing their citizenship skills and their understanding of what it means to be an informed citizen. They are aware of the attributes of a good citizen and use the knowledge they have learned to discuss issues effectively. They are making very good progress in their understanding of electoral and voting systems and of the criminal justice system. In one lesson in Year 9, students made good progress, understanding the causes and consequences of crime. In Year 8 books, satisfactory and sometimes good notes indicate effective research on life in the United Kingdom today. They are given opportunities to think about current moral, social and cultural issues and, while writing skills of many are below average, they contribute very well in discussion and are prepared to listen to others' views.
173. By Year 11, students' knowledge and understanding of citizenship are average and they achieve well. Students gain a good understanding of the impact of the media on public opinion. Students understand their rights and responsibilities in a democratic society. From the analysis of files, many have an insight into human rights and understand the role of the United Nations. Students are given the opportunity to participate in school affairs and activities through the School Council, by acting as prefects and in helping in tutors groups and in other activities, for example in sport. Students are encouraged to take part in group activities during breaks and lunch times and this has a positive impact on their development. In all years, students with special educational needs and English as a second language achieve in line with their peers.
174. Teaching and learning are very good, with a significant amount of excellent practice. Lessons are planned very well, with appropriate resources, to very effectively meet individual needs. Teaching is enthusiastic and skilful and interests students and involves them in a wide range of appropriate activities. Students are encouraged to participate in discussion and work together in team-building activities. There is very good use of role-play to encourage participation and develop confidence and

understanding. Relationships are extremely constructive and, as a result, students co-operate very well and enjoy learning. Assessment is used well to inform students how they can improve. Their progress is recorded and monitored.

175. Leadership and management are very good. The co-ordinator has an excellent understanding of the subject and has worked closely with staff to produce a most effective scheme of work. The National Curriculum is covered fully and students' progress is assessed and reported to parents. There is limited use of computers in lessons and, while contact is made with local councillors and the Member of Parliament, visits to legal and governmental places of interest are far too limited.

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM

In the inspection, four 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, but these courses no longer reflect the nature of the school's sixth form provision, since it now specialises in Level 2 vocational qualifications.

Level 3 GCE AS 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	1	0	80.1	0	23.7	0	29.9
Biology	4	0	65.2	0	11.1	0	20.6
Chemistry	2	50.0	72.7	0	13.9	15.0	24.1
Information and communication technology	1	100.0	67.0	0	10.9	20.0	21.4
Mathematics	3	33.3	61.9	33.3	17.1	16.7	22.1
Physics	1	100.0	68.6	0	14.4	20.0	22.7

Level 3 GCE A 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 and design	3	66.7	98.6	0	50.2	26.7	87.5
Biology	3	66.7	96.4	0	39.2	33.3	78.6
English literature	1	100.0	99.5	100.0	46.5	100.0	86.5
Information and communication technology	2	50.0	95.6	50.0	24.6	60.0	69.5
Mathematics	3	66.7	96.7	33.3	55.6	46.7	88.8
Physics	2	50.0	96.7	0	44.6	40.0	81.7
Sports PE studies	3	100.0	98.0	0	30.9	46.7	75.2

Level 2 vocational qualifications

Qualification	No. in final year	% gaining qualification		% gaining merit		% gaining distinction	
		School	England	School	England	School	England

Leisure and recreation	5	80.0	62.9	0	10.2	44.0	57.9
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ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

English

English language GCSE re-sit.

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Teaching of speaking and listening is good: students listen carefully and speak confidently.
- Students write extensively in different genres, but have weaknesses in spelling and punctuation.
- Assessment is not used sufficiently well to enable students to understand how to improve
- The GCSE course is barely suitable for all the current students.

Commentary

176. Students follow a course to GCSE in English; for the majority this is an opportunity to improve on their grade from Year 11. Standards are below average for this course: in 2004, 24 per cent of students on the course reached grade C, and a further 24 per cent reached grade D. Standards seen during the inspection were below average. Students write extensively in different genres, but do not punctuate and spell with sufficient accuracy. They listen carefully and many speak confidently, but some do not enunciate clearly.
177. Some students enter the course with low grades from Year 11, but a significant number have grade D already. Achievement seen during the inspection by these students was satisfactory.
178. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There is good teaching of speaking and listening, but the teaching of the more able students and management of their behaviour are only satisfactory. Assessment is not used sufficiently well to enable students to understand how to improve. Teachers do not record sufficient information about students with English as an additional language. Attendance at lessons seen was unsatisfactory.
179. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Students' current attainment is satisfactorily recorded, but the department does not make sufficient use of prior data about students' grades at GCSE. There is no analysis of the progress of different groups of students during the course. The GCSE course is barely suitable for all the current students. There is no key skills course at Level 2, which would suit some students better than the GCSE course.
180. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

181. Students reach below average standards of English language and literacy in the whole curriculum. While they listen and speak well, their written skills are less strong.

MATHEMATICS

Mathematics GCSE re-sit.

