

INSPECTION REPORT

Caludon Castle School

Wyken

Coventry

Unique reference number: 103731

Headteacher: Mrs Carol Reid

Lead inspector: Mrs R Fox

Dates of inspection: 11th – 15th October 2004

Inspection number: 268763

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of students:	11 - 18
Gender of students:	Mixed
Number on roll:	1486
School address:	Axholme Road Wyken Coventry West Midlands
Postcode:	CV2 5BD
Telephone number:	02476 444822
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr J Harrison MBE
Date of previous inspection:	18 th January 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

With 1486 students on roll (287 in the sixth form), Caludon Castle School, specialising in Business and Enterprise, is a community comprehensive 11 - 18 school. It is bigger than most other secondary schools nationally. Situated in north-east Coventry, Caludon Castle is over-subscribed and has about 100 more boys than girls. The profile of students is about average, both socio-economically and in terms of attainment, and the percentage of students whose first language is not English is higher than in most schools. The proportion of students with special educational needs and the proportion of students with a statement of educational need are broadly average. The range of needs includes dyslexia, emotional and behavioural difficulties, speech and communication difficulties, hearing impairment and autism. The school was awarded Investor in People status and became a Business and Enterprise specialist school in July 2004. It also has Investor in Careers and Sportsmark status and a Mentoring Kitemark.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
4617	R Fox	Lead inspector	Educational inclusion
32697	D Smith	Lay inspector	
28199	P Lawley	Team inspector	English; sixth form psychology; English as an additional language
22423	J Lovgreen	Team inspector	Drama, sixth form English
18072	J Stephens	Team inspector	Mathematics; sixth form mathematics
30433	C Corp	Team inspector	Science; sixth form biology
24453	G Jackson	Team inspector	Sixth form chemistry
32785	W Allt	Team inspector	Information and communication technology (ICT); sixth form ICT
2501	R Allison-Smith	Team inspector	Art and design; sixth form art and design
31238	G Clubb	Team inspector	Design and technology
18663	P Burchell	Team inspector	Geography; sixth form geography
20476	M Freeman	Team inspector	History; sixth form history
32208	D Aitken	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages; citizenship; personal, social and health education (PHSE)
30297	G Spruce	Team inspector	Music
20192	T McDermott	Team inspector	Physical education; sixth form physical education
35060	K Robinson	Team inspector	Religious education
19352	K Campbell-Platt	Team inspector	Special educational needs
32935	B Johnston	Team inspector	Vocational education; work related learning (WRL); sixth form business studies

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Caludon Castle is a good, inclusive school with some excellent features which is rapidly improving. It gives good value for money and has a strong ethos that promotes tolerance and respect. Students achieve well, they are very well cared for and attitudes are good. Teaching and learning are good. There are very good induction arrangements and links with other schools and colleges.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are

- Above average standards in Years 7 to 11 and good achievement, with very good achievement in the sixth form
- Good teaching and learning and very good teaching in the sixth form
- The headteacher's excellent clarity of vision, very high aspirations and outstanding leadership of the very innovative curriculum
- Excellent leadership of the senior team and excellent management of recruitment, retention and deployment of staff
- Very good support and guidance and provision for personal, health and social education that develop students' confidence effectively and contribute significantly to the above average standards attained
- Very good induction arrangements, links with other schools and colleges and careers guidance
- Very good monitoring and collating of performance data, but not all teachers use this data to improve teaching and learning and to ensure that students know how to improve
- Not enough use made of computers in subjects across the school

Since the last inspection, improvement has been good. As a result of very high expectations, excellent leadership and a new management structure, the curriculum has improved and standards have risen. Teaching and learning are now good and very good in the sixth form. When marking work, not all teachers tell students what they should do to get better. Information and communication technology (ICT) is still not used enough in subjects across the curriculum.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Results given are for 2003 for GCSE (using capped average GCSE points scores) and for AS and A-level. Key: A - well above average;

B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average

For Year 11, similar schools are those whose students attained similarly at the end of Year 9.

Achievement in Years 7 to 11 is good and very good in the sixth form. Students enter the school with average standards, overall. By the end of Years 9 and 11, they achieve well and standards are above average. Results in the end-of-Year 9 national tests in 2003 were above average and indicated that those students who sat the end-of-Year 6 tests in 2000 did better than expected. Results in the 2003 GCSE examinations were also above average and students achieved satisfactorily. Students did slightly better in 2004 in the GCSE examinations and about the same in the end-of-Year 9 national tests. A2-level results were above average in 2002 and average in 2003. Current sixth form standards are average.

Spiritual, social, moral & cultural development and the development of students' personal qualities are good. Spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory; social and moral development is very good. Students behave well and very well in the sixth form. Their positive attitudes and good attendance greatly enhance the progress made.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good.

Teaching and learning are good and very good in the sixth form. Very little unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection and a significant proportion of the teaching seen was good or very good. The school analyses data very effectively, but not all teachers are using it to improve their teaching and students' learning. A very good range of courses caters for the diversity of students' needs. Innovative steps have been taken to cater for students for whom the normal curriculum is inappropriate. Computers are not used enough in some subjects. Links with other schools, the school's contribution to wider partnerships and induction arrangements for students are very good. Support and guidance are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good, overall. Leadership is excellent and management is good. The headteacher has very high aspirations and gives excellent clarity of vision and sense of purpose to the school, supported by a very good team of key staff. Governors are very effective as critical friends of the school and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. They challenge and support senior managers well. The issues raised in the previous inspection report have been dealt with effectively, with the exception of the use of ICT across the curriculum and the provision of a daily act of collective worship. A building project is about to begin to improve the accommodation, some of which is poor.

PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and students believe that this is a good school. Most parents say that their children are happy, that staff expect them to work hard and that induction arrangements are very good. Some parents believe that the school does too little to seek their views. Students think this is a good school to be at, they say that they are well taught and the majority believe that they are expected to work hard and do their best. Some students are concerned about behaviour at the school and not all students believe that staff treat students fairly or are interested in their views. Inspectors judged that the school involves both parents and students well in the work of the school by seeking, valuing and acting on their views. Behaviour was judged to be good. Relationships between students and adults at the school were judged to be very good.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are

- Improve assessment procedures to ensure that all teachers
 - Use data to further improve teaching and learning and to meet the individual needs of all students
 - Make it clear to students how to improve
- Continue to extend the use of ICT in subjects across the curriculum

and, to meet statutory requirements

- Provide a daily act of collective worship for all students

THE SIXTH FORM AT CALUDON CASTLE SCHOOL

The sixth form is larger than average and numbers have increased significantly in recent years. The sixth form offers a range of advanced courses, academic and vocational, and a wide choice of additional courses taught by other providers.

OVERALL EVALUATION

Caludon Castle School has an effective sixth form which is cost effective and provides good value for money. Students have a choice of 28 A2-level equivalent courses, including six advanced vocational courses and three intermediate level vocational courses. In addition, they can choose one or more courses from a variety of advanced and intermediate courses taught by other local providers. With a wide range of students entering the sixth form, standards on entry are below average. As a result of very good teaching and learning, current standards are average and students' achievement is very good. Leadership is very good and management is good. Most students are very positive towards their school and three quarters of Year 12 students continue their studies into Year 13. Since the last inspection the sixth form has made good improvement.

The main strengths and weaknesses are

- The broad curriculum, including that provided by other linked establishments, supports students' individual needs very well
- Teaching and learning are very good and students achieve very well
- Leadership is very good with strong commitment to improvement; management is good but standards vary both from one subject to another and from one year to the next
- Students' behaviour is good as a result of very good personal care, support and guidance
- The attitudes of a minority of students are not fully positive which affects their attendance, punctuality and achievement

QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES OF THE CURRICULUM

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

Curriculum area	Overall judgement about provision with comment
English, languages and communication	Satisfactory in English language. Results at A2 and AS-level in 2003 were below average and broadly similar in 2004, although AS-level results show a clear improvement. Good teaching, resulting from a clearer understanding of course requirements, is behind students' good achievement this term.
Mathematics	Satisfactory in mathematics. Standards were well above average in 2002, above average in 2003, and lower in 2004. Teachers are knowledgeable but teaching style lacks variety. A2-level numbers are low but the adult numeracy course ensures that all sixth formers obtain a qualification in mathematics.
Science	Good in biology. A2-level results in 2003 were broadly average and AS-level results were above average. Good teaching from well-qualified, energetic teachers and very good leadership enables students to achieve well. Satisfactory in chemistry. A2-level results were below average in 2003 but AS-level results were higher. Levels of achievement were broadly satisfactory.
Information and communication technology (ICT)	Very good in ICT. The first cohort completed the AVCE course in 2004 so valid comparisons cannot yet be made. Current standards are average. Very good teaching and learning results in very good achievement for the majority of students who start the course with below average standards.

Curriculum area	Overall judgement about provision with comment
Humanities	<p>Good in geography. A2-level results were well above average in 2003 and similar to current standards. Students achieve well.</p> <p>Very good in history. The 2003 results for Year 13 were average but below average for the higher A/B grades. Current standards are well above average. Students see history as a relevant and enjoyable and achieve very well.</p> <p>Very good in psychology. Very good teaching, leadership and management have raised standards to well above average and reversed a recent dip in A2-level results. Students achieve very well.</p>
Visual and performing arts and media	<p>Good in art and design. The 2003 A2-level results were well above average. In 2004, the number entered was very small with almost half gaining an A grade. Results have fluctuated in the past, but students achieve well and frequently very well when compared to national averages.</p>
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	<p>Good in physical education. In 2003, results were below average at A2-level and above average at AS-level. Consistently good teaching leads to good learning but Year 13 students are not as well motivated as Year 12 students.</p>
Business studies	<p>Very good in business studies. In 2003, AVCE results were below average but improved significantly in 2004. Students achieve very well as a result of very good teaching and learning and effective use of ICT.</p>

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

Advice, guidance and support are very good. Students receive very good advice when applying to university. Those who are not going on to university or college are offered individual careers interviews and other guidance. Throughout the sixth form, students' progress is monitored carefully, and their individual strengths and weaknesses are well known and supported.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SIXTH FORM

Leadership and management are very good, overall. Leadership of the sixth form is very good, and management is good. The headteacher has an excellent overview of the sixth form and line management of the recently restructured team is very effective. Sixth form academic and pastoral work is well co-ordinated. Most subject leaders organise and teach their subjects very well. Management has some weaker areas; lack of monitoring leads to inconsistency both within subjects from year to year and from subject to subject. A minority of students underachieve as a result of their unsatisfactory attitudes to study.

STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM

Most sixth formers say they enjoy being at school. They feel that that teachers challenge them, that they are accessible and help them to study independently. Some students believe that there is not an adult in the school who knows them really well and that although careers advice is very good, they are not always given helpful advice as to what they should study in the sixth form. Some feel that the range of enrichment activities is too narrow and others say that the school does not seek and respond to their views. Inspectors judged that Year 12 students are given very good guidance on careers and about which subjects to choose when they are in Year 11 and that the school involves students well in its work by seeking, valuing and acting on their views. The range of extra-curricular activities was judged to be satisfactory. Pastoral support is strong. All students interviewed said that they know whom to approach with work-related or personal problems.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Students in Years 7 to 11 achieve well and standards are above average. In the sixth form, current standards are average overall, representing very good achievement. Students enter the school with average attainment in most subjects. End-of-Year 9 results in 2003 were above average and when students' performance in the national tests at the age of 11 is taken into account, they achieved well. GCSE results were above average. When taking their best eight subjects into account, students achieved satisfactorily and they achieved very well for their total points score. The 2004 results were higher in Year 11 and about the same in Year 9.

