

INSPECTION REPORT

EDLINGTON SCHOOL

Edlington, Doncaster

LEA area: Doncaster

Unique reference number: 106787

Headteacher: Mr Peter Morley

Lead inspector: Mr Graeme Clarke

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

Inspection number: 268799

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 pupils: 11 – 18 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed
Number on roll: 1148

School address: Tait Avenue
Edlington
Doncaster
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Telephone number: 01709 864100
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Appropriate authority: The governing body
Name of chair of Mr Ernest Hardy

Date of previous 10th May 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Edlington School serves Edlington and nearby villages in the district to the south west of Doncaster. It is a comprehensive school for 1148 boys and girls aged 11 to 18 years old, of whom 133 are in the Sixth Form. The school roll has fallen from the higher numbers of recent years. Students come from a range of mostly well below average social and economic backgrounds. Students' attainment on entry is below average, with a very clear minority whose literacy and social skills are well below average. About a tenth of students leave or enter the school other than at the times of normal transfer. Very few students come from minority ethnic heritages, and none is in the early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of students with special educational needs is average and most of those with a statement of special educational need have moderate learning difficulties. Others have specific (dyslexia), autistic or social, emotional, or behavioural needs and a few have physical, speech or hearing impairment. The school gained Investors in People status in 1999, the Artsmark in 2001, a School Achievement Award in 2003, and the Sportsmark in 2004. Students are very active in Young Enterprise, and many take part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme up to the Gold award.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1547	Mr Graeme Clarke	<i>Lead inspector</i>	
1104 1	Mr Marvyn Moore	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
1284 4	Mr Michael Saunders	<i>Team inspector</i>	English
2741	Mr Chris Glynn	<i>Team inspector</i>	English (post-16); Performing arts (post-16)
2488 7	Ms Yvonne Salmons	<i>Team inspector</i>	Modern foreign languages
8756	Mrs Pat Hanage	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics
1090 5	Dr Alan Brewerton	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science
1904 3	Dr David Lewis	<i>Team inspector</i>	Biology (post-16)
2290 6	Mr Barry Hodgson	<i>Team inspector</i>	Information and communication technology
2082 5	Mr Brian Ogden	<i>Team inspector</i>	Geography; Citizenship
1211 8	Mr Allan Paver	<i>Team inspector</i>	History
1945 2	Mr Anthony Pearson	<i>Team inspector</i>	Religious education
1594 0	Dr Norman Godfrey	<i>Team inspector</i>	Art and design
1247 5	Mr Stuart Johnson	<i>Team inspector</i>	Music
2489 4	Mr Clive Petts	<i>Team inspector</i>	Design and technology; Work-related learning
1085	Mr John Laver	<i>Team inspector</i>	Physical education
2032 4	Dr Vera Morris	<i>Team inspector</i>	Business studies (post-16)
2810 1	Mr Andrew Lagden	<i>Team inspector</i>	Special educational needs

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school which is providing good quality education. Although students' attainment in tests and examinations is below average, good teaching helps most students to achieve well and make good progress. However, the progress of some students in Years 7 to 9 is impeded by the negative attitudes and misbehaviour of a relatively few others. Although showing improvement, attendance is still below average. Very good leadership and good management make an important contribution to students' achievement. The school gives good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Very good governance, and excellent leadership by the headteacher, has led to improvement in many areas.
- Students who join the school with underdeveloped basic and social skills do not always receive sufficient early support.
- Students have excellent access to all parts of a good curriculum, and many take part in the very good range of activities provided, especially in music, dance, drama and sport. However, students' access to ICT facilities is inadequate.
- Outstanding improvement has taken place in music, which makes a notable contribution to school life. Provision is very good in German but unsatisfactory in geography.
- All students benefit from very good support and advice, and from very good careers guidance.
- The school has very good arrangements to seek students' views and involve them in its affairs, and to inform parents of their children's progress.
- Very good partnerships with the community support students' work-related learning.

Clear improvements have been made to address the issues raised by the previous inspection. They centre largely upon improving achievement by raising the quality of teaching and the use of information about students' performance to evaluate and develop the work of subject departments. Students' ICT skills are now better developed. Their spiritual development throughout the school has improved. Strenuous efforts have lifted attendance, but it remains unsatisfactory. Improvements are also noted in religious education in the Sixth Form and to health and safety procedures in design and technology. Arrangements for a daily act of collective worship do not meet statutory requirements, despite efforts on the part of the governors.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Performance compared with:		all schools			similar schools
		2002	2003	2004	2004
Year 11	GCSE/GNVQ examinations	D	D	D	C
Year 13	A/AS level and VCE examinations	B	D	C	

*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 have attained similarly at the end of Year 9.*

Achievement is good overall. Students' attainments when they join the school in Year 7 are below average, and the literacy and social skills of a large minority of students are well below average. Standards in Years 7 to 9 improve but remain below average. In recent years, results in Year 9 tests for English, mathematics and science have improved more rapidly than the national trend, but remain below the national average and the average of similar schools. GCSE results rose a little in 2004, after a dip in 2003, continuing a rising trend of recent years which is similar to the national pattern. Standards in current work seen are close to average in Years 10 and 11, and in the Sixth Form. Students' language and mathematical skills are below average, and their ICT skills are average. On the basis of their prior attainment, students achieve well in most subjects in Years 7 to 9, in Years 10 and 11, and in the Sixth Form. Their achievement is unsatisfactory in geography but is excellent in German, and very good in music and history. Boys and girls achieve equally well. Students with special educational needs (SEN), and those who are gifted or talented, achieve well.

Students' spiritual, moral and social development is satisfactory and their cultural development is good. Students' attitudes to school are generally good but a small minority, particularly of younger students, misbehave. Attendance is unsatisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching is good, with more very good and excellent lessons in Years 10 and 11 than in Years 7 to 9, and leads to good learning and achievement. Relatively little unsatisfactory teaching was seen, and this was mostly in Years 8 and 9. It stemmed either from inappropriate, unchallenging activities that did not promote sufficient learning, or from inadequate management of the misbehaviour of a few students who, disproportionately, hold back the progress of their classmates. Importantly, however, many students join the school with low levels of literacy and numeracy, and with underdeveloped social skills. The curriculum and teaching in Year 7 do not give them sufficient and prompt support to strengthen the foundation of their basic skills and their ability to learn in different kinds of lessons, such as those in science laboratories and technology workshops. Otherwise, students' attitudes are good and behaviour is satisfactory. Students benefit from open access to a good curriculum and from the wide and rich range of additional opportunities in which many take part. Very good partnerships with the community enhance students' opportunities for work-related learning, and very good guidance and support prepare them very well for their future. Very good links between Edlington and other schools and colleges support students when they transfer. Very good partnerships with parents lead to very high levels of satisfaction.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership is very good and the school is well managed. The combination of excellent leadership from the headteacher and very good governance provides a clear strategic direction for the future. Governors cannot fulfil their statutory obligation for a daily act of collective worship because of a shortage of space, but students are given daily opportunities to reflect upon a *Thought for the Week*, and satisfactory spiritual development. Very good leadership at a senior level in the school, well developed

management, and diligent and efficient administration are all focused on continual improvement. They make a major contribution to the progress and achievement of students throughout the school. There is a very good capacity for further improvement.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very well informed about the school, and about their children's progress. Overwhelmingly, they hold very positive views about the quality of work in the school. The inspection agrees with the views parents hold, including those where concerns have been expressed, such as about some misbehaviour. Students also hold very positive opinions about the school. The school gives its students very good opportunities to express their views, for example through the school's councils, and acts upon them.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Identify the basic and social skills of students joining the school, and provide prompt support to help improve the negative attitudes and misbehaviour of relatively few students who find it difficult to cope with the complexity of secondary school life.
- Support the recently established staff team in geography, to improve achievement and standards of work.
- Continue to address factors which will lead to an improvement in attendance.
- Develop the use of assessment and feedback to students where needed in some Sixth Form lessons, to raise standards and achievement still further.