Provision in mathematics is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are low and achievement is unsatisfactory.
- Course provision is inadequately focused and a Key Skills course might better provide for the needs of these students.
- The management of this course is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

182. Advanced courses were discontinued two years ago. Candidate numbers were very small and success rates only moderate. The Vocational Centre's mathematical provision is for students undertaking GNVQ courses. These students comprise former Beverley boys, students from other schools and some - mainly foreign students - who have not taken a GCSE course. Those who wish to try and upgrade their previous GCSE performance or gain a GCSE award are put into two time-tabled groups to undertake a modular re-sit course during Year 12.

183. Standards are low, with just 14 per cent gaining A*-C grades in 2004. This represents unsatisfactory achievement and is well below average compared to 2003 national data. From work seen with the current Year 12, it is unlikely this will rise substantially. Whole-class teaching is unsatisfactory: it insufficiently focuses upon individual needs; pace and challenge are not demanding enough for the limited time span available; attendance is irregular. The consequences are that students retain an insecure grasp of mathematics and their learning is unsatisfactory. In coursework assignments, greater stress needs to be upon mathematical content.

184. The leadership, management and content of the course are unsatisfactory at present, because not enough is being done to address the low standards. A more focused course, such as a Key Skills Application of Number course, might serve and motivate these students better, and more appropriately support their learning in their vocational subjects.

Mathematics across the curriculum

185. There is no indication that student performance in the GNVQ courses is inhibited by their often moderate standards in GCSE mathematics. In business studies, for example, students show generally sound competence in dealing with break-even and cash flow analysis.

SCIENCE

A re-sit course in science GCSE is offered outside of the timetabled day. This was not inspected.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

186. Intermediate GNVQ ICT is offered. One lesson was sampled in which teaching and learning were satisfactory. However, students were implementing their designs with too little planning or research.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

187. Classrooms in the Vocational Centre are well equipped with computers, and teachers and students use these well to support learning. In business studies, students use ICT to access a broad range of information on companies and to organise and present their work. One recently-arrived student with English as an additional language uses on-line translation software to help her understand more technical language. Students' general competence with ICT is sound. However, lack of access to ICT resources in the art department impedes students' progress.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA

Art and design was inspected in full, and GNVQ intermediate (Level 2) media studies was sampled. In **media studies**, the teaching and learning varied from satisfactory to very good. Where lessons were just satisfactory, the lesson content had not been well designed to suit the students' prior knowledge and understanding; students therefore became disengaged from learning. The very good lesson seen was well planned and made use of powerful and accessible subject matter to develop students' awareness of the functions and role of media products.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Intermediate GNVQ results in 2004 were above average judged against 2003 national data, and provided a good basis for further study.
- Students are able to access additional teaching as a result of good extra-curricular provision; this is helping to raise standards.
- Poor accommodation has a negative effect on learning, particularly the lack of a post-16 studio.
- Lateness to lessons and the absence of some students adversely affect learning, progress and productivity.
- There is a lack of a clear management strategy to support the good philosophical vision the teachers have for the development of the courses.

COMMENTARY

188. The school has restructured its provision for post-16 art and design, now concentrating exclusively on vocational courses.

189. Six students, out of the seven who started the Intermediate GNVQ, were successful in passing in 2004. Of these, half gained a merit or distinction. In relation to their prior attainment, this represents good achievement. Currently, taking the intermediate GNVQ and advanced VCE courses together, standards of attainment are average and students' achievement satisfactory.

190. Nine out of the ten students currently following the intermediate GNVQ course have no recent experience of art, which is reflected in the below-average standards seen. A third of the group is average, the rest below or well below average and achievement satisfactory. Nearing the end of the first assessment unit, students' skills of research and ideas development seen in the mask project are average, but the overall use of line, colour and media experiments is below average. Construction skills using card and other media, seen in the three-dimensional mask work, are average. The amount of work completed by the students is below expectation and is linked to the poor attendance of some students.
191. Success at either intermediate GNVQ or GCSE has appropriately equipped students for the VCE course. Standards are average and achievement is satisfactory. Research and ideas development are average, but too reliant upon secondary sources. Standards of drawing are appropriate for this course, but the ability to use drawing in an imaginative and speculative way, when researching ideas, is underdeveloped. Students are able to make connections between their own work and that of others and discussion with students shows that skills of critical analysis, though below average, are now developing. Selecting appropriate media to meet intentions when making three-dimensional work shows a good understanding of the way surface and texture can be exploited. Students are less successful when experimenting with media in a two-dimensional context. Students who have English as an additional language are achieving well.
192. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with examples of good practice. Lateness to lessons and absence have a negative impact on learning. As a result, teachers have to restate learning objectives too quickly, resulting in unsatisfactory levels of understanding and progress. There is an appropriate balance between structured taught lessons and the opportunities for students to take charge of their own learning. Good planning, linked to a good understanding of the needs of students, provides clarity of direction and resulted in good learning and achievement in an Intermediate GNVQ lesson about exploiting the qualities of line. Reviewing work and identifying short-term goals for improvement are good features of teaching. For example, weak skills of annotation were addressed in one lesson to help students to become more expansive when drawing; they became more expansive, exploring the fluid potential of paint when making self-portrait drawings. A significant factor in raising attainment and achievement is the amount of extra-curricular tuition available, particularly the Saturday morning sessions.
193. Leadership and management of these courses are satisfactory. The complex assessment process of the first intermediate cohort was well managed and met requirements. The full implication of managing two GNVQ courses has not yet been fully grasped, and the systems for managing assessment are not yet in place. There is a shared vision within the department of how the courses should develop, and a passion about the value of art education in motivating and giving a sense of direction to young people. As yet, there is a lack of strategic planning to support this vision.
194. Since the last inspection the art department has been through a period of great turmoil. There is now a settled team of dedicated teachers who are having a positive impact on standards. At the time of the last inspection, post-16 provision was purely