Main strengths

- The percentage of students gaining five GCSE A*-C grades has increased from 40% to 60% since the last inspection
- Standards are above average; students in all years, including the gifted and talented, those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, achieve well. Sixth form students achieve very well
- By the end of Year 9, standards are well above average in history and drama and by the end of Year 11 they are high in drama and well above average in English, history and art
- End-of-Year 9 test results have risen more quickly than the national trend

Commentary

1. Results in the 2003 end-of-Year 9 National Curriculum tests were above average. They were above average in English and mathematics and average in science. Students achieved highly in English, with targets greatly exceeded, and well in mathematics and science. Current standards are similar to these results. Students achieve very well in English and well in science and mathematics. Attainment in all other subjects is average, apart from history - and drama where it is well above average and art where it is above average. Students achieve very well in drama, art, history and PHSE, well in music, design and technology and ICT, and satisfactorily in all other subjects. Standards have improved faster than the national trend since the last inspection, although not consistently across all subjects.
2. GCSE results were above average in 2003 and better than in 2002. They improved in 2004. In 2003, a much higher proportion of students gained 5 A*- C grades, a higher proportion gained 5 A*- G grades and about the same proportion gained 1 A*- G grade. Girls did slightly better than boys but boys did better than boys nationally. Current standards are above average. Students achieve well overall and very well in English, art and history where standards are well above average. Standards are high in drama and achievement is excellent. Standards are above average and achievement is good in mathematics, science, ICT and religious education. Standards are above average and achievement is very good in geography. Standards are below average in music; although students achieve satisfactorily, limited availability of appropriate music technology restricts their achievements in composing.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	35 (32.7)	33.4 (33.3)
Mathematics	36.8 (35.1)	35.4 (34.7)
Science	34.6 (33.7)	33.6 (33.3)

There were 239 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	60 (45)	52 (50)
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	90 (88)	91 (91)
Percentage of students gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	96 (97)	96 (96)
Average point score per student (best eight subjects)	36.4 (34.4)	41 (n/a)

There were 236 students in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Students on the special educational needs register achieve well as a result of systematic procedures for identifying needs and for monitoring their progress. Students with statements of special educational need progress very well because of the good range of assistance, which includes in-class support from learning support assistants and the special needs coordinator and external specialist support for students with behavioural difficulties. They make satisfactory progress in gaining social and study skills and gain in confidence and self-esteem through mentoring, anger management sessions and small group support. The achievement of some groups of students on school action and school action plus who have weak literacy and study skills is limited in some subjects where there are too few learning support assistants. Although the needs of students with special educational needs are appropriately targeted on individual learning plans, adaptation and modification of classroom materials and tasks varies across subject departments.
4. Gifted and talented students achieve well. The school is currently working towards the Challenge Award designed to develop whole-school provision for gifted and talented students in a long-term, structured way. Students using English as an additional language achieve in line with their peers. They are nearly all at an advanced stage of speaking and writing English and are very well taught and supported by additional staff in the classroom. They achieve well because the school monitors and checks how well they are doing and takes action to give them extra help to match their needs. High-quality additional support from other agencies also enhances learning and enables parents to support their children.
5. Literacy skills are above average and numeracy skills are average. Students' ICT skills are only average because incompatible networks were set up in different parts of the school. This meant that computers could not be used effectively to support students' learning and achievement. This situation has just now been rectified, but its impact remains.

Sixth form

6. Results at A2 and AS-level, in the 2003 examinations, were average and slightly lower than those of 2002. Although boys' and girls' results were similar, boys did better than boys nationally whilst girls did about the same as other girls across the country. Results improved in 2004, with almost a third gaining the higher A/B grades and most students who entered gained at least one grade A-E pass. In comparison with all schools nationally, results rose considerably in 2002 from well below average to above average but dropped back in 2003. Inspectors judged that this is because the profile of entry has dropped from average to below average very recently, as a result of the more inclusive curriculum now provided by the school. Overall, current standards are average. They are well above average in history and psychology, above average in business studies and below average in English and chemistry. Achievement is very good overall; students achieve better in Year 12 than Year 13. They achieve very well in history, ICT and psychology and business studies, well in English, biology, chemistry, art, geography and physical education and satisfactorily in mathematics.
7. Few students need support with English as an additional language or with special educational needs, but this is available and as a result they achieve well.

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	78.6 (91.9)	89.4 (92.6)
Percentage of entries gaining A-B grades	23.9 (39.2)	32.6 (35.3.)
Average point score per student	188.9 (219.2)	234.2 (232.9)

There were 272 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Students' attitudes and behaviour are good in the main school. In the sixth form, attitudes are good and behaviour is very good. The number of fixed-period exclusions is below average for a school of this size. Students' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, overall. Attendance is good and punctuality is satisfactory in the main school. In the sixth form, attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Behaviour is good and especially positive for most sixth formers and enhances their progress
- Procedures for managing bullying and harassment are very effective
- Relationships between students and with adults are very good which contributes to the school's positive ethos and good climate for learning
- Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are rigorous, although in the sixth form monitoring of attendance across linked schools and colleges is inconsistent

Commentary

8. Students enjoy coming to school and wear their uniform with pride. Teachers stimulate their desire to learn well and have high expectations of behaviour. As a result, most students behave well during lessons and are interested in their work. Although the time available for lunch is limited, they queue in an orderly manner and have their lunch in the time available. Despite constant efforts by staff, litter at lunch and break times remains a problem.
9. Students support others in a number of ways; through helping with supported reading; mentoring younger students and by assisting with tutorials. Working relationships are warm and mutually supportive and develop students' confidence and self-esteem very well. Racist incidents are rare and students of all nationalities get along very well; incidents of bullying, racism and other forms of harassment are dealt with very effectively.
10. Systems for monitoring progress and providing interventions to support students with behavioural difficulties are good. These include a range of support from pastoral and special educational needs staff including the newly appointed mentor. Learning support assistants have received mentor training and use it appropriately to help students stay on task.
11. Attendance has been consistently above the national average for at least the last four years. Staff liaise closely internally and with parents and unexplained absences are swiftly followed up. The electronic registration system ensures that any students unexpectedly absent from lessons are immediately identified. This helps ensure that attendance remains good. The number of fixed-period exclusions is static and no student has been excluded more than once. There were no permanent exclusions over the last year.

	2000/01	2001/2	2002/3		
	Attendance rate	Attendance rate	Attendance rate	Authorised absence	Unauthorised absence
School	92.2	91.6	92.7	6.8	0.4

England (secondary)	90.9	91.0	91.7	7.2	1.1
School difference	1.3	0.6	1.0	-0.4	-0.7

Ethnic background of students

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of students on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	972	20	
White – Irish	5		
White – any other White background	12		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	13		
Mixed – White and Black African	5		
Mixed – White and Asian	6		
Mixed – any other mixed background	30	1	
Asian or Asian British – Indian	84		
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	18		
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	10		
Black or Black British - Caribbean	7		
Black or Black British – African	3	1	
Black or Black British – any other Black background	2		
Chinese	6		
Parent preferred not to say	15	15	

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

12. Students’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Spiritual development has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. Students reflect upon their own feelings and develop an understanding of spirituality through assemblies and in lessons such as art, religious education and PHSE. In one assembly, using both images and music, students were asked to reflect upon the issue of “fairness and equality” and responded very well. Opportunities for spiritual development within lessons are limited and few assemblies or tutorial sessions contain an act of collective worship. Cultural development is also satisfactory. A satisfactory range of cultural visits is arranged and the appreciation of other cultures is well promoted through history, music and religious education.
13. Moral and social development is very good. Most students understand what is right and wrong and a strong school ethos values the individual and mutual respect. Adults, especially the senior leadership group, lead by example and ensure that tolerance permeates all school activities. Staff have very good relationships with students and make every effort to explain to them the reasons for their actions. Moral dilemmas are often discussed, particularly in history, English and science, where students consider issues such as Animal Rights and the “right to life”. A good range of opportunities encourages students to develop socially including a school council. Each year group has adopted a charity for which it raises money.

Sixth form

14. Sixth form attendance is satisfactory. Students work supportively with younger students in a number of situations. Year 12 students help run the main school council, take part in the Community Action Programme, mentor younger students and organise and take part in extra-curricular clubs such as the

chess club. Students work well together, respect their environment and recognise their own responsibility as members of a community. They are an amenable group who enjoy being in the sixth form and are committed to their learning. They work hard and can be relied upon to behave sensibly and to consider the needs of others. They willingly play an active role in the life of the school. The sixth form committee organises various social and fundraising events.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality of education. The quality of teaching and learning is good with some that is excellent. The quality of the curriculum is very good. Satisfactory attention is given to the care and welfare of students. Advice and guidance is very good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is good in Years 7 to 11 and leads to good learning and achievement. Teaching and learning are very good in the sixth form. Assessment of students' work is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good, with much that is very good or better. This leads directly to good achievement over time. Teaching in the sixth form is very good
- Teachers prepare their lessons well and use interesting activities to motivate students
- Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour and as a result students acquire good skills, knowledge and understanding
- Teachers meet the needs of individual students well by varying questions and offering individual support but the work and tasks provided do not always meet every student's needs
- Some students do not know what to do to get better because marking is inconsistent

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 192 lessons (146 in Years 7 to 11 and 46 in Years 12 and 13)

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Main school	8(5%)	51(35%)	53(37%)	30(20%)	4(3%)	0	0
Sixth form	2(4%)	20(44%)	16(35%)	8(17%)	0	0	0

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

15. The quality of teaching and learning in Years 7 to 9 is very good in English, art, history, PHSE and drama. It is good in mathematics, science, design and technology, ICT, music, and physical education and satisfactory in all other subjects. Teaching and learning in Years 10 and 11 are very good in English, art, geography, history, PHSE and excellent in drama. They are good in mathematics, science, ICT, business education, physical education and citizenship and satisfactory in all other subjects.
16. Planning is very good. In a very good Year 8 history lesson, very good planning and the teacher's very good subject knowledge and enthusiasm ensured that students made real gains in understanding how to interpret visual images of historical figures by comparing them with newspaper pictures of today's celebrities. Students are active participants in their own learning and learn well. Homework is used well to reinforce and extend class work.
17. Teachers insist on high standards of behaviour and give significant amounts of additional time to support and extend learning which sustains students' motivation and leads directly to good achievement. Resources for learning are appropriate to the learning needs of the students and are well selected to generate interest and hold attention. Teachers very often give praise for good efforts and are consistent in their encouragement.
18. When teaching and learning are less effective the work set does not fully meet students' needs. Challenge becomes inconsistent, pace drops, students become disinterested, and learning and achievement slow. In some extreme cases, behaviour then becomes an issue.
19. Teaching and learning of students with special educational needs are good. Teaching assistants are well deployed, work closely with teachers and know how to assist in lessons. Individual education plans inform teachers of students' needs and are of greatest help to teachers when they give detailed

advice on how to meet the needs of students in each subject. This is not consistently the case, particularly so in physical education.

20. Literacy skills are taught well. Teachers use discussion well to promote understanding in most subjects, accompanied by well-directed questioning and specialist language displayed on classroom walls. In physical education, for example discussion is used to deepen students' understanding in evaluating each other's performance, while in music, English is used both to explore and express emotional responses and to investigate specialist terminology. Students' mathematical skills are developed well in subjects such as art and science and spreadsheets are used effectively to analyse weather systems in ICT. In subjects such as religious education and English, opportunities are limited. The school has a better than average ratio of students to computers but the development of students' ICT skills is only satisfactory because of recent stability problems with the network.
21. Marking of students' work is satisfactory. Work is marked regularly and consistently and in subjects such as ICT and English; students know their target grades and what they have to do to improve. In others, including mathematics, students are unaware of, or have forgotten, their predictions. Progress and attainment are closely monitored in science and peer assessment is effectively used in drama. Marking is thorough in religious education.
22. Data collection and analysis are very good. Over the past two years, earlier collections of data have been rationalised and developed. Spreadsheets have been established for all year groups, charting individual progress through the school. An averaged prediction is made for the level at the end of Year 9 and predicted and target grades given for the end of Year 11. Focused analyses are possible by inclusion category, gender, ethnicity or attendance. How students prefer to learn is also being compiled to inform and assist class teachers. Award ceremonies are now based on effort not attainment. Parents are starting to employ the language used by the school to describe students' effort. Effort data recorded each term for all students, gives early identification of slippage or improvement. The use made of this data is however very variable. Few departments use assessment data to evaluate and improve teaching and learning.
23. Good liaison with primary schools and clear procedures for identifying and assessing needs ensure a clear view of the progress made by students with special educational needs and the nature of the intervention needed. This is supported by regular meetings between the special educational needs coordinator and learning support assistants.

Sixth form

24. Teaching and learning are very good. In the eleven subjects that were the focus of the inspection, teaching and learning were very good in history, ICT, psychology and business education. They were good in English, biology, chemistry, art, geography and physical education and satisfactory in mathematics. In the nine subjects sampled during the inspection, teaching and learning were very good. In all subjects, teachers have very good professional knowledge and use home learning very effectively to ensure that students achieve very well. Planning is usually very good and enables students to acquire skills and knowledge quickly. In mathematics, teaching and learning are only satisfactory because the planning of work is inconsistent, which departmental monitoring has failed to address.
25. Marking is thorough, consistent, and is used well to respond to students' specific needs. Students know the level at which they are working. In English and ICT; teachers are particularly good at telling students what it they need to do to improve and students and teachers work together to ensure that students understand assessment criteria. Some teaching groups are small, for example in geography, and as a result teachers know their students well, are aware of individual progress, and give effective individual support. Few department use assessment data to evaluate and improve teaching and learning or to tell students clearly enough what they need to do to improve.