And, to meet statutory requirements:

- Explore and implement alternative arrangements for a daily act of collective worship.

THE SIXTH FORM

OVERALL EVALUATION

The Sixth Form at Edlington School gives its students a very good standard of education.

The management team takes students' views very seriously and, in return, the Sixth Form is a major asset to the school community as a whole. Students come into the Sixth Form with a range of grades in GCSE, but relatively few have attained high grades. The school has worked very effectively to create high levels of motivation and a culture of success in the Sixth Form, and most students gain places in higher education. These are often in highly competitive subjects, such as medicine. The grades that students achieve are often better than could be expected from their relatively modest GCSE grades, and this is largely due to excellent attitudes and very good support from tutors and subject teachers. The Sixth Form neither subsidises nor is subsidised by the main school, and gives very good value for money.

The main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Students' attitudes, behaviour and commitment to the success of their school are very good.
- The support given to students in their learning, and in the preparation for the next stage in their education or for entry to the world of work, is excellent.
- All students make an excellent contribution to the life and work of the school, and to their own personal development and that of those they work with.
- Although teaching is very good overall, and students achieve well, more could be done in some lessons to use assessment and feedback to students to raise standards and achievement still further.
- Social accommodation for the Sixth Form and the availability of computers for Sixth Form private study and research are unsatisfactory.

QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES OF THE CURRICULUM

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

Curriculum area	Evaluation
English, languages and communication	Very good. An enthusiastic approach and strong tutorial support for small groups and individuals, and an appropriate course enriched by extra

	curricular provision, lead to good achievement.
Mathematics	Good. Good teaching, combined with students' hard work, leads to good learning and achievement. Standards are above average.
Science (biology)	Very Good. Very good and sometimes excellent teaching, coupled with effective support and a well managed course, lead to good achievement.
Humanities (history)	Good. Students achieve well because teaching and learning are consistently very good.
Information and communication technology	Satisfactory. Standards are at expected levels in Year 12, and above average in Year 13. Achievement is good, and students value the subject. Teaching and learning are satisfactory.
Visual and performing arts and media (performing arts)	Very good. Very strong specialist teaching in dance, drama and music, and a curriculum enriched through extra-curricular opportunities, result in students' good achievement.
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel (physical education)	Good. Standards are average. Students achieve well in response to good teaching. This developing subject area is very well led and managed.
Business	Good. Examination results are at least in line with expectations, and class work shows steady improvement. Achievement is good overall.

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

Sixth Form teachers work together to provide **excellent advice, support and guidance**, and are committed to ensuring that every student does as well as possible. Advice and practical support for students in their applications to higher education are particularly good. The head of Sixth Form and his team of tutors work closely with their students to create an atmosphere in which mutual trust and respect are the norm. They recognise the contribution that the Sixth Form can make to the personal development of younger students. They provide excellent training, so that Sixth Form students can act as learning support mentors, they help to coach games, and they provide support to students who are suffering from bullying. Very good academic support helps students to gain the most from their courses. Equally good support is given to those who take some time to adapt to the higher standards needed in Sixth Form work, or who are unsure of their plans when they leave the school. Teaching is very good overall, though in a few lessons assessment and feedback to students are not used as much as they could be to promote higher achievement.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SIXTH FORM

Leadership and management of the Sixth Form are very good, and staff work together to realise the clear vision of the headteacher and governors for the place of the Sixth Form in the community. Staff and student aspirations are high, and a high degree of unity of purpose means that the Sixth Form as a whole makes an important contribution to the life of the school. This is due in large measure to the inspiration and commitment of the experienced and specialist staff who manage the work of the Sixth Form, and create effective teams. Sixth Form provision is monitored very effectively, and good evaluation leads to clear strategic development. There is a good capacity for further improvement.

STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM

Students recognise the value of the support they receive in the Sixth Form, and make good use of the range of opportunities they have to take responsibility outside lessons. They say that the school treats them as the responsible young adults they are, and they welcome the value the school places on their contributions, both formal and informal, to its continuing development. They fully acknowledge the commitment of their teachers to their successes, and the very good help and advice available to them.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Students achieve well overall. Standards attained in Year 9 tests and GCSE examinations in 2003 were below average. Standards in current work seen in Years 7 to 9 are below average, and are average in Years 10 and 11.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching helps students to achieve well throughout the school. Achievement is unsatisfactory in geography but excellent in German, and very good in music and history.
- Students make good progress and improve upon their below average and often well below average attainments when they first join the school. Although their ICT skills are average, their language and mathematical skills remain below average.
- Year 7 students who have underdeveloped basic and social skills do not achieve as much as they should in classroom, laboratory and workshop settings.
- English, mathematics and science test results in Year 9 have improved more rapidly than results nationally in recent years, but are still below the national average and the average of similar schools.
- GCSE results rose a little in 2004, after a dip in 2003, to maintain a rising trend similar to the national pattern.

Commentary

1. Students' attainment is below the national average when they join the school in Year 7. The language and mathematical skills of a substantial minority lie well below average, and each year fewer students come to the school with results in English, mathematics and science at the higher levels. Information from the primary sector about students' abilities is limited, and is not used as promptly in lesson planning as it could be, particularly in English, mathematics and science. In turn, many low attaining students have insufficient support to improve their basic literacy and mathematical skills. Their ability to listen and be attentive in lessons, especially in unfamiliar surroundings such as workshops and laboratories, is often limited and this has slowed down their progress and achievement.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	Not available (33.9)	Not available (33.4)
mathematics	Not available (34.2)	Not available (35.4)
science	Not available (33.4)	Not available (33.6)

There were 202 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. Compared with provisional national data for 2004, results are below average in Year 9 tests but most boys and girls do as well or better than expected on the basis of their prior attainment. Results at the higher Level 6 are below average in mathematics and well below average in science, but no comparative information is available for English at present. Results in each of these three subjects have improved in line with the national trend in recent years. Nevertheless, challenging targets set for the school were not met.

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	35 (37)	52 (52)
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	88 (81)	89 (91)
Percentage of students gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	96 (95)	96 (96)
Average point score per student (best eight subjects)	30.5 (28.2)	34.9 (34.7)

There were 198 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. The 2004 GCSE results were below the national average and in line with the average of schools where students had similar prior attainment. Despite an overall improvement in 2004, the school's year-on-year improvement trend is lower than the national picture. A challenging target for attaining five or more grades A* to C was not met. More boys than girls attained the highest grades, but overall their performance was similar.

4. Inspection evidence and lesson observations indicate that current achievement in Years 7 to 9 is good in many subjects. It is satisfactory in mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). However, unsatisfactory achievement in geography stems from a weak foundation in geographical skills caused by severe staffing difficulties over the past few years which have now been resolved. Students work well to reach high standards in history and physical education, and average standards in many other subjects, but standards are below average in mathematics, geography, ICT, and modern foreign languages, and well below in design and technology. Standards improve in Years 10 and 11 in citizenship, design and technology, geography, ICT, modern foreign languages and, markedly, in music. Most students continue to achieve well. Their achievement in music and modern foreign languages is very good; it is good in most other subjects and satisfactory in English, mathematics and ICT, but it continues to be unsatisfactory in geography. As in Years 7 to 9, staffing issues lie at the root of the problem. Throughout the curriculum, students' competencies in language and mathematical skills are below average, and their ICT skills are average.