at Advanced level. This is no longer the case, making comparisons with the last inspection inappropriate. The poor accommodation reported at the last inspection remains and continues to have a negative effect on learning, particularly the lack of a dedicated post-16 workspace. Also, the limited provision of appropriate ICT is barely satisfactory for students following vocational courses.

HOSPITALITY, SPORTS, LEISURE AND TRAVEL

One lesson of Intermediate GNVQ leisure and tourism was sampled. Standards are above average and students achieve very well as result of very good, enthusiastic teaching and excellent attitudes on the part of the students.

BUSINESS

Business Studies

Provision in business studies is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching is very well organised so that students quickly recognise the objectives of their lessons and have a very clear understanding of the course structure.
- The teacher and students use resources, including ICT, very well to enhance the quality of learning.
- The completion of assignments and other work is not recorded systematically, so that there is not a sufficiently transparent system in place for the tracking of students' progress.

Commentary

195. In 2004, six out of seven students passed their GNVQ intermediate course. This is a high pass rate in relation to national averages, but no students gained a merit or distinction. Retention of students on the course was good. Prior to this, business studies had last been examined as an A-level in 2002.

196. Current standards are in line with the expectations for students of this age taking qualifications at this level nationally. The students are achieving well. A number of students have had their education interrupted with periods abroad and one has arrived late onto the course from abroad as a beginner in speaking English. Students' folders are well organised and show mostly good completion of assignments work to date. There is a tendency for the lower-attaining students in their explanations of how businesses work to use a lot of information indiscriminately and not to apply the information to specific business examples. However, ICT has been used well by most students to access information and to organise and present their work. Students show sound number skills in completing break-even and cash flow forecasts; boys in the group applied percentages well to the calculation of VAT in one lesson. After a sequence of lessons on the topic, students now demonstrate a good understanding of the format and sequence of business documentation required to support and facilitate a transaction.

197. Teaching and learning are good, with very good features. The teacher has very good subject knowledge, which is communicated with clarity and precision. Such clarity is also helped by a very well organised approach. The students' folders contain thorough briefing notes on the course structure and are set out unit-by-unit so that students know exactly what they have to do to complete the course. In lessons, the teacher makes very good use of a wide range of resources and approaches to help students understand and maintain their interest. Such resources include the excellent wall and whiteboard displays of subject material, objectives for learning, key words and assessment criteria to which the teacher constantly refers. The needs of individual students are given close support and attention, so that the student who is in the early stages of learning English can access translation software and is passed the teacher's overhead projector transparencies to help with note-taking. Students' folders show that they have refined their assignments as a result of discussions with their teacher. However, the completion of assignments and other work is not recorded systematically by the teacher or students, so that progress through the course is not tracked in a transparent manner. Action points for the improvement of work are not always written down in a format to which students can readily refer.
198. The course is well led and efficiently managed. The teacher in charge of the course is new in post and has a good vision for the subject, which incorporates closer working links with partner schools and more direct contact for the students with local businesses. Greater business involvement in the course is a particularly important development priority, as it will help the students to apply their knowledge more effectively in a vocational context. The subject was noted as "strong" at the last inspection; while the nature of the course offered has changed completely, there has been satisfactory progress in maintaining a good quality of provision.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND GENERAL PROGRAMMES

199. General studies is not offered as part of the curriculum. Half-day personal and social education sessions are held every half term based on the units delivered at the Advanced Centre. None were observed during this inspection.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Sixth form grade</i>	<i>School grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the sixth form and the school	4	4
How inclusive the school is		2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	8	4
Cost effectiveness of the sixth form / value for money provided by the school	4	4
Overall standards achieved		4
Students' achievement	4	4
Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities		4
Attendance	5	4
Attitudes	4	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3	4
Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		3
The quality of education provided by the school		3
The quality of teaching	4	3
How well students learn	4	3
The quality of assessment	4	4
How well the curriculum meets students' needs	4	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities		3
Accommodation and resources	4	5
Students' care, welfare, health and safety		3
Support, advice and guidance for students	3	3
How well the school seeks and acts on students' views	3	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents		4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3	3
The leadership and management of the school		3
The governance of the school	3	4
The leadership of the headteacher		2
The leadership of other key staff	3	3
The effectiveness of management	3	3

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7); does not apply to this school (8).