The curriculum

Curricular opportunities are very good. Enrichment provision including out-of-school activities is good. Staffing is good; the quality and quantity of accommodation and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The innovative, broad and balanced curriculum and the very good provision for personal and social education satisfy students' needs well
- The good range of extra-curricular activities is well supported by students
- Business and Enterprise status is beginning to have a positive impact
- Opportunities are limited in some subjects and computers are not used enough in lessons
- Although accommodation is satisfactory overall, some of it is good and some is unsatisfactory
- Very good collaborative arrangements in the sixth form increase students' choice of courses

Commentary

26. A very broad and balanced curriculum, innovatively tailored to meet the needs of students, provides equality of access for all. The English department, for example has adapted the Key Stage 3 Strategy well; ICT is used well and a good balance is maintained between the key National Curriculum elements of the subject. In science, courses lead to triple, double and single awards and students receive good guidance as to which course is appropriate to them. Most other subjects use some elements of the strategy to improve their teaching and learning and drama uses it extremely well. In subjects such as mathematics, although the strategy informs planning, end-of-lesson review of the work covered tend to be rushed.
27. Students participate in a good range of extra-curricular activities throughout the year. Events, such as a wide range of sporting activities, including many successful school teams, mainly occur after school or during the holidays. A good range of activities is offered to students and members of the community, centred on its swimming pool. Other activities include dance and drama clubs, art evenings, music lessons and whole-school productions. Attendance at clubs and societies is very good and some students perform to a high standard. Most subjects support students well in preparing for examinations out of lesson time.
28. Business and Enterprise status is beginning to impact positively across the curriculum. Students are well prepared for the world of work and appreciate enterprise. An example of this philosophy is the vocational course offered to all Year 10 and 11 students. Work-related education is very good. Sixty Year 10 and 11 students participate in off-site activities every week and speak enthusiastically about their involvement with the course.
29. Personal and social education is very good. A notable feature of the course is the high quality of guidance students receive to ease the transition from Year 9 to Year 10 and to prepare them for examination courses. Students have a comprehensive careers education. They access the 'Fast Tomato' ICT-based program. Careers education benefits greatly from the on-site Connexions service, which provides a swift, flexible and sympathetic response to students' needs including the minority of disaffected students.
30. The curriculum offered in some subjects is too narrow. Two modern foreign languages, French and Spanish, are taught in Year 7 to 9, but students do not have the opportunity to study both of these. Boys are not given the same opportunities to study dance as girls in physical education. The good access to computers found in English is not replicated across the school and there are subjects, notably modern foreign languages, science, history, design and technology and music where not enough use is made of computers.
31. Specialist staff support students with learning difficulties well, but too few subject teachers adapt tasks and activities to match students' needs. Year 8 and 9 students who are poor attenders, or who have a range of special educational needs, receive very good additional literacy lessons which boost

their self-confidence and self-esteem and develop transferable learning skills. Students with statements of educational need access the curriculum well in Years 10 and 11. Good liaison between pastoral and special educational needs staff meets the needs of students with behavioural difficulties well, but there are too few learning support assistants to fully meet the needs of some students with literacy problems.

32. Staffing is good. The number, qualification and experience of teaching staff are very well matched to the curriculum in most areas. Recent appointments to the teaching staff, many at middle manager level, are having a positive effect on curriculum development and delivery. Technicians and other ancillary staff effectively meet the needs of the students and staff they work with. This is particularly the case in ICT and design and technology. In science, there are too few technicians to accommodate the demands of the curriculum.
33. Accommodation and resources are satisfactory. The school is being rebuilt in a phased project due for completion in 2007. The quality of the present accommodation is very mixed. In some subjects it is poor. In physical education it is a barrier to learning and in music it restricts student access to the full curriculum. Teachers work hard to ensure that accommodation is not lowering achievement. In art, for example teachers have made the work space a stimulating area to improve standards. The distribution of resources varies between subjects and is satisfactory, overall.

Sixth form

34. Curricular provision is very good. There is good progression into the sixth form with an appropriate balance between GCE courses and vocational options at two different levels. Very good collaborative arrangements through a local federation of secondary schools and a further education college involve common timetables and organised transport. These arrangements provide students with a greater range of courses, than one school alone could offer. The teaching of a few AS and A2-levels, including for example media studies and music, is shared with other providers. Timetables are coordinated to minimise the impact of travelling time. The match of teachers to subjects in the sixth form is good.
35. Personal and social education is very good. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. Students follow a flexible core programme, choosing from short courses in first aid, young enterprise and sports leadership together with options such as driver safety and journalism. 'Work insight programmes' prepare for work experience placements well and help students to refine their ideas as to which career path they might be best suited for.

Care, guidance and support

Very good advice and guidance support students well, but problems with pathways and flagstones around the school mean that care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall. Good efforts have been made to ensure that students have a voice and this is linked to changes in the way the school operates.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff know pupils well and provide very good support and guidance
- Induction procedures for new students and as they move into the sixth form, are good
- Although first aid cover is good, those involved do not work closely enough to ensure a consistent approach

Commentary

36. Child protection matters, overseen by senior members of staff, are good. An induction programme for all new staff, both teaching and non-teaching makes them aware of these arrangements. Attendance is monitored well. A risk book showing students' medical condition is circulated to all staff and several of them are trained in first aid. Each uses the procedures recommended by the local education authority for recording accidents, dates and treatment. First aid cover is good but those involved do not work closely enough to ensure consistency. Good procedures ensure the safe departure of students at the end of the day. One or two issues

were brought to the school's attention in the design and technology room but these were dealt with immediately. Some outside pathways and flagstones are currently unsafe. The school does its best to ensure that students avoid them.

37. Most tutors offer good support, with many showing confidence in leading discussions and in allowing students to think for themselves and to develop their ideas. Individual learning plans have been introduced for Year 9 which will soon be extended across the school as a whole. A clear home learning policy and good use of personal planners help students to make good progress in their work. Through a well-established and effective mentoring system, student volunteers are trained to provide mentoring on subjects or personal issues. In addition, a Timeout Zone provides students with problems with support and counselling. Students say they feel able to speak to someone if they have a problem and that they value and appreciate the support they receive. Assessment procedures are systematic and well-managed, but not all teachers use the data collected to inform their planning.
38. The induction process helps new students settle in quickly. Good links have been established with primary schools, particularly in science and music. Year 4 students from some primary schools use the Caludon swimming pool whilst other primary schools offer work experience and community placements. Year 6 children are invited to after-school discos prior to transferring, receive visits from Caludon teachers in their primary school and spend a day at Caludon to prepare them for Year 7.
39. Students and parents receive helpful advice and guidance and are involved at an early stage when option choices are made and when students are considering courses post 16. Careers interviews take place according to student needs, links with Connexions are good.
40. School council members are volunteers and have brought about the change in lunch arrangements and improved the toilets. A 'Children's Voices' scheme is being piloted which involves seeking the opinions of Year 10 students on classroom management and learning styles. There are plans to extend this throughout the school.
41. Good individual guidance is provided for students with special educational needs. Parents are involved in the reviews of statements and requirements of the Code of Practice are met. Regular, specific and practicable reviews of students on school action plus and school action are held in relation to individual education plan targets. Good links have been established with local authority services.

Sixth form

42. A good variety of taster lessons as well as interviews with tutors, pastoral heads and Connexions, supports those entering the sixth form very well as they make their subject choices. Students' progress in the sixth form is closely monitored. Decisions to change course are made only after careful consideration to ensure that choices fully reflect each student's priorities. In consequence, few students leave the sixth form during their period of study and most continue on to higher education. Careers education is impartial and comprehensive. Students are given a full picture of local employment prospects and maximise their chances through successful job applications. Those intending to continue in education receive very good advice on financial planning to minimise student debt. Students are involved well in the work of the school; their views are sought and acted upon.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with schools and colleges are very good and with parents and the community are good.

Main strengths

- Very good links with other schools and colleges enrich the curriculum, promote students' personal development very well and provide wide educational opportunities for sixth formers
- The school actively seeks parents' views and responds well to their suggestions or concerns
- Parents receive good information about the school and about their children's learning

Commentary

43. The school is an active member of a local federation of schools and colleges and its Business and Enterprise status creates many opportunities to engage students, parents and the wider community. Teachers support their colleagues in primary and secondary schools well and combined training days ensure that good practice is disseminated. A good range of vocational courses such as catering, media and childcare is offered to students in other schools in the city. This collaboration ensures that they choose from the widest possible range of courses and puts them in a very good position to plan for the future. Mechanisms for the transfer of students are very good. The school plays an energetic role in area community activities and contributes effectively to the Caludon Community Forum.
44. Wherever possible, the school acts on parents' views. Senior teachers provide a weekly drop-in session for parents where they can voice any concerns or suggestions. Key staff meetings are held later in the day and quick responses are provided to those concerns. A recent survey on the format of students' reports attracted a very high response from parents and resulted in changes in the way information is presented.
45. Most parents who replied to the questionnaires and attended the parents' meeting believe that this is a good school but some feel that the school does too little to seek their views. Inspectors judged that the school seeks parents' views well and keeps them well informed through information evenings, termly newsletters and letters about the curriculum. Regular surveys are conducted providing parents with detailed feedback. Parents receive good information about what their children will be studying and how they can help and support them at home. Annual reports are well structured and informative. Homework diaries are well used to keep parents up-to-date and ensure that the school and parents keep in touch.

Sixth form

46. Students are prepared well for transition into the sixth form. An opportunities evening helps them find out about subjects and match their career aspirations with subject preferences.
47. Links with other schools and colleges are very good. Good collaboration with other schools and colleges ensure that students enjoy the widest possible access to suitable courses.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent and inspires the leadership group and governors to develop and improve the quality of education through very effective teamwork. Subject leadership and management are good and sometimes very good. Governance is good. Governors are very effective as critical friends of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's excellent leadership results in a very positive, forward-thinking atmosphere
- The recently appointed leadership group contains a wide and complementary range of experience and expertise which is rapidly improving the school's effectiveness
- The self-critical governing body holds the school to account very well
- Monitoring procedures to secure continuing improvement are underdeveloped in some subjects

Commentary

48. Leadership of the headteacher is excellent. Clear vision, sense of purpose and wide-ranging professionalism ensure rising standards throughout the school. The curriculum has been reorganized, the timetable changed to improve access for all, teaching and learning have improved and the school is operating a balanced budget. In two years, a very good senior team with complementary skills and talents has been established. It ensures systematic monitoring, evaluation and review of all aspects of the school's work and sustains continued improvement. Senior staff with expertise in data analysis, curriculum development; improvement planning, teaching and learning, school self-evaluation and

workforce reform, now work in an open, collaborative way to improve all aspects of the school's work.

49. The leadership group manages and implements new initiatives such as the focus on the quality of teaching and learning and on open and frank self- evaluation, well. Strategies to improve teaching and learning are wide-ranging, incorporating thinking about how children learn best, and are just beginning to have an effect. The recently introduced self-evaluation system is detailed and comprehensive, but has not yet had time to be embedded.
50. Leadership of departments is good. It is very good in English, drama, science, geography, art, history, ICT, PHSE and special educational needs, good in design and technology, music, and citizenship and satisfactory in mathematics, modern foreign languages, religious education and physical education. The best leadership is characterized by heads of department with a vision of continuous improvement providing good role models for teachers and students. Management is good, overall. It is good in science, design and technology, geography, music, religious education, special educational needs and physical education, very good in English, art, history, ICT, PHSE and drama and satisfactory in mathematics, modern foreign languages, - and citizenship. It is not as good as leadership. Although new policies and procedures have been put in place in most subjects, they are not yet all used consistently across departments.
51. Governance is good; governors have high aspirations and ambitions for the school. Regular links with departments ensure that governors understand the school's key strengths and weaknesses and provide effective challenge. Governors have approved a wide range of policies, including those promoting racial equality and ensuring access for all. They understand and report that accommodation restrictions prevent the school providing a daily act of collective worship for all students. This is a serious omission, but in partnership with the headteacher, governors have secured a major building programme which will resolve this issue and radically improve students' life chances and opportunities.
52. Leadership and management of special educational needs are very good with very good systems for identifying and supporting students. Regular reviews and good documentation result from good administrative support. Students are placed in classes in line with their attainment and learning support assistants enable those with statements of special educational need and those on school action plus to access the curriculum effectively. Not enough help is available for students with literacy and behavioural needs.

Financial information

53. Financial management is very good. Management has built up a comprehensive picture of historic spending which informs the production of the budget to meet educational priorities. Where major expenditure is planned, as in the purchase of ICT equipment, sufficient funds are earmarked and best value is used in making the purchase and installation. Efficient systems of financial control include appropriate separation of duties. Financial information is readily available to subject managers, senior managers and the governing body which exercises its responsibilities of challenge and scrutiny well. Recommendations made in the recent audit report have been acted upon.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	£5207057
Total expenditure	£5077410
Expenditure per student	£3193.35

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	£66200
Balance carried forward to the next	£195847

Sixth form

54. Leadership is very good; management is satisfactory. Senior staff are fully committed to improving students' achievement and the sixth form is cost effective. Sixth form spending is carefully

monitored, educational priorities have an equal voice with financial considerations in dictating the courses that run. Very good management of the linked provision ensures that most students can follow courses that best meet their ambitions and aspirations. Departmental leadership and management are good overall, and very good in English, history and psychology. They are good in almost all other subject areas with the exception of mathematics and physical education.

55. Good systems support students' personal development with excellent staff/student relationships. Monitoring of attendance and punctuality on a daily basis is good but the monitoring of attendance across linked schools and colleges is inconsistent. Systematic collation of attendance statistics shows that attendance is satisfactory overall. Students' progress is monitored very well in individual tutorials and by subject staff but overall monitoring is inconsistent. As a result standards vary both from one subject to another and from one year to the next. Students are very well advised as to higher education choices.

OTHER SPECIFIED AREAS

Work-related learning

Provision for work-related learning is very good.