5. Overall, the achievement of students with SEN is good. The additional help provided by the SEN department enables most of them to complete GCSE and other courses successfully. Individual students, particularly those involved in the *Successmaker* and *Better Reading Partnership* programmes, make good progress in developing their numeracy and literacy skills.

6. Gifted and talented students achieve well. The school widens the very good provision for these students to those who are able as well as those who are gifted. Able and talented students achieve well in most subjects, particularly in music, German and history. They achieve less well in design and technology, geography and French.

Sixth Form

Students' attainment is in line with national averages, and better than expected from students' GCSE results. Their achievement in the Sixth Form is, therefore, good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students produce good work in class, and their examination results are often better than expected from their GCSE grades.
- Boys achieve as well as girls, and gifted and talented students are supported so that they reach their potential.
- Despite good support from their teachers, students' weak literacy skills are sometimes a barrier to learning.
- Students do not make enough use of ICT in their day-to-day work.

Commentary

7. As a result of its open access policy, and because many students who meet the subject requirements have relatively modest GCSE grades overall, standards on entry to the Sixth Form are below average. The school prides itself on its ability to cater for the needs of all students, whatever their ability, and does much to support students who enter the Sixth Form with limited prior attainment. The options evening for Year 11 provides realistic advice to potential Sixth Form students and, where appropriate, draws attention to vocational courses on offer in the school or elsewhere.

8. By the end of Year 13 and, to a lesser extent, Year 12, students gain A level, or AS, results which are close to the national average. Although the school successfully helps higher attaining students to achieve the highest grades, in general the number of students gaining grades A or B is below the national average, and the average points score is also below the national average. The results for 2003, which is the most recent year for which national comparisons are available, are summarised in the table below.

Standards in GCE A/AS level examinations at the end of Year 13 in 2003

	School results	National results
Percentage of entries gaining A-E grades	91.0 (83.3)	89.4 (92.6)
Percentage of entries gaining A-B grades	18.8 (27.6)	27.6 (33.8)
Average point score per student	200.9 (261.5)	258.2 (263.3)

There were 54 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

9. In individual subjects the pattern is generally similar. Support for students is good enough to ensure that nearly all students complete their chosen courses successfully to gain AS or A level grades as appropriate. In the past, relatively few have gained the highest grades, A or B, but work with students identified as higher attaining has led to significant improvements; and in 2004 the proportion of higher grades was significantly higher than in previous years. The analysis of students' progress through from GCSE shows that virtually all gain at least the grades expected from their GCSE grades, and that many do better than expected.

10. Lesson observation and the scrutiny of students' current work confirm these judgements. Relatively small group sizes mean that comparisons must be treated with caution, but well above average work was seen in chemistry, and some above average work was seen in lessons in nearly all subjects. The school's culture of helping students to do as well as they can means that no group of students achieves better than any other; boys may do better than girls in a particular year or subject, but the situation may be reversed in the following year.

11. Nevertheless, there are areas for improvement. Sixth Form students need to be able to use the language of the subject accurately, to evaluate statements, to weigh evidence, and to substantiate arguments. They often show these skills in discussion in the classroom, but find it difficult to demonstrate them more formally in their written work. One way students could develop these skills is to use computers to draft and refine their responses to questions. However, despite the provision of some computers in the Sixth Form study area, access to computers for routine private study is limited in practice. There is no culture of using computers for day-to-day presentation of work, and skills in this important area are underdeveloped.

12. Overall, examination results and work seen during the inspection represent good, and improving, achievement. Girls achieve as well as boys do, and students who are gifted and talented achieve well as a result of the very good provision which is made for them. Achievement is very good in English, especially in creative writing. It is good in performing arts, music, history, and art.

Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Students' attitudes are good and behaviour satisfactory, and both are very good in the Sixth Form. Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory overall but satisfactory in the Sixth Form.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students' interest in school life and the range of activities provided is very good.
- Students are willing to be enterprising and to take responsibility.
- The school sets high expectations for students' conduct and works effectively to achieve them.
- The efforts of parents and carers to ensure the attendance of their children are unsatisfactory.
- Behaviour is generally satisfactory but immature behaviour by a few students, mainly in Years 7 to 9, sometimes occurs in lessons and holds back the progress students make.

Commentary

13. Attendance is unsatisfactory in Years 7 to 11. Although the school has good procedures to promote attendance, including the appointment of a full time attendance officer, a significant number of parents and carers do not make sufficient effort to ensure the attendance of their children. Difficulties with public or contract transport, when buses are late for students who travel some distance to school, is the main reason why students' punctuality to school is unsatisfactory in Years 7 to 11 and satisfactory in the Sixth Form.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2003/04 (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.3 (8.5)	School data	1.3 (1.5)
National data	6.9 (7.2)	National data	1.1 (1.1)

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

14. Students display a very good interest in school life and the range of activities provided. Nearly all of them enjoy coming to school and show a good level of confidence and self esteem. Lunchtimes and break are used as pleasant, social occasions and students from all age groups and backgrounds integrate well. Students are enterprising and are happy to take on responsibility, for example as members of their form council, or the school council, or to help run school functions and presentations. An outstanding evening of musical entertainment, organised, managed and presented by a Sixth Form Young Enterprise group, involved many students from Years 7 to 11 in a performance of *Stars in Your Eyes* which enthralled a full audience of their schoolmates and parents. Students enjoy their turn as receptionists, and willingly act as hosts at parent evenings and other school events. Senior students who volunteer are trained to act as peer mentors to the younger students, and to hear them read. They interact very well with the adults and the other students they help, and this in turn contributes to their confidence and personal development.

15. Behaviour is satisfactory overall. On a few occasions, in Years 8 and 9 particularly, when staff do not follow the school's behaviour management policy, a small minority of

students sometimes present immature and disruptive behaviour. However, most students behave well, both in and out of lessons. In many situations, students' positive and sometimes very positive attitudes lead to good learning and achievement in lessons. The school deals very effectively with all forms of harassment. When instances of bullying occur, which is rarely, staff deal with them immediately and very effectively. Students have a good respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. They respect the property of the school, their own belongings and those of other students. The school has no graffiti or litter and there is no vandalism. The school is a well balanced, happy and secure community.

Ethnic background of students

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
Mixed – White and Asian

Exclusions in the last school year

No of students on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
1123	149	6
1	1	
1	1	

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

16. Although the level of exclusions is high, exclusions are always made for very good reasons and are meticulously recorded. The school makes very good use of its behaviour-support centre to offer advice and guidance for students in imminent danger of being excluded. The team of learning mentors work very well together with teaching staff to support students, specifically those displaying challenging behaviour. The school readily accepts students who have been excluded from other schools for behavioural difficulties, and has initiated a pastoral support programme to meet their needs.

17. Students identified as having SEN display good attitudes to their learning, especially when working with learning support assistants. They also work well together in small groups when withdrawn from lessons for additional support. Students with behavioural difficulties often respond well to the wide range of strategies employed by staff, especially in the learning support centre.