56. Very high value is placed on WRL. The development of employability skills in communication, ICT and numeracy is integral to all vocational courses in Years 10 and 11. Students use these skills to boost their achievement in other subjects. Year 10 and 11 students choose from a wide range of vocational courses suited to their aspirations and needs. Many students attend vocational courses outside school as a result of partnership arrangements with local schools and colleges, training providers and commercial organisations. For example, a group of students in Year 10 follow a work-related course with the Construction Industry Training Board. Students on vocational courses achieve well. Pass rates on GNVQ and applied GCSE courses are high, teaching and learning are good and standards of work are above expectations. 'Enterprise' classes have been introduced in Year 10, but industry links have yet to be developed.
57. Involvement with industry is good. The school was an 'Enterprise Pathfinder School' in 2003-2004 and is now a Business and Enterprise specialist school. Very good industry links in vocational courses and through special events are organised through local companies and The Education Business Partnership. The work experience programme is very well organised and is well-integrated into students' personal development programme. Opportunities for learning about work are very good. There is an on-site Connexions office with a full-time adviser. In one lunch-time session the adviser briefed a Year 10 group on 'taster events' in local industries and students were keen to take part.
58. Leadership and management are very good. The school places high priority on the development of WRL and has invested in staffing and resources to support its development. As a result of the school's new Business and Enterprise status there is a clear and widely understood appreciation of its value in raising students' achievement.

PART C: 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 very good. Examination results have risen as a result of very good teaching that has improved as a result of very good management.

	Years 7, 8 and 9	Years 10 and 11
Standards	Above average	Well above average
Achievement	Very good	Very good
Teaching and Learning	Very good	Very good

Leadership	Very good
Management	Very good
Improvement since last inspection	Very good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Examination results have risen to above average since the last inspection and current standards in Years 10 and 11 are well above average
- Very good teaching uses a stimulating variety of methods, activities and incisive questioning to draw in student interest and promote further learning
- Very good leadership and management have improved teaching methods and content, leading to rising GCSE results
- Students' spelling skills are insecure because teaching has not focused enough on this area

Commentary

59. Results in the national tests in 2003, at the end of Year 9, were above average, as in previous years. The proportion of students reaching at or above levels 5 and 6 was well above average. Girls did better than boys, following national trends, but both were equally above the trend for their respective genders. Students arrive with average standards in English and compared with similar schools, these results showed very high achievement. Since the last inspection results have remained stable.
60. GCSE results have risen since the last inspection. They were above average overall, but the proportion gaining higher A*-C grades was slightly below average. Girls' results matched the national picture for their gender at the higher-grades, but boys fell below theirs. Results in English literature were above average, both overall, and for the proportion gaining higher grades. Girls did better than boys, with boys matching the national profile for their gender and girls exceeding it. Results rose in 2004 and are well above those reported in the last inspection.
61. Students, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve very well. In Years 7 to 9, they answer questions clearly and discuss ideas sensibly. They show understanding of what they read, for example by explaining character, narrative event and dramatic structure thoroughly in Shakespeare. They benefit from incisive questioning and teachers' explanations of examination criteria help them express their own ideas. Higher-attaining students employ a rich vocabulary and extended sentence structure to explore controversial issues such as fox-hunting or the use and abuse of drugs. Lower-attaining students and those with special educational needs benefit from well-calibrated teaching, which adapts materials to support them. Boys' standards continue to be lower than girls', but are improving as a result of lesson planning which takes better account of their interests. In Year 11, in response to good lesson design, the deployment of attractive materials, stimulating activities in small groups and incisive teacher questioning, students explain

perceptively the way in which authors portray character, create atmosphere and build suspense. They read novels analytically. Higher-attaining students acquire subtle understanding of the plays and novels they study. Middle and lower-attaining students analyse the structure and presentation of sequences in feature films confidently, benefiting from very good prompt sheets and lively teacher questioning. Lower-attaining students and those with special educational needs enlarge their vocabulary with good thesaurus work, although their writing does not always fully convey their levels of understanding. Students operate computers well to communicate and order their ideas logically. Nevertheless, spelling skills across the age range are underdeveloped because teachers have not used consistent approaches over time or trained students in techniques to learn from their own mistakes.

62. Teachers use a wide range of methods, varied resources and use time well to engage student interest and help them work independently. Students benefit from helpful guidance on how well they are doing and what they should do in order to improve, which underpins high levels of application and achievement.
63. Following recent staff changes, the subject benefits from very good vision for its continued development, based on astute analysis of previous strengths and identification of further areas for improvement. Rising GCSE results have been driven by the high quality of management which has improved teaching methods and content. Teachers are led very well to analyse how well groups of students are learning. They go on to collaborate in planning and share ideas to improve teaching to counteract underperformance.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

64. Literacy standards are good. Students retrieve information well in design and technology, religious education and art and read well for information and pleasure in a well-organised library. Writing is used effectively to organise thinking, to extend understanding and to express ideas in many subjects. Spelling is not as good. Students have difficulties spelling reliably and conventionally as a result of inconsistent teaching methods and lack of impetus.

Modern foreign languages

Provision in modern languages is satisfactory. Students study one language, French or Spanish, in Years 7 to 9. French and German are the current options in Years 10 and 11.

	Years 7, 8 and 9	Years 10 and 11
Standards	Average	Average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Teaching and Learning	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Leadership	Satisfactory
Management	Satisfactory
Improvement since last inspection	Unsatisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- New colleagues are raising expectations of student performance
- The curriculum and the monitoring of teaching and learning are underdeveloped, partly as a result of long-standing staffing difficulties
- Teachers manage students well, enabling them to concentrate on learning
- Higher-attaining students are not sufficiently challenged
- Not enough use is made of computers and only one foreign language is on offer

Commentary

65. The results of teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 in 2003 were very high. In 2004 they were slightly lower. These assessments were found to be inaccurate when looking at the work of students currently in Years 9 and 10. Results in the 2003 GCSE examinations were average in French and below average in German. Students underachieved in German and in both languages few students attained the higher grades. In 2004, results were higher in French, but static in German with far fewer students taking a GCSE in languages.
66. Students enter school at the national average and all, including those with English as an additional language and special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily. The achievement of higher-attaining students is weaker; they are disadvantaged by the narrow curriculum with few opportunities for enrichment. Students do better in French than in German in Years 10 and 11, because work is more demanding.
67. Lessons are clearly structured to practise all the skills. Resources are carefully prepared and used imaginatively to help students construct short sentences using the three tenses but not all teachers' are consistent and resources are not used to maximum advantage to ensure brisk progression in learning, especially in speaking. Some marking is detailed, giving supportive comments as to how students can improve. Over-optimistic Year 9 assessments however, have not provided an accurate benchmark for tracking student progress and for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. Students do not receive their statutory entitlement in ICT and only one foreign language is on offer. Behaviour is good; students are attentive which helps lower and average-attaining students to progress.
68. A new team is enabling the department to arrest a long period of decline since the last inspection and to overcome staffing problems which have affected continuity and contributed to the underdeveloped curriculum and monitoring procedures.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is good.

	Years 7, 8 and 9	Years 10 and 11
Standards	Above average	Above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and Learning	Good	Good
Leadership	Satisfactory	
Management	Satisfactory	
Improvement since last inspection	Good	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average overall in Year 7 to 11
- Enthusiastic mathematicians with good subject knowledge plan thoroughly and teach well
- Good working relationships between teachers and students result in good achievement
- Many students do not know their level of attainment and what they need to do to get better
- Good use of support staff raises the achievement of lower-attaining students

Commentary

69. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 9, in 2003, were above average. In 2004 they were broadly similar, with an increase in the percentage attaining level 6 or higher. In the 2003 GSCE examinations at the end of Year 11 results were slightly above average. The A*-C percentage increased in 2004, but the A*-G percentage decreased.
70. Students arrive with average standards and for most these improve rapidly during Years 7 to 9 and more slowly during Years 10 and 11. Good teaching, working relationships between teachers and

students and challenge in lessons ensure good achievement for most students, including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language.

71. Enthusiastic, knowledgeable mathematicians plan and deliver lessons that develop students' understanding well. In a very good Year 9 lesson, an electronic whiteboard was used effectively to review students' knowledge of angles and they learned how to identify and use alternate and corresponding angles. Lessons are well constructed following the Key Stage 3 Strategy. Starter activities are appropriate but end-of-lesson review sessions tend to be rushed, losing the opportunity for good review and preview. The strategy also positively influences teaching and learning in Years 10 and 11.
72. Work is marked positively, but there are few references to the level of students' work during lessons and in exercise books. Many students do not know the level at which they are working and are not given enough guidance on how to raise their level. Support lessons are offered after school to students at a critical stage in their studies in order to help them to improve. Students in Year 9 participated in and won a local mathematics competition, beating 25 other schools. Provision has improved from satisfactory since the last inspection.
73. Sound management ensures smooth departmental running. An effective team of specialist teachers has been created. Clear, knowledgeable leadership is given in some areas. A good practice portfolio has been developed and a GCSE statistics course initiated for some high-attaining Year 11 students who will take the GCSE examination early. Schemes of work contain little guidance on how topics are to be taught. Innovative use of ICT by some teachers enhances students' learning, but the use of ICT is largely left to individual teachers' interests. Leadership does not ensure that sufficiently challenging targets are set for all students. Information held centrally is not used enough to influence teaching and learning.

Numeracy across the curriculum

74. Students' competence in mathematics is satisfactory. Students' mathematical skills are developed well in subjects such as art, involving ideas of shape and space, and science, where good skills are demonstrated in the use of formulae and in data collection and handling. Spreadsheets are used effectively to analyse weather systems in ICT. GCSE students in physical education make good use of proportion and graphs, but in subjects such as religious education and English, opportunities to develop mathematical skills are limited.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is good.

	Years 7, 8 and 9	Years 10 and 11
Standards	Average	Above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and Learning	Good	Good
Leadership	Very good	
Management	Good	
Improvement since last inspection	Satisfactory	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The relatively new team of teachers is well qualified and has very good subject knowledge. lessons are well-planned and engage students' interest effectively
- Leadership of the department is very good
- Teaching and learning are good leading to good achievement
- Students do not use computers enough

- There is insufficient monitoring of how well students learn in lessons

Commentary

75. Results in the 2003 end-of-Year 9 national tests were average and have been since the last inspection. The 2004 results were similar. The standard of work seen in lessons and in students' work indicates that this standard has been maintained. GCSE results were below average in 2003 and similar in 2004. Boys did much better than girls. The standard of work seen was higher and is now above average. The modular GCSE results for Year 11 students indicate a significant rise in attainment with little difference between boys and girls.
76. Students enter the school at the national average and now achieve well, especially in Years 10 and 11. Higher-attaining students achieve very well mainly as a result of their very good attitudes in lessons. The achievement of students with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good. Teachers are fully aware of each student's needs and give them good support in lessons with extra suitable resources.
77. Many teachers are relatively new to the school. They have very good subject knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject. They share very good relationships with students and work cooperatively with them. Lesson planning is good with frequent practicals and investigations but the small team of technicians is stretched to ensure that resources are available, particularly in their cramped preparation areas. Use of computers with whole classes is restricted due to lack of access to suitable rooms. Teachers mark students' work well giving detailed comments on how to improve and students are aware of their potential grades.
78. Teachers have a shared vision and desire to raise standards and expectations. The newly introduced relevant courses at GCSE, give students a much wider choice. This has had an early impact on raising achievement. Data is kept centrally and reviewed to identify the progress of individual students effectively. Courses are better organised since the last inspection; standards have remained the same as has the quality of teaching and learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is good. All students now follow a discrete ICT course in Years 7 to 11.

	Years 7, 8 and 9	Years 10 and 11
Standards	Average	Above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and Learning	Good	Good
Leadership	Very good	
Management	Very good	
Improvement since last inspection	Very good	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A variety of teaching styles encourages good learning by all students
- Work is well marked; students are given clear guidelines as to what they need to do to improve
- Teachers have good relationships with students and support them well in lessons
- Some non-ICT specialists who teach in Years 7 to 9 have insecure subject knowledge and so their teaching is less effective

Commentary

79. In 2003, the end-of-Year 9 results were below average but showed significant improvement in 2004. In 2003, GCSE results were very low but improved in 2004 with the number of grades A*-C almost

tripling. Results at GCSE, however, were still well below the national average. This was in part due to long-term staff absence and a very unstable ICT system.