Sixth Form

Attendance in the Sixth Form is satisfactory, and attitudes to work are very good. Despite occasional lapses, behaviour as a whole is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students' attitudes to their studies are very good; they take an interest in their work, and respond very well to the support of their teachers. They achieve well as a result.
- Students participate very well in school life and in the good range of activities arranged for them.
- They make a very good contribution to the life of the school community, are willing to take on responsibility, and are enterprising in their approach to the activities they arrange.

Commentary

18. Attendance in Years 12 and 13 is satisfactory. Students in the main have a very positive and mature attitude to their learning and set a very good example to the rest of the school.

19. In lessons, students respond well to the school's efforts to promote a scholarly atmosphere in which learning can flourish. They are attentive when the teacher is explaining the work, and participate well in discussions and other activities, such as science

practical work. They note and act upon the advice of their teachers. Outside school, homework is, for the most part, completed conscientiously. Students are most appreciative of the good range of academic activities their teachers arrange, such as field trips, and visits to theatres and art galleries. Although there is a culture of private reading in subject areas such as history, in other areas this aspect is limited.

20. Relationships between students and adults are very good. Students recognise that the school treats them as responsible adults, takes their views and suggestions very seriously, and helps them to grow in maturity and independence. Nearly all show very good interest in school life. With the excellent support of the head of Sixth Form and his staff, students grow in confidence and self-esteem: they welcome opportunities to be enterprising and take responsibility. The head boy and head girl provide an excellent example to the rest of the Sixth Form, for instance through their leadership of the school council, and by taking part in high profile activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme and the Young Enterprise scheme. All students make a real contribution to the work of the school community, for example as peer mentors for students in the main school, helping at school functions, and raising funds for charities. During the inspection week, a meeting of school council discussed and implemented plans to improve arrangements for ensuring punctuality to school by those using school and service buses.

21. By their example, Sixth Form students contribute substantially to creating an orderly environment free from racial harassment and bullying, and in which good relationships are the norm. The school is rightly proud of its successful Sixth Form.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good overall and leads to good learning. The curriculum in Years 7 to 11 is good overall and the school gives excellent access to all its students. A very high proportion of students participate in a very good range of extra-curricular activities. Staffing is good, but accommodation and resources are unsatisfactory. Students are safe, and benefit from very good support and guidance. Students are proud of the school, and value having their views taken into account. Parents have confidence in the school.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Teaching is good overall, with almost four in every five lessons good or better, and leads to good learning and achievement.
- Almost a third of teaching in Years 10 and 11 is very good or excellent.
- Provision for students with SEN is good.

Commentary

22. The school has laid a very strong emphasis on developing the quality of teaching since the last inspection, with marked success. The school strongly encourages improvement to teaching and learning and seeks to promote the best teaching practices.

The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching has diminished and more than a quarter of the lessons seen were very good or excellent, compared to fewer than a fifth at the last inspection. Very good quality teaching takes place in nearly every part of the school, though more frequently in Years 10 and 11 than in Years 7 to 9. Most of the unsatisfactory teaching seen occurred in Years 8 and 9, where either the teacher presented inappropriate, undemanding activities that did not engage students sufficiently, or the misbehaviour of a very small minority of students was not adequately managed, disrupting the progress and achievement of the rest of the class. Overall, teaching is strongest in history and music, and good in English, science, art and design, design and technology, modern foreign languages and physical education. Teaching is satisfactory in mathematics, geography, ICT, religious education and citizenship.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 188 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
8 (4%)	44 (24%)	94 (50%)	35 (19%)	6 (3%)	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.

23. Most teachers have a very good command of their subject, and know how to communicate it to their students. Where teaching is good or better, teachers plan lessons effectively and provide activities which sustain students' attention and help them acquire knowledge and skills. In these lessons activities are designed to support students with different abilities, and the purpose of the lesson is clear. Questions are well focused and directed to individuals, challenging group work promotes good discussion, and good relationships foster good behaviour. All these features result in students becoming involved in the lesson and lead to good learning and achievement. Satisfactory use is made of homework to extend the work done in lessons, and to reinforce learning.

24. Where unsatisfactory features occur in lessons, not all students learn as well as they should. Whenever the purpose of the lesson is not made sufficiently clear, students are unsure what to do, and their attention wanders. Not enough questions to tax students' thinking, and activities that are too easy, results in a lack of challenge needed to stimulate students' engagement in the lesson. In lessons which are led too firmly by the teacher, students play a passive role and learn relatively little. In some lessons, time is not managed well enough; for example, a slow pace does not sustain involvement, or the lesson overruns, leading to work that is not completed and learning not consolidated. In some lessons, in Years 8 and 9 particularly, the negative attitudes and misbehaviour of a minority of students impede the progress of the class, especially when the misbehaviour is not managed well.

25. Good use is made of assessment to help students work to improve their work. In many subjects marking is detailed and gives students clear pointers to better achievement. In some subjects, however, inconsistencies between teachers lead to students not receiving adequate advice on improvement. More use is made by teachers in Years 10 and 11 of their very good understanding of the GCSE examination criteria to help students understand exactly what is needed to reach higher levels, but less use is made of National Curriculum levels in Years 7 to 9. Students' test and examination results are collated meticulously, and are used to set targets for improvement. Form tutors share information, and advice on improvement, with parents and students. However, specific use of this

information to plan suitable activities for students' different abilities is inconsistent between subjects.

26. The school is at a relatively early point in developing independent learning to raise students' achievement. In Years 7 to 9, physical education students, and especially boys, are motivated by peer coaching; and in dance, students create and evaluate their own routines. In Years 10 and 11, most subjects provide increased opportunities for students to take responsibility for their own learning, for example in physical education and ICT, and within the extensive programme for gifted and talented students.

27. The teaching of students with SEN is good overall. Many teachers use individual education plans (IEPs) to inform their lesson planning, and especially to provide personalised teaching and learning approaches. Where present in a lesson, learning support assistants are deployed well, with teachers using their experience and skills effectively. The policy of linking learning support assistants to individual departments increases their effectiveness in the classroom, enabling them to give support that is specific to subject teaching. Overall, the learning of students with SEN is good. In the SEN department, a positive and supportive environment enables teachers and learning support assistants to monitor and track the progress of students carefully, and to use the information to foster achievement.

28. Gifted and talented students achieve well. All students on the school's able and talented register are known to teachers. Each student has an individual educational plan with challenging targets for development. Subject departments foster very good learning, for example by a study of historical manuscripts at Sheffield University. The school provides excellent extra-curricular opportunities, including a wide range of activities, visits and events. Examples are the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, which enables students to work independently and develop confidence; a successful summer school for the most able students from feeder primary schools; and a public speaking contest in which students formally present their creative writing. Able and talented students are encouraged to become independent contributors to school life by organising their own events, and providing support for other students as peer mentors.

Sixth Form

Teaching and learning are very good overall, and teachers promote very good attitudes to learning which enable students to derive maximum benefit from their studies. Assessment is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching in nearly all subjects leads to very good learning and good achievement.
- Underdeveloped literacy and ICT skills mean that some students do not learn as well as they could.
- Assessment is good overall, but the very good use of assessment to support learning in some lessons is not shared sufficiently across all subjects.

Commentary

29. Sixth Form teaching is very good overall. Nearly all the lessons seen were good or better, and two in every five lessons were very good or excellent. Teachers have good subject knowledge, and invariably plan their lessons carefully. They explain carefully to students what they are expected to achieve. This gives a focus to the lesson and helps students to question their teachers when they do not understand. They use a good variety of teaching methods and involve students extensively in their own learning, for example by discussion and group work.

30. The best lessons are characterised by a scholarly approach in which discussion and evaluation are important elements. A good variety of activities helps to cater for the range of students' learning styles. Questioning is challenging and makes students think critically about their work. In an excellent history lesson on why the English Civil War broke out within two years of the breakdown of personal rule, for example, the teacher brilliantly used a courtroom role-play activity to challenge students' understanding of the issues, and to improve their communication skills. Exemplary command of the materials and imaginative teaching led to outstanding learning and achievement. In an English lesson, in which students were introduced to the phonetic alphabet, the teacher made excellent use of appropriate humour and peer-assessment to entertain, stimulate and involve students fully, and this too led to excellent learning. Excellent use of ICT as a teaching tool was seen in biology and, in a French lesson, excellent use of the language by the teacher, who is a native speaker, helped to improve students' spoken accent.

31. Many students find the higher standards required for advanced work in the Sixth Form demanding. In particular, their ability to evaluate an argument and express themselves in writing is sometimes a barrier to learning. Teachers seek to overcome this problem by leading good discussions which develop students' self-confidence and self-esteem as well as improving their understanding, but do not always do enough to promote writing skills. Furthermore, students find it difficult to gain access to ICT during private study periods, and much of their written work is presented in manuscript. This means that they cannot realistically refine successive drafts of their work, a process which would help them to improve their ability to use written communication. Where suitable facilities are available, such as in biology, teachers make excellent use of ICT to enhance their teaching, for example in presenting animations illustrating cell division.

32. In lessons that were satisfactory rather than good or better, teachers failed to involve students actively in the lesson as much as they could, and learning became a largely passive activity. In such lessons, the teacher was not alerted early enough to the need to clarify an explanation, perhaps because earlier work had not been learned well enough, and learning was less effective than it might have been.

33. Throughout the Sixth Form, homework and assessment are well used to monitor students' progress. Good records are kept, and the school responds promptly whenever there are difficulties. The school prides itself on its policy of helping all students to reach their potential, and students themselves acknowledge that the individual support of teachers is a major strength. All students are aware of their targets and know how to improve.

34. In the best lessons, teachers continually assess their students' progress, and respond to weaknesses by using alternative approaches; as a result, engagement is high and students are never left with unresolved difficulties. In other lessons, however, teachers leave students with insufficient time to reflect on the challenges of the subject, preferring to answer questions directly as they arise in order to move the lesson on. Whilst this may have the effect of helping the teacher to reach the end of what was planned for the lesson, better achievement could be promoted by making more use of assessment for learning, and sharing best practice across the school.

35. Students' capacity to learn independently is good in most subjects. Teachers provide opportunities for students to take responsibility for their own learning in physical education, dance and drama, where they plan and refine their routines well. The students have comparable opportunities in history, for example in analysing historical documents, and in modern languages, where they research French and German websites, successfully developing reading and reporting skills.

The curriculum

The school offers a good curriculum, enhanced with a very good range of additional activities. Accommodation and resources are unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum provides a very good range of opportunities for students to study and participate in a range of activities outside the school day.
- A good match of specialist teachers provides good learning opportunities for all students.
- All students have very good opportunities to understand and experience the connections between education and employment in their work-related curriculum.
- Learning opportunities for students with SEN are good.
- Students' access to ICT resources is unsatisfactory. Some specialist accommodation is unsatisfactory, especially for design and technology, music, physical education and science.

Commentary

36. The curriculum is well managed, showing that the school is careful to make appropriate provision for all students through innovation. It is broad, balanced and relevant, and all students have equal access to it. All national curriculum statutory requirements are met. The SEN department ensures good provision for students on the SEN register, enhanced by good links with external agencies, including the integrated learning support and education psychology services.

37. The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 provides students with good choice and access, through very flexible arrangements which provide them all with worthwhile and carefully managed learning opportunities. Students have an expanded choice which incorporates traditional GCSE accreditation together with a range of vocational subjects. For example, GCSE media studies adds

to opportunities to study English; GCSE statistics enhances mathematics; higher attaining science students can study biology, chemistry and physics separately; and GCSE fine art and applied GCSE art and design are available. Physical education students can be involved in the Community Sports Leadership Award scheme.

38. Vocational subjects in Years 10 and 11, and in the Sixth Form. increase the school's flexible approach to work-based learning for a significant number of students. All students benefit from very good careers education and guidance which is strongly supported through the Connexions partnership. Very good work-related activities make the curriculum relevant, and these are reinforced by very good links established with local colleges and schools, and by a work experience programme for everyone in Year 11.

39. A clear reflection of the school's policy of inclusion is the way all students can take advantage of a very good range of extra-curricular activities which enrich their learning and development. Participation is high in after-school and lunchtime activities, for example in music, art, and physical education. Easter and Summer schools, homework clubs, revision classes and study-skills workshops, using outside trainers, all enhance students' learning and personal development. Of particular note is the very high level of involvement in the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, where students can progress to the Gold award.

40. Overall, there is a good match of teachers and support staff to the needs of the curriculum. Very few teachers are required to work outside their specialist areas. The core subjects have good access to support staff, although provision in other subjects is sometimes insufficient.

41. Resources are unsatisfactory and in some cases restrict learning and achievement. Of most concern is students' limited access to suitable and reliable ICT facilities in several subject areas. Overall access to computers has not improved significantly since the previous inspection. Textbook resources are limited, especially those which extend learning for higher attaining students. The quality of accommodation is very mixed but overall is unsatisfactory. Facilities for the performing arts and swimming are very good, but in many areas accommodation has not improved significantly since the previous inspection; some laboratories are too small for practical science in many classes in Years 7 to 11, and the lack of a sports hall and too few practice rooms restricts the range and quality of activities in physical education and music respectively. Workshops for design and realisation work in design and technology are poor. The library is used as a teaching room at times and this restricts its access as an open-learning resource. Delays, which are outside the school's

control, in reaching a decision on exploiting funds currently available to rebuild the school will protract the adverse effect of inadequate accommodation.

Sixth Form

Curriculum opportunities are good overall and provide well for students' needs. All students take a course in general studies, and a well planned guidance course provides for students' personal development. The requirements for religious education in the Sixth Form are met but, as in the main school, it is difficult to meet those for a daily act of collective worship.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum, based around a range of AS and A level courses, an advanced vocational course in business studies, and a range of intermediate level GNVQs, provides well for students' needs and aspirations.
- The school regards equality of access as an important principle in its work, and has created a very inclusive Sixth Form.
- Opportunities for enrichment, and the range of extra-curricular activities, are very good.
- Some specialist accommodation is unsatisfactory, as is accommodation for Sixth Form social activities.

Commentary

42. Curriculum opportunities are good overall. A good range of AS and A-level subjects provides for the needs of most students, and developing links with another school widen the range further. An advanced vocational certificate of education (AVCE) course in business education is a popular choice, and other vocational courses, at intermediate level, are available, for example in child development and in leisure and tourism.

43. In keeping with its policy of taking note of students' wishes, the school canvasses students for their option choices in time for them to influence what is available in Year 12, and the school is often able to make special arrangements to cope with reasonable requests. Good advice to students ensures that, in the main, choices are sensible ones, and nearly all Sixth Form students are pleased with the courses they are studying. AS and A-level courses are well established, and suit most students' needs. Unusually, geology at AS and A level has been established for many years and attracts a good-sized group each year. Further mathematics can be taken by students who wish to do so. For students for whom vocational courses are more appropriate, the school offers a small but expanding group of vocational courses at Level 2, and a large group is currently working towards the AVCE in business studies. GCSE re-sit courses are available for those who need to improve their grades, perhaps in preparation for embarking on AS courses in Year 13.