80. Students enter the school with below average standards in ICT and all, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve well. Year 7 students evaluate and use PowerPoint presentations for transition and animation; Year 9 produce interactive weather information systems linked to live web sites and Year 10 manipulate images and incorporate them into business flyers. Year 11 students use the internet to solve problems related to business activities.
81. In the best lessons, good pace, charged with activity, accelerates learning. Teachers have very good knowledge of their subject and examination board requirements, using past experience to stimulate learning. Lessons are very well planned. Good relationships exist between students and teachers. Lessons start promptly and students immediately become engrossed and enthusiastic in their learning. Tasks are open-ended, imaginative, challenging and appropriate to students' needs. Teachers use a variety of teaching styles, which stimulate students' interest. Students are encouraged by praise to respond to questions and teachers answer questions quickly and accurately. One-to-one help successfully supports students and peer evaluation, used in end-of-lesson review sessions checks learning outcomes. Students' attitudes are very good. In a minority of lessons, patchy knowledge by some non-ICT specialists leads to less satisfactory teaching and learning.
82. Students' work is assessed well. Target grades are identified and students know what they need to do to improve. Self-evaluation sheets help them to understand the standard of their work and encouraging comments give a clear indication of how they can improve.
83. Extensive documentation in the department shows detailed planning. Schemes of work for Years 7 to 9 reflect national recommendations. In Years 10 and 11, new courses are continually reviewed. A cycle of lesson observations, focused on aspects of teaching, is well established and faculty strengths and areas for development are continually assessed.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

84. Most staff have their own lap-top and the use of ICT in other subjects in the main school is satisfactory and developing. The number of computers available for use by students is above the national average. Every faculty has a data projector and electronic whiteboard. The faculty leader meets regularly with departmental representatives to support the use of ICT in other subject areas and cross-curricular use of ICT is mapped. Interactive whiteboards (IWB) are used effectively in mathematics and science; in English, ICT is used well for drafting and editing work. Geography coursework is word-processed and data analysis is represented graphically and in design and technology, 2-D design and Photoshop are used for product design and image manipulation. As students become more confident, those without access to ICT at home are increasingly dependent on ICT at school to support their learning.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is good.

	Years 7, 8 and 9	Years 10 and 11
Standards	Average	Above average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Very good
Teaching and Learning	Satisfactory	Very good
Leadership	Very good	
Management	Good	
Improvement since last inspection	Satisfactory	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The department is very well led and the clear focus on improvement is shared by the committed team of teachers
- Teaching and learning are very good in GCSE classes
- The long-term management of learning is well supported and improving
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent in Years 7 to 9; not enough different work is provided to support and challenge all students fully
- Monitoring and evaluation of teaching and the use of data are not fully effective

Commentary

85. Results of Year 9 teacher assessments in 2003 were in line with those reported nationally. In 2004, they were similar. GCSE examination results in 2003 were below average for A*-C passes, but A*-G results were above average. Boys did better than girls and slightly better than all boys nationally. Girls did less well than nationally. In 2004 results were above average: all students passed and did better than in most of their other school subjects.
86. Students achieve broadly as expected by Year 9, but exceed or fail to reach expectations in relation to teachers' levels of demand. By Year 11, standards are above average. Students start school with average attainment but variable experience of geography; so current standards represent very good achievement by Year 11.
87. In Years 7 to 9, teachers plan to a clear structure of starter, main activity and closing summary. Some use ICT well, but lessons lack the good pace, structure and fun required to fully engage students' concentration and understanding. Most lesson plans only just support the wide-ranging needs of students satisfactorily and progress is slower. In Years 10 and 11, clear objectives and teachers' experience in preparing for examinations, leads to interesting, well-supported work. Relationships are good; most teachers expect high standards of work and behaviour from students but students do not understand exactly how to improve without help and do not use computers enough.
88. Many new policies and systems are in place and in early stages of implementation, so some are not yet applied consistently and some are not yet having the full planned impact. Systems of monitoring and self-review have led to current improvements in practice and standards, but are not yet as formal or as effective as they can be. Improvement plans are sensible and comprehensive. A lack of fieldwork has been a weakness in the recent past but much is now planned and some has taken place. Since the last inspection improvement has been satisfactory: standards in Year 9 are higher, but have been more variable at GCSE.

History

Provision in history is very good.

	Years 7, 8 and 9	Years 10 and 11
Standards	Well above average	Well above average
Achievement	Very good	Very good
Teaching and Learning	Very good	Very good
Leadership	Very good	
Management	Very good	
Improvement since last inspection	Very good	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The team focuses on teaching and learning relentlessly; standards are well above average
- Teachers share their enthusiasm for history with students and use different teaching styles confidently

- Good discipline and classroom management create a stable learning environment
- Excellent relationships with students improve achievement
- Insufficient opportunities are provided for students to use computers

Commentary

89. End-of-Year 9 teacher assessments and GCSE results were above average in 2003 and higher in 2004. Work seen during the inspection indicates that standards are now well above average and that the 2004 standards have been maintained. Students enter the school at the national average and achieve very well by the end of Year 9 and at GCSE.
90. Styles of teaching are designed to provide access to learning for all abilities. Teachers know students well and they receive individual challenge and support. Rising numbers are opting to take GCSE history. Students enjoy the subject and believe that they will be taught well. Lessons are well planned and objectives are shared with students at the beginning of each lesson. Students respond very well to the brisk pace of lessons in which a sequence of well-judged tasks engages all abilities. Teachers show skill in judicious praise and challenge and their excellent relationships with students improve achievement. Marking is encouraging and gives points for improvement. Students know how well they are doing and are kept constantly aware of expectations for each level and grade. Lack of use of computers restricts the use of potentially rich sources of information.
91. All members of the department share a focus of ensuring the highest possible standards, making them reflective, self-critical, innovative and risk-taking. Present practice is evaluated against the standards achieved and results in planning for improvement. Good practice is shared and an 'open door' policy encourages teachers to learn from each other and to monitor progress across the department. Established methods of ensuring good behaviour are used effectively and create a stable learning environment. Dispiriting accommodation is overcome with bright classroom displays, up-to-date text books and high quality teacher-produced materials. Improvement since the last inspection rests on the formation of a teaching team with a coherent philosophy of continuous encouragement, inclusion and high standards both of teaching and learning.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is satisfactory.

	Years 7, 8 and 9	Years 10 and 11
Standards	Average	Above average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Teaching and Learning	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Leadership	Satisfactory
Management	Good
Improvement since last inspection	Good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A high proportion of Year 10 students enter for the short course and almost all achieve a grade
- Marking of students' work is of a very high standard
- Not enough different work is provided to meet the needs of all students
- Students are encouraged to reflect on their learning and religious education therefore makes a major contribution to students' spiritual and moral development
- Display of students' work in classrooms is very good

Commentary

92. In 2003, nearly the whole of the year was entered for the short course GCSE examination, and results were above the national average. In 2004, they were similar. Girls did better than boys. At the end of Year 9, teacher assessments in 2003 show that more students achieved level 5 or above than those reported nationally. Teacher assessments were similar in 2004, although the number of students achieving the very highest grades was low.
93. Year 7 students arrive with a varied experience and the standard on entry is average. Current standards in Year 9 are still average but by end of Year 10 they are above average. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 9 and 11 and good in Year 10. By the end of Year 9, students have a good insight into both Buddhism and Sikhism and talk with enthusiasm about Martin Luther King from a good unit of work called "Workers for God". By the end of Year 10, most have a deeper understanding of the impact of religion on world issues.
94. Teachers ensure that students know the lesson objectives and every lesson starts with a "starter activity". Planning is good; teachers ensure that a range of activities keeps students fully engaged and use praise well to motivate students. The marking of students' work is exemplary and comments tell students how to improve. A small minority of students are not always fully on task and provision of separate work to meet the needs of individual students, especially the more able, is limited. Not enough use is made of local faith communities.
95. Programmes of study meet all requirements of the Coventry Agreed Syllabus, including at sixth form level. Good schemes of work and monitoring and evaluating the work of the department. have been developed. Although ICT is included within Year 7, it is insufficiently developed across the years. Real emphasis has been placed upon display in classrooms, which creates a very good learning environment. Analysis of results is very good but this information is not currently used to raise student achievement. Religious education is now offered in Years 10 and 11 and the number of specialist teachers has increased.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is good.

	Years 7, 8 and 9	Years 10 and 11
Standards	Average	Average
Achievement	Good	Satisfactory
Teaching and Learning	Good	Satisfactory

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Improvement since last inspection	Satisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- New leadership in design and technology is focused on raising standards
- Assessment is not being used to raise standards
- Good teacher/student relationships raise achievement and support the learning process well
- The use of ICT in lessons is underdeveloped
- Students behave well and are keen to learn

Commentary

96. In 2003, the end-of-Year 9 teacher assessments were above average and similar in 2004. In 2003, GCSE results were below average for the A*-C grades and both girls and boys did better in most of their other GCSE subjects. Results in food and resistant materials were better than those in graphics. Early indications are that the 2004 GCSE results are better.
97. Students join the school with below average standards. By the end of Year 9, standards are average which represents good achievement for all students including those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language. They discuss sources of protein and design a high protein meal. Students who study food, resistant materials or graphics to GCSE level produce work in line with national expectations and achieve satisfactorily. Year 11 students studying resistant materials design and make artefacts using hand and power tools with confidence. Those students studying graphics achieve less well because they do not receive a good grounding in this area lower down the school.
98. Teachers have very good technical knowledge that enables them to demonstrate new skills and provide good individual support. Very good teaching was seen in a Year 10 resistant materials lesson where students had designed wind chimes. Every student was engaged in using a range of hand tools in addition to the pillar drill, disk sander and lathe. In less successful lessons teachers do not set short-term targets for students. As a result they spend too long on small tasks. An assessment system has been developed, but is not yet impacting on learning. Since the last inspection computers have been installed in the area. These are not being fully utilised. Relationships between teachers and students are good. Teachers' expectations of behaviour and performance are high. Students are attentive, concentrate well and develop good working practices.
99. Recent changes in leadership have led to a clear focus on raising standards. Strengths and weaknesses have been identified with accuracy. A new assessment system has been introduced, designed to raise achievement by concentrating on target levels and grades.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design

Provision in art and design is very good.

	Years 7, 8 and 9	Years 10 and 11
Standards	Above average	Well above average
Achievement	Very good	Very good
Teaching and Learning	Very good	Very good

Leadership	Very good
Management	Very good
Improvement since last inspection	Good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good teaching and learning results in students having high levels of motivation and enthusiasm and very good attitudes to their work
- Progressive development of skills contributes positively to students' very good achievement
- Teamwork is excellent with a very strong commitment to improvement
- The wide range of information available is not used consistently to target individual students, and ensure that work set matches their needs

Commentary

100. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 were above average in 2003 and similar in 2004. GCSE results in 2003 were well below average. Girls achieved better than boys, as is the case nationally, but boys achieved much lower standards than the national average and did much worse than in their other subjects. In 2004, the results were higher and back to the standards of previous years.
101. On entering the school students' attainment is below the standards achieved in the core subjects. They respond very positively to the teaching. Year 7 students, after only five weeks, had made very good progress and showed good observational drawing skills, blending colour and using tone to show form and shadows. In all years, students value and feel proud of their achievements, which motivates and enthuses them, giving them the confidence to tackle more advanced skills. By Year 9, many attain the expected standards and a significant proportion the higher levels. Students' very good attitudes contribute positively to their achievements. Standards in current GCSE classes are well above average; both boys and girls achieve very well. A crucial factor underpinning students' achievement is the progressive development of skills. This prepares them well for examination courses and gives them the freedom and confidence to express themselves through their work. Where students achieve particularly well, teachers build in opportunities for them to deepen their understanding, for example of art and artists' work, by their use of questioning and the development of spoken responses.
102. The pace of learning and the organisation and use of teaching spaces are excellent. Teachers have very secure subject knowledge and make very good use of limited resources. The development of literacy skills is supported well, in workbooks and in teachers' explanations and instructions. However, the learning expectations of the highest-achieving students are not consistently identified in lesson plans and workbooks.
103. The subject positively contributes to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teamwork is excellent with constructive plans for improving standards and extending the use of ICT. Much information about students' potential learning needs is available, but the information is not used consistently to target individual students, to ensure that work is matched to their needs and to

track their progress. Since the last inspection standards have improved and the curriculum is better planned.

Drama

Provision in drama is very good.

	Years 7, 8 and 9	Years 10 and 11
Standards	Well above average	High
Achievement	Very good	Excellent
Teaching and Learning	Very good	Excellent
Leadership	Very good	
Management	Very good	
Improvement since last inspection	Good	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE results have returned to their previous high level after a downturn in 2003 and achievement in Years 10 and 11 is outstanding
- Students' learning is very good and excellent in Years 10 and 11. Teachers plan meticulously and make excellent use of the National Strategy
- Staffing is excellent
- Most students behave very well, and show responsibility in practical work
- Lost access to accommodation poses practical problems

Commentary

104. The range of attainment *of* students choosing drama is wide. In 2003, GCSE results were below average. Girls made more progress in drama than in any other subject, but a large number of boys had disappointing results. In contrast, in the previous year, results were high compared to the national average and were similar in 2004.
105. It was not possible to observe the work of students in Year 9 during the inspection. In the Year 8 lesson seen standards were above average, representing very good achievement from the average standards with which students join the school. Students worked well in both pairs and class discussion to share ideas and take on board other opinions. Good, sensible practical work showed awareness of drama techniques, the ability to work and think in character, and unusually good awareness of 'hot seating' skills. The excellent standards of work of a Year 11 class again showed very good achievement. Many students applied drama theory to their work. Group work was intense yet imaginative, students supporting and directing each other in briskly-timed tasks.
106. Teaching and learning are excellent for GCSE groups. Lessons are scrupulously planned, with careful attention to what students will learn, how, and how they will appreciate what they have achieved. Excellent use of techniques and structures is stimulated by the National Strategy. Students learn to use drama disciplines and conventions, as when a Year 8 group explored the tensions and traumas of sectarian conflict, because the teacher asked them to define conflict and work from their own experience and emotions. Apart from a few younger boys, students are keen, focused and sensible in practical work. They cooperate well, show care and sensitivity to others. They share ideas, and even younger students compromise well with others rather than just pushing their own ideas. Classes are well managed and energy is channelled into the task in hand, whether discussion, rehearsal, or performance. Excellent relationships and an atmosphere of shared effort, respect, and trust pervade all lessons.
107. The department is very well organised with an ambitious vision for high standards and a detailed strategy for bringing these about. Staffing is excellent, all lessons being taught by specialists with considerable experience and expertise. Since the previous report GCSE results are higher; there is a much better lesson allocation for Year 9 students, much improved teaching and improved accommodation and many opportunities for students to enjoy drama work outside of lessons.

Accommodation remains unsatisfactory because specialist rooms have to be used for exams or other school purposes.

Music

Provision in music is satisfactory.

	Years 7, 8 and 9	Years 10 and 11
Standards	Average	Below average
Achievement	Good	Satisfactory
Teaching and Learning	Good	Satisfactory
Leadership	Good	
Management	Good	
Improvement since last inspection	Satisfactory	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students' achievement is good in Years 7 to 9 due to good and sometimes excellent teaching
- Poor accommodation means that students are not able to work effectively in groups thus limiting their access to the full curriculum
- Relationships between students and teachers are good
- Insufficient use of music technology has an adverse effect on standards in Years 10 and 11

Commentary

108. Numbers of students choosing to study GCSE music since the last inspection have increased significantly. However, results in GCSE examinations were significantly below the national average in 2003 and similar in 2004 with less than half of those entered gaining grades A*-C. Students enter the school with average standards in music. By Year 9 they perform on keyboards with reasonable fluency, standards in singing are good and they achieve well. They attain average standards in composing and use a range of musical terminology and concepts with understanding and perception when listening and appraising music. Poor accommodation means that students cannot work in groups and the lack of sound insulation results in their work and concentration being disrupted by musical activity in other rooms. This has an adverse effect on standards.
109. Students begin the GCSE course with very limited performing skills. Although each student receives an individual instrumental lesson each week in which achievement is good, they do not make sufficient progress to attain GCSE grades A*-C by the end of the course. The limited availability of appropriate music technology, to support students' composing, results in unsatisfactory achievement in this area of the course. Students achieve average and sometimes above average standards in listening and appraising. They understand a range of music terminology and concepts and are able to apply them to their listening.
110. Teaching is fast-paced and relationships between students and teachers are never less than good. Musical theory and information about musical styles is closely linked to students' performing and composing activities. This results in good learning and achievement. A great strength of the teaching is teachers' use of their own excellent performing skills on a range of instruments. Teaching and learning in Years 10 and 11 are satisfactory. In the best lessons, musical theory and concepts are taught through musical activity, resulting in good learning. In some lessons, the tasks set do not take sufficient account of students' weak performing skills and the learning of notation is not linked to musical sound.
111. New leadership has identified key areas for development including revision of the scheme of work, the development of effective assessment systems, and more extra-curricular activities.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is satisfactory.

	Years 7, 8 and 9	Years 10 and 11
Standards	Average	Average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Teaching and Learning	Good	Good
Leadership	Satisfactory	
Management	Good	
Improvement since last inspection	Satisfactory	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Unwelcoming and dispersed accommodation is a barrier to achievement
- Enthusiastic and well-planned teaching often leads to good learning
- Well-motivated students enjoy the subject
- Leadership of the subject has lacked consistency

Commentary

112. In 2003, the GCSE results were below average. In 2004, they were better but below the school average. Students enter the school at the national expectation and by Year 9, standards are average. This represents satisfactory achievement with no significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls, or other groups of students. Year 11 standards in the core provision are average and above average in GCSE groups. Achievement is satisfactory.
113. Students are well behaved and properly turned out for work and their attitudes are good. They listen and concentrate well. Relationships between teachers and students are very good. Students work independently and observe, analyse and evaluate the work of others. Opportunities for taking initiative and responsibility are common in the best lessons.
114. Teachers have secure knowledge of the subject and work safely. In a good Year 8 football lesson, girls made good progress developing their ball skills. They understood the differences between attacking and defensive positions. Year 8 boys engaged wholeheartedly and safely in swimming. In a very good Year 10 lesson, girls played fast-paced, accurate netball because increased teacher input overcame the barriers presented by numbers, space, and resources. Well-planned lessons, and good marking that tells students how to improve, lead directly to good learning and achievement. When pace slows, when challenge drops or when timing goes awry, the quality of learning suffers.
115. Leadership has been in transition for some time but the situation has now stabilised. There is clear vision of continuous improvement but the skills and knowledge required to realise it have yet to be developed. Schemes of learning are outdated and do not say how the needs of different students will be met. Assessment information is beginning to be used to inform curriculum development but its full impact has yet to be felt. Students know what they need to do to improve but there is no agreed starting point. The curriculum is well balanced, but does not give boys the opportunity to experience dance. Extra-curricular sport is good.
116. Accommodation is depressing, not fit for purpose, and dispersed with no regular classroom base. Staff and students show great patience and understanding in testing circumstances but these factors hinder progress and represent clear barriers to learning and achievement. Since the last inspection examination results have risen and teaching is better, overall.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

Provision in business education and other vocational courses is good.

117. Business studies was inspected and health and social care and leisure and tourism were sampled. The 2003 GNVQ health and social care students achieved very well and the current standard of work in applied GCSE is above expectations. In the lesson seen, teaching and learning were very good. In GNVQ leisure and tourism in 2003, students achieved very well and the current standard of work is also above expectations. In the lesson seen, teaching and learning were satisfactory. Both courses offer a wide range of industry links and are popular with students. Opportunities for progression into advanced level courses in the sixth form are good.

	Years 10 and 11
Standards	Above average
Achievement	Good
Teaching and Learning	Good
Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Improvement since last inspection	Very good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very high number of students achieve the GNVQ qualification
- The new teachers have very good subject knowledge and use it effectively
- Access to computers is very good but resources for student research are limited
- The range of industry links is limited

Commentary

118. In 2003, results were above average. A very high percentage of students achieved the GNVQ qualification and results in 2004 were similar. Few students achieved the highest grades. Current standards are above expectations. The majority of students achieve well but there is insufficient adaptation of tasks to meet the needs of individuals and, in some cases, this is limiting achievement. For example, in one lesson where a class began work on the location of a local business, a large group of higher-attaining students found the work very easy and completed it very quickly.
119. A well-qualified team of specialist staff plans lessons with activities related to the business world. They are well paced with a wide range of activities although the layout of some classrooms is unhelpful to group and discussion work. Work is interesting and relevant. For example, in a marketing lesson, two starter activities with music and brand recognition engaged students' interest in the new topic. Teachers frequently use case study examples from real business, as when Year 11 students completed an assignment on an amusement park researched through the internet. Organised opportunities for students to research first hand through visits or contact with employees are limited and restricts the range of business contexts they use in their own research to the retail sector, with which they are familiar.
120. All business studies rooms are dedicated ICT rooms and there are examples of good use of ICT in student work, for example to create charts on changes to industrial sectors using a spreadsheet. In one lesson, students used computers to present work on contracts of employment and in another, their assignment work involved well directed use of the internet to research real businesses. A new intranet has just been created for shared teacher and student resources. Independent learning is encouraged, for example students research career opportunities from the on-site Connexions base and use this to inform work on job roles. There are too few textbooks, however and an over-reliance on worksheets in lessons and for home learning. As a result students have too little access to independent reading and research material. Assessment of students' work is good overall but, in some work, there is too

little advice to students on how to improve. Classes are well-managed with a pleasant, business-like working environment. Students are focused, responsive and productive.

121. There is clear vision for a key department within a Business and Enterprise specialist school. An effective team of new teachers has revised schemes of work and planned new industry links. The school now offers a wide and inclusive range of vocational options. All students in Year 10 study at least one vocational course. Business studies is a popular choice and there is good progression into advanced level courses. Resources for ICT are very good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

Provision in personal, social and health education is very good.

	Years 7, 8 and 9	Years 10 and 11
Standards	Average	Average
Achievement	Very good	Very good
Teaching and Learning	Very good	Very good
Leadership	Very good	
Management	Very good	
Improvement since last inspection	Good	

Main strengths

- Teachers have good subject knowledge and use a wide range of teaching techniques to explore a wide range of topics
- Planning is very good and ensures that all aspects of the course are covered in detail

Commentary

122. PHSE is taught during dedicated time and includes a careers programme with strong links with citizenship. Standards are in line with expectations; achievement is very good.
123. A core team of staff teaches the course using well-produced resources. In an excellent lesson on bullying, exemplary planning ensured that the lesson moved at a very fast pace as it explored the issues relating to bullying. Students achieved very well. All students could give their views although levels of oracy were only average. In two lessons in Years 10 and 11, career options were thoroughly explored and in the Year 11 lesson, students learnt how to access the 'Fast Tomato' careers programme and quickly became independent learners.
124. Lines of accountability are clear. Planning meets the needs of students. Schemes of work are full and detailed. The good time allowance allows students to revisit topics and deepen knowledge and understanding in subsequent years.

Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is good.

	Years 7, 8 and 9	Years 10 and 11
Standards	Average	Average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Good
Teaching and Learning	Satisfactory	Good
Leadership	Good	
Management	Satisfactory	
Improvement since last inspection	Not applicable	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Citizenship has been embedded more securely in the curriculum of the school
- Short lessons reduce the quality of teaching and learning in Years 7 to 9
- Students' personal and social skills are very well developed through the complementary programmes for citizenship and personal development
- The quality of teaching and learning and of assessment is not effectively monitored

Commentary

125. Standards are average. Well-planned schemes of work help students develop knowledge and understanding and citizenship skills progressively. Year 9 students working on the Criminal Justice Bill practised the techniques of persuasive writing whilst Year 11 students clarified and sequenced their ideas before arguing the case for or against Britain's continuing membership of the European Community. A minority of students in Years 7 to 9 are not as focused on their learning as their peers, which impacts on their achievement. Students are given some opportunities to participate responsibly in the life of the school, for example through peer mentoring, whereby Year 10 and 11 students support the learning of younger students. Opportunities for involvement in the life of the wider community are more restricted.
126. The 25-minute lesson is not ideal for structured learning. Time is insufficient for teachers and students to explore issues in depth, summarise or assess learning. Teaching is lively and more consistent in quality and students are more mature and accept the need to make the sessions productive by working at pace. Moments for reflection in lessons are effective and further enhance the quality of discussion in the Short Course GCSE classes. A useful start has been made in producing models for recording students' progress.
127. Leadership is enthusiastic and committed to developing students' experiences of citizenship. Assessment and monitoring systems are not yet robust enough to guarantee quality.

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM

In the inspection, 11 subjects and courses were inspected and are reported on in detail. Work in other subjects and courses was sampled and contributed to the overall picture of teaching and learning in the school.

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

Level 3 GCE AS level courses

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Art	6	100.0	80.1	83.33	23.7	53.3	29.9
Biology	19	89.47	65.2	26.32	11.1	30.5	20.6
Chemistry	17	76.47	72.7	23.53	13.9	28.2	24.1
English	12	100.0	82.9	8.33	17.5	31.7	28.7
Geography	15	93.33	74.3	20.0	19.8	35.3	26.5
History	18	100.0	80.7	55.56	19.5	43.3	28.6
ICT	24	79.17	67.0	4.17	10.9	22.9	21.4
Mathematics	17	82.35	61.9	29.41	17.1	30.6	22.1
PE	9	100.0	73.2	33.33	11.4	37.8	23.1
Physics	5	60.0	68.6	20	14.4	26.0	22.7
Psychology	24	75.0	69.7	16.8	16.7	24.6	25.2

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	9	100.0	98.6	66.67	50.2	88.89	90.0
Biology	8	87.50	96.4	25.0	39.2	72.50	78.6
Business studies	10	100.0	65.0	0.0	14.6	56.0	60.1
Chemistry	5	80.0	97.6	40.0	49.0	60.0	84.9
English	11	100.0	99.4	18.18	36.3	74.55	80.9
Geography	12	100.0	98.7	58.33	44.5	93.33	84.0
History	17	94.12	99.0	29.41	44.6	76.47	84.6
Mathematics	6	100.0	96.7	50.0	55.6	93.33	88.8
Physical education	4	100.0	98.0	0.0	30.9	55.0	75.2
Physics	4	100.0	96.7	25.0	44.6	70.0	82.4
Psychology	17	100.0	97.4	52.9	42.7	85.9	80.2

ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

GCE AS-level and A2-level courses are offered in English language and English literature. Both courses are increasingly popular. The focus was on English language, but lessons in literature were also sampled. In English literature, results, from small numbers were very high in 2003 compared to the national average, and current standards are well above average. Teaching is very good: demanding and well-informed so that students show very good understanding and expression.