44. In addition to their main academic courses, all students take courses in general studies leading to an AS qualification, and regular guidance lessons. These courses are very well structured, and it is a measure of their success that AS general studies results are well above the national average and that most students are successful in their applications to higher education. The courses also make a real contribution to students' personal development, as well as meeting the requirements for RE in the Sixth Form.

45. A very good range of extra-curricular activities further promotes Sixth Form students' place in the community. Special mention must be made of the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, in which students regularly progress to the highest level. In addition, there are many sporting and artistic activities, many of which involve Sixth Formers in working with younger students, to the

considerable benefit of both. Many students take part in the Young Enterprise scheme, which gives them good links with local businesses.

46. These activities are good in themselves, and promote students' academic and personal development well. The school fulfils successfully its policy of equal opportunity for all and regularly evaluates the needs of its students, as well as the success of the courses on offer, so that it can respond to changing needs. Formal examination courses, extra-curricular activities, and opportunities to take responsibility are all part of a well co-ordinated curriculum whose overall strengths are greater than the sum of its parts.

47. The governors, headteacher and other senior staff monitor and evaluate the work of the Sixth Form continually. They acknowledge that, despite the undoubted strengths in the current Sixth Form, there are still improvements to be made. The developing of literacy and study skills, improving the range of innovative teaching activities, and creating a more unified approach to learning in the Sixth Form are all areas which, though at least satisfactory, would benefit from further work.

48. Sixth Form accommodation is unsatisfactory. Classes are mostly taught in the same subject areas as in the main school, and these areas have several deficiencies. There are few discrete subject areas for the Sixth Form; for example, there is no dedicated area for Sixth Form art. Study and common room areas are in poor condition. Resources are satisfactory. Biology is one of the few areas where resources are good; teachers make excellent use of the data projector and interactive whiteboard to help students to understand the ideas associated with the subject. This very good practice could usefully be shared more widely in the school. Access to computers and to the library, for independent study and research, is limited.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes satisfactory provision for students' care, welfare, health and safety. The provision of support, advice and guidance to students is very good. The involvement of students through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is good in the main school and excellent in the Sixth Form.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Induction arrangements for students, in partnership with primary schools, are very good.
- The school takes students' views into account and offers them clear sources of advice and guidance, all of which foster very good relationships.
- Students have very good access to support, advice and guidance, including careers education and advice.

Commentary

49. Child protection procedures are satisfactory. The child protection officer has received up-to-date training and has arranged for training to be carried out for all other members of staff. The school has amended its procedures to meet new regulations. It ensures that child protection records are kept centrally and that information about children on the child protection register and about those in the care of the local authority is shared only with those staff who need to know.

50. Satisfactory procedures ensure that students work in a healthy and safe environment. Although regular inspections of the buildings and grounds are conducted by the health and safety officer, and prompt attention given to issues identified, records are not detailed enough. Subject departments carry out detailed risk assessments of their work, but in design and technology they are not sufficiently specific. Weekly fire alarm tests and regular fire drills ensure that equipment and procedures work well.

51. The school offers very good quality support, advice and guidance to its students. Regular meetings take place between form tutors, year heads and subject leaders to discuss students' progress and identify possible problems. Students' pastoral progress is well monitored by a very effective recording system. The school uses a number of agencies, including learning-support mentors, SEN staff, and education psychologists, to identify and support students with difficulties. Many students at the school come from backgrounds where life is difficult and challenging. Because of the very good arrangements made by the school to support them, they thrive and make very good progress.

52. Students benefit from very good careers advice, guidance and support. An adviser from the Connexions service works effectively in school and makes a significant contribution to the teaching of careers education, which is part of the personal social and health education programme throughout Years 7 to 11. Students have very good access to a work-related learning resource centre which includes booklets and other written matter as well as Internet access to 'on-line' information. Students are prepared very effectively for when they move on into post-16 education or to the world of work.

53. Relationships at the school are very good. Students interviewed both formally and informally during the inspection week felt that their views are taken into account through the year and school councils; their opinions matter and that they are treated with courtesy and respect by staff. The school fosters a strong sense of belonging and responsibility by involving students in its affairs, in the mentoring of younger students, for example, and, where appropriate, in staff appointments. Students feel extremely well supported and know that they can turn to staff for guidance and help.

54. Induction arrangements in preparation for students joining the school in Year 7 are very good, and most students settle quickly into school life. The head of Year 7 visits the seven principal partner primary schools to meet prospective students. A bridging project in which Edlington staff teach English, mathematics and science to Year 6 students in primary schools promotes familiarity with teachers before students join the secondary school in Year 7. In addition, a 'French breakfast' event allows prospective students to meet their modern foreign language teachers beforehand. Gifted and talented students identified by the primary schools take part in a summer school, and

then benefit from mentoring support from older students allocated to them throughout their first year. Parents of Year 7 students value the meeting held early in the autumn term to discuss pastoral arrangements, and also the additional evening for students and parents where targets for academic and personal development are set.

55. The SEN department provides a very good level of care for students with special educational needs. Good use of the IEPs was seen in English, mathematics, science and design and technology lessons, and this reflects the consistent use of them which is encouraged throughout the curriculum.

Sixth Form

The school offers an excellent standard of support and advice to all its Sixth Form students. The school has a comprehensive guidance programme for Sixth Formers and makes good use of the Connexions Service, which offers advice and counselling to all students if requested.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Advice on Sixth Form courses, and good induction procedures, lead to high levels of satisfaction with what the school has to offer.
- The school has the highest regard for students' views, and involves them in all appropriate aspects of its work. An excellent, taught, guidance course and an examination course in general studies help students to acquire the skills they need to become responsible young adults who can make informed decisions for themselves and contribute substantially to the running of the school.
- Monitoring of academic progress is excellent, and all students are aware of their targets. They are kept informed about how they could improve.
- Personal development is a strength of the Sixth Form; it is based on the contributions the students make to the school and the wider community, with high quality training where necessary.

Commentary

56. The school adopts the principle that students' views are of crucial importance, and is at pains to respond to their needs and requests. The head and deputy head of Sixth Form recognise that many students come into the Sixth Form with limited knowledge of opportunities available to them, either in higher education or in employment. They have worked with tutors and outside agencies to design courses and procedures which seek to improve students' appreciation of what is available. As a result, the school has very good arrangements for the admissions tutor from Sheffield University to offer advice on university admissions, and very good links with training providers. In response to perceived need, the school has introduced new GNVQ courses, including health and social care, leisure and tourism, and business studies.

57. Sixth Formers interviewed during the inspection confirmed that they have excellent access to support, advice and guidance, that their views are taken into account, and that they feel they are treated as responsible young adults by staff, senior school management, and governors. Inspectors' judgements confirm students' view that they are very well prepared for life in the world of further education and work in a multicultural society.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are very good. The school has very good links with the community, other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents receive very good information about the school and about their children's standards of work and progress.
- Very good procedures for dealing with any concerns or complaints ensure satisfaction.
- The school has very good arrangements to involve parents in the life of the school through seeking, valuing and acting on their views.
- Strong links with local schools and colleges ensure very effective arrangements for transfer when students join the school or move on.