English language

Provision in English language is satisfactory.

	Years 12 and 13
Standards	Below average
Achievement	Good
Teaching and learning	Good
Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Improvement since last inspection	Satisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching results in all students gaining insight into language and its usage
- Students benefit from, and appreciate, teachers' regular and helpful marking
- Language theory and lesson objectives are too broad and generalised
- Class discussion lacks liveliness and originality

Commentary

128. The English language course has traditionally attracted a greater proportion of lower-attaining students who nonetheless want to follow an English course. The most recent Year 12 intake had a more balanced spread of attainment. Results in English language at A2-level in 2003 were below average because a number of lower-attaining girls took the course. Results were similar at AS-level. In 2004, results were similar at A2-level, but AS-level results show a clear improvement.
129. Present standards are at national expectations in Year 12 and below expectations in Year 13. Higher-attaining students have good knowledge of theory and show understanding and appreciation of linguistics in analysis. Essays are well organised, but in other areas too much work of a simple nature is produced. Average-attaining students spot and articulate ideas but do not develop them fully, nor link them to the principles behind language theory. They rely on teacher-given or orthodox views rather than presenting their own ideas and examples. Lower-attaining students write clear English with good detail and sound use of correct terminology. They point out, list and describe things rather than analysing or interpreting them. Achievement has been satisfactory and is now good. Most students are moving from recognising, labelling and defining terms to writing about them with growing insight.
130. Good teaching, resulting from a clearer understanding of course requirements is behind students' good achievement this term. Achievement prior to this has been satisfactory. Students learn theory and its technical vocabulary because of the good emphasis placed on it in lessons. Year 12 students made good progress in thinking about the differences in the language used by males and females and the influences causing them. The teacher elicited good ideas from students and repeated these in a more precise and technically-worded way to encourage correct terminology. Lessons are well planned with the purpose made clear to students. Teachers' methods are well chosen to suit tasks and students show good progress in working independently. Students learn to discuss texts and issues because open discussion in groups or class is successfully encouraged by teachers. However, in small classes students are too often faced with broad questions which can be daunting. Questioning is not specific enough and too much emphasis on tackling the whole issue, rather than one aspect of an issue at a time, limits their confidence and understanding. All students are clear about their standards and have a good understanding of where they need to improve because written work is thoroughly marked with good advice given.
131. Leadership and management are good. Administration is well organised and there is a clear and agreed vision of how to develop the course further and raise standards. A review of recent results has led to a change in syllabus to one more suited to student abilities.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

132. Standards of literacy in the sixth form are average. Students write competently and discuss ideas intelligently. Their skills in reading and retrieving information are sound.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is satisfactory.

	Years 12 and 13
Standards	Average
Achievement	Satisfactory
Teaching and learning	Satisfactory
Leadership	Satisfactory
Management	Satisfactory
Improvement since last inspection	Satisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have good subject knowledge but lack of variety in teaching style means that lessons tend to be dull
- The adult numeracy course enables students who were less successful in Year 11 to succeed
- Numbers of students continuing to Year 13 of GCE courses are low for a school of this size

Commentary

133. Results in the Year 13 2003 examinations were above average with a small cohort. They were less good in 2004. In 2003, results at the end of Year 12 were above average. They were much worse in 2004, with about half of the students failing to obtain a graded result.
134. Standards in the lessons observed and in the scrutiny of students' work were average. Students commencing GCE mathematics courses include a low proportion of the highest-attaining students from the previous Year 11. Achievement is satisfactory. In a satisfactory lesson on probability, students developed their knowledge of conditional probability to include an understanding of independent events and mutually exclusive events. Few students continue with the course in Year 13. Those who continue attain above average standards and achieve satisfactorily.
135. All lessons in the sixth form are taught by mathematicians who have good subject and examination knowledge, but lack of variety in teaching style means that many lessons are dull, pedestrian and lacking in pace. Working relationships between teachers and students are positive, with supportive advice given in individual discussions, but the lack of confidence of many GCE students means that they are very dependent on their teachers. Joint reviews between students and teachers are used to set targets for improvement. Marking advice tells students what they have done wrong and how to correct it. In a very good adult numeracy lesson, students made very good learning gains by building on their intuitive understanding of how to share a lottery win in given proportions.
136. The subject is soundly led and runs smoothly day-to-day. Clear vision has facilitated the development of the adult numeracy course in Year 12 (in addition to the GCSE course for those students who obtained grade D in their Year 11 examinations) to ensure that all students have the opportunity to obtain a qualification in mathematics. GCE schemes of work lack detailed guidance, for example on how topics should be taught or how using ICT could enhance teaching. Appropriate student guides include advice on home learning.
137. GCE mathematics students lack enthusiasm about their studies. The fact that so many students drop the subject after the end of Year 12 is a cause for concern. Self-evaluation has identified a number of relevant areas for improvement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

138. Numeracy is satisfactory. Sixth form students use and develop their numeracy skills in many subject areas, such as art where good awareness of spatial concepts is demonstrated. In AVCE business

studies, spreadsheets are used effectively for modelling balance sheets. Biology students are able to carry out good statistical analyses.

SCIENCE

The focus was on biology and chemistry but physics was also sampled. In 2003 and 2004, the small group of physics students all passed the A2-level examination, although their average point score was well below average. At AS-level in 2003, only three of the group of six students were successful with well below average results. Two satisfactory physics lessons were observed. Teachers had good subject knowledge and in one lesson the interactive display system was used very effectively to enhance the teaching of atomic particles. Standards were just below expectations for this stage of the course. Students made satisfactory progress based on prior attainments, indicating satisfactory achievement.

Biology

Provision in biology is good.

	Years 12 and 13
Standards	Average
Achievement	Good
Teaching and learning	Good
Leadership	Very good
Management	Good
Improvement since last inspection	Satisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Current standards are above average at A2-level, representing good achievement by students
- Teaching and learning are good and teachers and students share very good relationships
- Leadership is very good with a clear, shared vision by the team of enthusiastic teachers
- There is insufficient use of computers for research and learning

Commentary

139. In 2003, results at A2-level were broadly average, but lower in 2004. The standard of work seen in the current Year 13 is above average. The 2003 AS-level results were above average but lower in 2004. The standards seen during the inspection in Year 12 were in line with national expectations for this stage of the course.
140. Students enter the sixth form with relatively low GCSE grades. The data for individual students indicates that by the end of Year 13 most students reach, and in many cases exceed their predicted final grades. They achieve well. The number of students choosing biology post 16 has increased significantly over the past two years.
141. Well-qualified, energetic teachers motivate students by providing engaging and well-planned lessons. Teachers and students share very good relationships and work cooperatively. Students are secure in their knowledge and enter into class discussions with confidence. Teachers are very skilled at handling class discussions and use these to gauge students' understanding of the topics covered. They do not use computers enough because access is limited. Teachers know students well and are able to identify those who are struggling and offer extra help. Students appreciate the supportive manner in which their work is marked and feel they are making good progress. They enjoy the subject and are aware of their potential grades from the many assessments made by teachers.
142. The relatively new team of teachers has a clear vision of how to improve and high expectations of themselves and the students. Modules of work are well designed and all lessons are well planned. Students' attainment is well evaluated. Since the last inspection standards have been maintained and student numbers have increased.

Chemistry

Provision in chemistry is satisfactory.

	Years 12 and 13
Standards	Below average
Achievement	Good
Teaching and learning	Good
Leadership	Good
Management	Satisfactory
Improvement since last inspection	Satisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results from the Year 12 AS-level course indicate a four-year downward trend and include a significant proportion of students who fail
- The subject is now taught by enthusiastic subject specialists. Teachers are experienced with very good subject knowledge and teaching is good
- Very good relationships exist in lessons
- The small group size at A2-level limits group dynamics and teaching opportunities

Commentary

143. A2-level results in 2003 were below average, both for the A-E and for the A/B grades. The 2004 results were better. In 2003, AS-level results were above average due to the high proportion of A/B passes. However, the percentage pass rate was the lowest since 2000, because a high proportion of students failed the course. In 2004, results show a further reduction in the overall pass rate and no student gained A/B passes. This partly reflects staff changes in the department. Levels of achievement at both AS and A2-level are broadly satisfactory, though they cover a wide range.
144. Current standards are below average and better in Year 12 because the brisk pace of lessons focuses the learning. Year 13 standards are below average. Standards in some of the areas covered at AS-level are weak. Confidence levels are lower than expected and students find some topics difficult, especially the numerical aspect, which limits their chances of success. Most students are now achieving well in relation to their entry standards to the courses, which for some students is below average.
145. Lessons are very well planned and conducted at a pace appropriate to students' abilities. Multi-media presentations are successfully incorporated to engage students in whole-class teaching. Relationships between students and teachers are very good. Questioning challenges students' thinking well. Some quieter students are not actively involved in class discussions and with the small Year 13 group size this limits group dynamics, the development of communication skills and teaching opportunities. Students have adequate ICT skills but little evidence was seen of its use by students, apart from internet research. Teachers provide students with clear, accurate notes. Marking includes useful diagnostic comments and students assess their progress and identify areas for improvement.
146. Two experienced teachers have recently joined the department including the department leader. The department now has a high profile, based on experience and specialist knowledge. A new course has been introduced to meet the need of the students, schemes of work are being amended and the contributions of the three teachers teaching the two courses are carefully coordinated. A developing database is carefully used to monitor students' progress. In the past year, the faculty leader has devoted his attention to the wider needs of the science faculty, and the needs for sixth form chemistry have had a lower priority. At the present time there are no plans for formal lessons observations and no schedule of meetings for the team teaching chemistry.

147. Since the last report, the proportion of A2-level grades has increased and teaching standards are higher. Resources are managed and used well and there is an increasing use of multi-media presentations to enhance students' learning. Visits are also arranged to the chemistry department at a local university to stimulate further interest in the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (AVCE)

Provision in ICT is very good.

	Years 12 and 13
Standards	Average
Achievement	Very good
Teaching and learning	Very good
Leadership	Very good
Management	Very good
Improvement since last inspection	Not applicable

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve very well because of very good teaching
- Work is well marked and students know what they need to do to improve their grade
- Students are well supported by staff who know them well
- Many students are passive in class discussions

Commentary

148. The first cohort completed the AVCE course in 2004 so valid comparisons cannot yet be made. AS-level results were about average overall. There was an improvement in the average point score of Year 12 students who completed the AS-level equivalent in 2004.
149. Most students start this course with below average attainment and achieve very well. Standards are in line with national expectations for this stage of the course. Students produce information flow diagrams based on pre-released documentation from the examination board, selecting suitable software to complete this task. They design user documentation for a piece of software, identify the target audience and switch from one software package to another, selecting suitable features to produce clear documentation of a good standard.
150. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and understand the requirements of the curriculum and of the examination board. Very clear teacher input ensures that students embark on practical tasks with purpose, know what to do and result in very good learning. Data projectors are used successfully in all lessons. In one lesson, the data projector was used to develop form design, by demonstrating the advanced features of the database and evaluating the outcomes. This ensured that students knew what to do and it accelerated their progress. Teachers work hard to elicit responses to questions and to get students to think about the problems set. However, many students are passive. Discussion between teacher and student on a one-to-one basis is more successful because teachers know students well.
151. Teachers have good understanding of the requirements for the advanced vocational course and analyse student data well to identify the support needed. Written work is well marked. Students know they must meet the deadlines provided. They are given clear indications of criteria to be met to achieve different grades and know what they need to do to improve.
152. Leaders are very good role models with vision. They have worked hard to develop this subject and as a result there are now a total of 66 students learning ICT post 16.

ICT across the curriculum

153. Students have good access to ICT for independent learning with a designated area in the library and additional computers in the sixth form area. Good use is made of ICT in art by using Photoshop for manipulation of scanned images. In English, business studies and history, ICT is used for Internet research and drafting and editing of essays. In music, both instrumentalists and non-

instrumentalists use Cubase and Sibelius for composition. In other subjects, for example biology, imaginative use of the interactive white board enhances student involvement, promoting very good learning.

HUMANITIES

The focus was on geography, history and psychology. Government and politics and law were also sampled. In the government and politics lesson, teaching and learning were good. The teacher actively involved students in discussing the nature and purpose of the House of Lords. As a result their understanding developed considerably during the course of the lesson and they achieved well. In the law lesson, very good, imaginative teaching and stimulating resources ensured that students developed good knowledge and understanding of key concepts. Expectations were high, so students learned and achieved very well in response to the challenges provided.

Geography

Provision in geography is good.

	Years 12 and 13
Standards	Average
Achievement	Good
Teaching and learning	Good
Leadership	Very good
Management	Good
Improvement since last inspection	Satisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A2-level results in 2003 were above average
- Very good leadership and management mean that learning is well planned both in lessons and throughout the courses studied
- Teachers are knowledgeable and experienced in how to prepare students for examinations
- Students generally feel very well supported and most achieve their potential
- Wide swings in subject take-up, and some inconsistencies in teaching, produce variable results

Commentary

154. In 2003, the percentage of students gaining higher grades at A2-level was well above average; all students passed. Students did better than in their other subjects and both boys and girls considerably exceeded national expectations. At AS-level, performance was above average. In both examinations there are no clear trends in performance, but the previous and 2004 A2-level results were less good than 2003. At AS-level girls have outperformed boys over the last three years.
155. In Years 12 and 13 standards are in line with national expectations. Students enter Year 12 with average to below average attainment and their achievement is good. Achievement is sometimes very good when teachers' expectations are high and methods used are imaginative and demanding. Most students have good understanding of key ideas and geographical methods but they are not overtly confident in their abilities. In Year 12, this reflects the early stage of the course, while in Year 13 it is because some students lack consistent motivation.
156. Teachers' coverage of syllabi is thorough and students' knowledge of content, skills and exam technique is good. Where teaching is carefully structured, imaginative and very well resourced, it leads to very good learning. When students are encouraged and enabled to think and apply ideas learned in a number of different ways, this results in very good achievement. Sometimes, however, when the balance of challenge and support is less well-sequenced, students feel that too much is left to their own initiative and motivation.
157. Leadership and management reflect the strengths of the department noted in the main school. The previous lack of fieldwork opportunities impacts on student take-up, attitudes and performance and hinders the development of fully independent learning styles. Lack of access to ICT is a similar problem. Improvement plans are very good and solutions to both issues are in hand.

History

Provision in history is very good.

	Years 12 and 13
Standards	Well above average
Achievement	Very good
Teaching and learning	Very good
Leadership	Very good
Management	Very good
Improvement since last inspection	Very good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good continuity between GCSE and A-level syllabi
- Teachers have very good subject knowledge
- Teaching is planned to make learning accessible to all students
- Teachers and students share high expectations and great enthusiasm
- Too few opportunities are provided for students to access ICT

Commentary

158. The 2003 results for Year 13 were average but below average for the higher A/B grades and better in Year 12 for the AS-level course. 2004 results were better and work seen suggests this improvement will continue with the change of syllabus which now provides greater continuity from Year 11. Students of all abilities are making progress at a very good rate in relation to their capability and previous results. Current standards are well above average. Students achieve very well.
159. Teaching provides both challenge and support for all students. Teachers have very good subject knowledge which they use effectively to stimulate students' interest. Students receive feedback on their progress and guidance on improvement both orally and in writing.
160. Students share their teachers' enthusiasm and together they make a learning partnership which leads to creative thinking. Students are aware of their progress and their teachers' high expectations and enjoy the subject and the lessons. Not enough use is made of ICT.
161. Leadership provides high but realistic expectations of teachers and students. A focus on constant improvement is shared by all members of the team. Critical self-evaluation leads to planned change as in the adoption of a different syllabus and sharing of good practice. Attractive, accessible textbooks are well used by students. A strong teaching team has been established and increasing student numbers show high levels of confidence and interest.

Psychology

Provision in psychology is very good.

	Years 12 and 13
Standards	Well above average
Achievement	Very good
Teaching and learning	Very good
Leadership	Very good
Management	Very good
Improvement since last inspection	Not applicable

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good subject knowledge and well-set assignments result in very good learning because students relate academic theory to life experience
- Teachers shrewdly exploit excellent student attitudes to underpin very good achievement
- Very good leadership and management has improved teaching and reversed the most recent temporary dip in standards
- Students do not use computers enough to communicate ideas and analyse information

Commentary

162. A2-level results in 2003 were above average, both for the proportions gaining higher A/B grades and overall. Girls did better than boys, but both were above the national profile for their respective genders. Results rose from 2002, but fell again in 2004.
163. Current standards are well above expectations for this stage of the course. In Year 12, students grasp quickly the basic principles of the subject in response to very good materials which help them order their understanding. They relate the concept of psychological and biological models of abnormality to critical issues such as anorexia with a clear relevant understanding of the problems of definition and social context. Achievement is very good; lessons keep up a pace and demand and shrewdly exploit students' excellent attitudes to work.
164. By Year 13, students analyse and explain personal experiences using central psychological interpretations critically, such as the Freudian tradition, in response to subtle teacher questioning and well-designed assignments. They underpin this with good independent research and make well-informed presentations to their peers. They grasp firmly the value of theory in explaining controversial issues such as aggression, authority and social conditioning, demonstrating their understanding in well-informed dialogue which teachers promote through questioning and sensitive instruction. Achievement is very good because lessons keep up a pace and demand and involve students fully. Not enough opportunities are provided for them to use computers because of inadequate access to ICT.
165. Teachers use very good subject knowledge; a stimulating variety of methods, good materials, well-directed questioning and subtle reassurance to hold student interest. They deepen students' technical knowledge by assisting them to relate theory to life experience and by building each new challenge on previous learning. Students benefit from very good advice on how well they are doing and what they should do in order to improve.
166. Following recent staff changes, strengths and weaknesses have been analysed. Teaching is now better matched to challenge individual students and standards in work seen have risen.

ENGINEERING, TECHNOLOGY AND MANUFACTURING

One design and technology lesson was sampled. Very good teaching incorporated a variety of different activities based around product design and modelling. Students' achievement and their evaluation of design models were both very good. They accessed a wide range of materials and a workshop very well equipped with hand and power tools. A2-level results in 2003 were average.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA

Art and design was the focus of the inspection but one media lesson was observed. In the media lesson observed, teaching and learning were good. Students learned well because the lesson was interesting, very well resourced, and students' own prepared presentations were used very well. The subject is very popular and is attracting students with a wide range of abilities and interests. Standards are in line with those nationally, as they were in the 2003 VCE examination.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is good.

	Years 12 and 13
Standards	Average
Achievement	Good
Teaching and learning	Good
Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Improvement since last inspection	Good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve well from their different starting points
- Students receive constructive advice and feedback on their work and progress
- The quality of critical analysis is weaker than practical work
- The broad curriculum has increased student uptake
- Students are highly motivated and many continue into higher education
- Restricted accommodation is having a negative impact on achievement

Commentary

167. The 2003 A2-level and AS-level results were well above average. Over half of those entered gained A/B grades. In 2004, the number entered was very small with 2 out of 5 gaining an A grade. Results have fluctuated in the past but students achieved well, and frequently very well, when compared to national averages. The school is recruiting large numbers of students onto the photography course, all of which have no previous experience of the subject, although some have taken a GCSE in art and design. The combined AS-level results of art and design and photography in 2004 showed that students who took the art and design option generally attained higher grades than those taking photography. Most students achieved well from their different starting points.
168. Current standards are average overall. Students achieve well. They feel well supported and challenged by the opportunities provided. A visit to an exhibition of photographs that documented the changes in South African politics around 1980-2000 and a meeting with the photographer had a profound effect on those who visited it. In the fine art course, students gave thoughtful accounts of their work and decision-making and their use of a range of two and three-dimensional materials. Their practical work is generally of a higher standard than their written notes. Journals sometimes lack depth and intellectual rigour.
169. Teachers have very good skills and expertise and their ability to enthuse and motivate leads many students to choose to continue to study the subject after leaving school. In the photography lesson observed, good teacher expertise and effective consolidation of technical skills led to good standards of work. In fine art, students receive constructive guidance and feedback on their work, but opportunities for other learning styles, notably for students to practise and develop advanced skills of evaluation and critical analysis, are missed. While students talk about their work with knowledge and enthusiasm, not many read widely or can compare and contrast it with work from different times and cultures. The quality and range of three-dimensional work is good, but standards of painting and drawing tend to be lower.
170. The curriculum is broader than at the time of the last inspection with photography recruiting 65 students in Year 12 this year and many more students using computers for image manipulation. Additional numbers have put a huge strain on studio space and resources. Until the new building is completed the opportunities for photography students to work independently are very limited and this has an impact on their achievement.

HOSPITALITY, SPORTS, LEISURE AND TRAVEL

The focus was on physical education but travel and tourism was also sampled. In the lesson observed, teaching and learning were very good. The teacher had very good subject knowledge, and students achieved very well as a result of the pace, variety and structure of the lesson. They were fully engaged and challenged by the teacher to draw on their own experiences. No students were entered for examination in 2003, but current standards are average. Students clearly understand how to achieve the higher grades in this advanced vocational course; working relationships are very good.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is good.

	Years 12 and 13
Standards	Average
Achievement	Good
Teaching and learning	Good
Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Improvement since last inspection	Not applicable

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consistently good teaching leads directly to good learning
- Students appreciate teachers' very strong commitment
- Students need to be reminded that good achievement follows from strong commitment to study

Commentary

171. In 2003, results in A2-level examinations were below average. At AS-level they were above average. Examination results in 2004 were similar at A2-level and AS-level. Students in these groups started their advanced courses with below average prior attainment which represents good achievement and very good achievement for the Year 12 group.
172. Current standards in both Year 12 and Year 13 are average. In a very good Year 12 lesson, students identified the muscles involved in the flexion and extension of joints and distinguished between the origin and insertion of muscles depending upon the particular stabilised joint. In a Year 13 lesson on the aerobic threshold, students analysed the ATP/PC cycle and distinguished between the effects of gender and anatomical factors when under-taking comparative measurements of levels of fatigue. Opportunities for students to develop their independent learning skills were provided in both lessons, not all of which were taken.
173. Students have inconsistent commitment to the subject. They make their own reference notes but do not always complete their work assignments on time. They often work well together in collaboration to improve their levels of understanding, but teachers have to be assertive to make this happen. Before commencing their courses, students know the structure and difficulty of the work required and the advantages that will be gained by following these courses. Many students go on to higher education in related areas of study.
174. Teaching is consistently good which usually leads directly to good learning. In the best lessons, enthusiastic, expert young teachers expect the best of students. Good summaries use the full range of teaching strategies to meet students' preferred learning styles.
175. A dynamic team meets the demands of the advanced curriculum well in terms of professional knowledge and skills. There is a clear vision of continuous improvement in all the work of the department. The progress students are making is measured and tracked. Regular verbal and written feedback ensures that students know how well they are progressing.

BUSINESS

Business studies AVCE was inspected and BTEC National Business Studies course was sampled. In the BTEC National Course there are no results for 2003 or 2004 as this is the first time this course has been offered. In the lesson seen teaching, learning and student achievement were very good. Students benefit from a range of industry links and enterprise activities with local business. They enjoy the course, are positive and well motivated in their work and many are planning progression into business-related higher education courses.

Business studies (AVCE)

Provision in business studies AVCE is very good.

	Years 12 and 13
Standards	Above average
Achievement	Very good
Teaching and learning	Very good
Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Improvement since last inspection	Very good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Student achievement is very good and significant strategies are planned to improve it further
- Teaching is knowledgeable and supports learning through challenging expectations
- Participation in Business Studies courses is high with very good completion rates
- Resources for research in the department and in the school library are very limited

Commentary

176. The results in 2003 were below average but improved in 2004 in both the single and double awards. Current standards are above average; students research independently and analyse and justify their findings using business studies theory. Students enter groups with average attainment and achieve very well.
177. Teachers show good subject knowledge and use it well to promote discussion and analysis. Lessons are well planned and challenging, using a variety of teaching styles which both motivate students and maintain their interest. Employability skills are developed as an integral part of the course, for example in one lesson students researched examples relating to new theory using books and the internet and worked in groups to present their ideas to the class. Peer assessment provided mutual feedback. In another lesson, students worked enthusiastically on a series of problems to calculate depreciation. Good ICT resources are used frequently and students' ICT skills are developing quickly as a result. In a Year 13 lesson, students set up a balance sheet using a spreadsheet. Use of the Internet is well directed by teachers who provide students with a limited range of websites from which to research. Students ask searching questions, for example in one lesson on pricing strategies they related their questions to theory on supply and demand. Clear, consistent information on course specifications and one-to-one mentoring ensures they know how they are doing.
178. Students show positive attitudes, are courteous and display a business-like approach to their work. There is a tradition of good industry links for advanced level courses with plans to improve these further. Students have too few resources for research with too few books, periodicals and videos available to them for independent research in the school library.
179. The new team has a clear sense of direction and is effective in setting high expectations for teaching and learning. The school's 14 -19 curriculum provides a wide range of course choices suited to student aspirations with good opportunities for progression into a range of post-16 business studies or business-related options. The key skills of communication, numeracy and ICT are integral to the course; students progress very well.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

One lesson was sampled. Teaching is very good and students are highly motivated by the very good course and by the teacher's very good subject knowledge, planning and methods. Relationships are good. Students make very good progress in relation to their prior achievement and take pride in producing good written and visual work, for example, striking posters on learning through play. They have very good word-processing skills and work well on individual research as well as in groups. Good initial guidance is given and individual needs are well supported.

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	3	3
How inclusive the school is		3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3	3
Cost effectiveness of the sixth form / value for money provided by the school	3	3

Overall standards achieved		3
Students' achievement	2	3

Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities		3
Attendance	4	3
Attitudes	3	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2	3
Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		3

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

The leadership and management of the school		2
The governance of the school	3	3
The leadership of the headteacher		1
The leadership of other key staff	2	2
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).