Commentary

58. Parents are well served with information. The school's prospectus is extremely well produced to professional standards and gives full and detailed information about the school, policies, ethos and the curriculum. Regular newsletters provide very good information on current events, staff news and curriculum matters. The annual governors' report is well written for parents, and contains all statutory information required. The school has a detailed and effective complaints procedure.

59. Extremely helpful annual reports inform parents about their children's progress. Teachers' comments are detailed and provide specific, subject-based information about grades attained, progress and achievement, and targets for further improvement. An annual parents' evening gives parents an opportunity to meet each subject teacher and obtain accurate information on their child's progress. Other meetings allow parents of Year 7 students to discuss progress early in the year, Year 9 parents and students to discuss GCSE options, and parents of Year 11 students to discuss Sixth Form or college courses. In addition, an annual academic review day enables parents, with their child, to discuss with the form tutor academic progress, future targets, and personal development. Whenever parents have difficulty in attending meetings, the headteacher, and other teachers, willingly arrange to see them at other times. Importantly too, the school regularly contacts parents by telephone or letter when there is cause for concern, or to praise a student for good work or conduct.

60. The school has very good links with parents of students with special educational needs. Parents are encouraged to be fully involved at all stages of their child's education. For example, most parents are involved in the annual reviews of progress and, helpfully, students attend their own annual review meetings with their parents. Parents are very satisfied with these arrangements.

61. Parents are encouraged and welcomed into the school, which greatly appreciates the help they provide. For example, they mentor students, assist with school visits and functions, and give talks based on their own experience. A very active Parents' Guild (parent/teacher association) has a membership of all parents and provides a useful forum for consultation. In addition, the guild arranges a wide variety of successful social events and last year raised £2,500 for school funds.

62. The school has very good links with the community. Local companies and businesses contribute to work-related learning through opportunities for students' work experience. Some have agreed financial support for the school's bid to become a specialist business

and enterprise college. Students raise money for local and national charities. The school is making a growing contribution to the development of the surrounding community.

63. Links with other schools and colleges are very good. The relationship with local primary schools through the joint bridging project is improving continuity of students' learning in mathematics, English, science and technology. Advanced skills teachers work with other schools and share their expertise with colleagues in the school. Provision for students with SEN is enhanced by the head of learning support teaching in a local special school. The school's active participation in the South West Doncaster Consortium contributes to the development of the 14 to

19 curriculum. Very good links with further and higher education establishments enhance students' knowledge and opportunities to make appropriate decisions for the next steps in their education when they leave the school. Good relationships with teacher training institutions provide opportunities and effective support for trainee teachers.

64. The school is an active member of the Post-16 Consortium for Further Education, and the timetable is aligned with that of Doncaster College Sixth Form which students attend as part of the consortium arrangements. The school is a member of the Re-Engagement Project, with training providers for students who wish to undertake work-related learning. Students are given good information about the range of options available to them in the Sixth Form. Staff readily give advice on university and further education courses. Students interviewed were of the view that they were given very good advice regarding further education, their careers and the world of work.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Excellent leadership by the headteacher and very good governance provide clear direction and drive to sustain improvement in all aspects of the school's work. The school is very well led by key staff, and is well run and managed.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides extremely effective leadership in creating the school ethos.
- The leadership team successfully shares leadership with heads of department and heads of year in improving the climate for learning.
- Leadership and management of the Sixth Form are very good.
- An excellent systematic approach to evaluating the school's work supports development planning which emphasises raising achievement.
- The school does not have effective arrangements to identify and deal with weaknesses in students' attainments and social skills as soon as they join the school.
- Excellent and efficient financial management leads to the school giving good value for money.

Commentary

65. The governing body is led by a strong and experienced chairman, and has the school's interests at heart. Meetings are well attended. Governors have a very clear vision for the development of the school and work hard, together with the headteacher and his leadership team, to implement it. They ensure that effective management systems are in place, which lead to clear improvements. Governors monitor the progress of different groups of students, and make very good use of very detailed analytical reports about students' performance from the headteacher, the leadership team and heads of subjects. Information that governors gain at first hand about teaching and other provision is more limited, and they know that this is an area for their development. Governors cannot fulfil their statutory obligation for a daily act of collective worship and have considered ways around the restrictions on space for large groups of students to meet together. They are assured, and this was confirmed by the inspection, that students have daily opportunities

to reflect upon a *Thought for the Week* and that their spiritual development throughout the curriculum is satisfactory.

66. The headteacher shows outstanding leadership and dedication by very effectively involving governors, staff and students in the school's development. An excellent commitment to inclusion is built into his approach to the curriculum, teaching and learning. He is determined to raise achievement further by promoting teaching of high quality, encouraging extensive participation in a very good range of extra-curricular activities, and providing many opportunities for students to contribute to the life and affairs of the school.

67. Very good leadership by the senior team, heads of year and heads of subject departments reflect a commitment to the continued development of the school. They are very good role models and an inspiration to staff and students alike. Teams are very effective, and staff with leadership responsibilities have clearly defined roles which they discharge very well. The headteacher and key staff display a unity of purpose, which fosters the positive attitudes to learning and behaviour shown by most students as they grow and develop through the school.

68. Systematic quality assurance in the school enables the leadership team to make very good use of information gained from monitoring students' work and from analysing their test and examination performance. This information is used to identify underachievement and arrange for suitable support; to inform parents and students of progress and targets for the future; and for school development planning. Development work focuses sharply on improving students' achievement by giving attention to the three key areas of behaviour and attitudes, teaching quality, and leadership and management. However, the school lacks a sufficiently comprehensive approach to deal quickly with the weak literacy and social skills of a large minority of students who join the school each year. Recent approaches to improve behaviour have yet to be implemented with consistency by all teachers, particularly in classes of younger students.

69. The acting special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) provides good leadership and management. Clear documentation supports good organisational and administrative procedures. These, and nominated link teachers and learning support assistants, ensure good provision within subject departments. The committed and hard working learning support assistants work well together as a team. They have benefited from taking part in a general training programme but their effectiveness is limited at times by insufficient training in the skills required for supporting students with specific educational needs.

70. Overall, the management of staff is good. The performance management of teachers, which is well organised and carried out efficiently, leads to a well organised programme for the professional development of staff. The arrangements for the induction of newly qualified teachers to the school are very good, and the school also has very good links with several universities for the training of new teachers.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	5,046,253.00	Balance from previous year	-1842.00
Total expenditure	4,929,907.00	Balance carried forward to the next	114 504.00

Expenditure per student (1207)	4,084.00
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71. Financial management is excellent and is coupled with meticulous administration of the budget and accounts. The school gives good value for money.

72. The school applies the principles of best value well. Prudent spending ensures good value when purchasing supplies and services. Through the auspices of the local education authority, and from analysis of students' test and examination performance, the governors and school make comparisons with similar schools to gauge students' achievement and attainment. Governors challenge themselves and the headteacher to assure the quality of work in the school, and the school's own evaluation of its work accorded very closely with the findings of the inspection. Thorough arrangements for seeking students' views, and consultation through the parents' guild, enable the school to form a clear view of their perceptions and to act upon them.

Sixth Form

Leadership and management of the Sixth Form are very good. The governors, headteacher, and senior staff have a clear vision for the place of the Sixth Form in the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and governors communicate very effectively to the staff their very clear vision for the place of the Sixth Form in the community.
- The head of Sixth Form and his deputy rigorously evaluate the effectiveness of the Sixth Form in terms of academic success, and more widely.
- They are committed to the principle of inclusion and meeting the needs of each individual student.
- Sixth Form leaders, pastoral and subject staff, and the head boy and head girl, form an excellent team who work together with a high degree of unity of purpose to achieve the school's aims.
- The school continually evaluates the work of the Sixth Form and works to promote continuous development and improvement.

73. Leadership and management are very good. The school has high aspirations for its Sixth Form students, both academically and in terms of their personal development, and works to achieve the highest standards. The head of Sixth Form, his deputy, and tutors form an excellent team who continually evaluate their work: they work with students and subject staff to identify how best they can support students during their courses and beyond. Together with the school council, which is ably chaired by the head girl, they have direct links to the governing body so that all involved can work closely together. All are committed to the creation of a Sixth Form in which equality of opportunity and the best possible support for students are paramount.

74. Implementation of the governors' vision for the school is very good. Teams share their commitment to high standards, and have put in place procedures designed to secure them. The work of staff and students is carefully monitored, and areas where improvement is possible are identified and acted upon. The consistency of this approach and the effectiveness of the outcomes are an impressive testimony to the work of the school, in which the Sixth Form is a major strength.

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

Work-related Learning

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A business and enterprise culture is well established in the curriculum throughout the school: students are increasingly enterprising in outlook and are confident in taking responsibility.
- Leadership provides a clear vision and drive to promote development.

- Thorough monitoring and evaluation leads to improvements in practice.
- A successful programme of work experience is well assessed and evaluated in partnership with *Business Education: South Yorkshire*.
- Very effective collaborative arrangements with Connexions underpin the successful operation of a teaching and resource area, although it does not yet have drop-in access.

Commentary

75. All students are provided with a broad range of work-related opportunities in a structured curriculum which gives access to learning about training and employment. The curriculum in many subjects for students in all years is made more relevant through links to local business and industry. Students in Years 10 and 11 and the Sixth Form reach average standards in a range of vocational options where their skills are accredited, some in partnership with local training providers. Standards in business studies are marginally above average. Students of all ages have an understanding of the nature of enterprise within business and industry. Although students display positive attitudes towards WRL, many of the personal skills valued in the workplace are not yet well enough established, particularly amongst the boys in Years 8 to 10.

76. Work experience is arranged in partnership with *Business Education: South Yorkshire* and, despite difficult local circumstances, a good range of well planned placements is arranged for all students. Students' skills are assessed and placements are effectively monitored and evaluated by teachers and employers. Assessment and achievement form an important component of each student's record of achievement. Plans are already advanced to accredit all work experience when the current Year 10 move into Year 11

77. Students are very well prepared for the choices of study they make at the beginning of Year 10, and for progression into the Sixth Form, further and higher education, or the world of work. They benefit from very good guidance and support from the Connexions service. The part-time adviser, who works in school, makes an effective and significant contribution to the careers education module taught as part of the PSHE programme throughout Years 7 to 11. The WRL resources centre provides a very good range of materials, including access to Internet information sites, but its use as a drop-in facility is underdeveloped.

78. Very good links have been established with a network of local businesses and industry. A structured programme for teachers to benefit from short-term placements is in place, and has led to the adaptation of lessons to incorporate a practical business context. For example, one local firm makes a significant contribution to the teaching in the Project Business programme, which is part of GCSE business studies.

79. Leadership of WRL displays a clear vision and a very secure grasp of all statutory requirements. The school has a clear strategy and culture for WRL, and has a well established coherent curriculum. Monitoring and evaluation of WRL are thorough, and effective use is made of the outcomes to improve opportunities for students. The day-to-day management of work-related activities is good, but lines of responsibility, which are becoming complex, would benefit from clarification as the school practice is broadened. Successful bids have obtained funding from national and European initiatives to support WRL.

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

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use assessment well to promote students' learning.
- The department works effectively as a team to develop a curriculum increasingly well suited to students' needs and aptitudes.
- Teaching, lesson planning and target setting are good overall but these high standards are not yet consistent throughout the department.
- The good progress made over Years 7 to 9 is not sustained in Years 10 and 11.
- Students enter the school with low standards of literacy and an insufficiently detailed account of their learning needs.

Commentary

80. Students' attainment when they enter the school is well below average. Standards in tests at the end of Year 9 in 2004 were almost in line with the results of schools nationally. The proportion of students gaining A* to C grades in GCSE examinations in 2004 was well below average for both language and literature. These results show that students made good progress and achieved well over Years 7 to 9 but did not sustain momentum in Years 10 and 11, where achievement was satisfactory. The loss of momentum in Years 10 and 11 relates to students' lack of independence and to patterns of absence. The current emphasis on group work, speaking and listening, and self-evaluation, is therefore thoughtfully intended to encourage and develop greater autonomy.

81. The inspection gave a more positive picture of achievement, however, because the standard of work seen was better than these results would suggest. In Years 7 to 9, higher attaining students read aloud well and interpret the text with good understanding. Their writing conveys meaning clearly. However, Year 7 girls write noticeably better than boys. By Year 9, students develop a good understanding of the plot and character in literature. In Years 10 and 11, middle and higher attaining students effectively use techniques for marshalling information and can explain and justify their choices when writing an argument. Lower attaining students competently discuss relevant issues such as simple rules for family life, but their writing contains poor expression and is not punctuated properly.

82. Teaching is good overall but leads only to satisfactory learning because students are over dependent on their teachers for progress and motivation. In the lower school one unsatisfactory lesson was seen, but the majority were good or better, and in these lessons

good relationships sustained students' involvement and learning. In Years 10 and 11, four out of five lessons were good or better, with none unsatisfactory. The best teaching is characterised by sharp questioning, carefully differentiated materials, challenging but manageable group work, and close attention to criteria for assessment and improvement. Examples were in a Year 8 lesson on examining the language of *Snakestone*, and in Year 10, where students presented advertising campaigns of their own devising. This good practice was more typical than the occasional lesson that left students too passive for periods of time, or doing work that did not stretch them.

83. Leadership is very good. The recently appointed head of department presents a model in her own work of energetic and very productive teaching. There is a collaborative ethos, promoted by paired arrangements for planning and support. The department makes good use of assessment to encourage students' learning and awareness of what to do to improve. Management is good. The curriculum now includes a media option, which is popular and well taught and relates closely to students' interests and aptitudes. Teachers are deployed in such a way that part-time arrangements do not fragment students' experience of English. Because the high quality of planning and assessment is not yet entirely general, the acknowledged next step is to make it so.

84. There is now in place (as distinct from the recent past) a settled English team with great potential. The department is well placed to build upon the satisfactory improvement since the last inspection because of very good leadership and the high quality teaching of most of its members.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

85. Literacy development is rightly a priority for the school because many students arrive with poorly developed language skills. Standards on entry to the school are well below average and negatively affect students' ability to learn effectively. Standards remain below average from Years 7 to 11. This is an issue for the whole school because it affects more than attainment and achievement in English lessons. The generally good teaching in English would have greater impact were it possible to address specific weaknesses of literacy with fine-tuned information from primary schools at the start of students' secondary experience. Very good literacy work was noted in some departments, namely English, art, history and modern languages. However, the co-ordination of a whole school literacy strategy is not sufficiently focused on consistent practice and on evaluating its impact. Additionally, the lack of detailed information about students entering Year 7 crucially delays immediate and concentrated attention to their learning needs.

Modern foreign languages

Provision in modern foreign languages is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In German, students' achievement overall is excellent as a result of very good or excellent teaching.
- In French, more able students are insufficiently challenged in Years 7 to 9, and students' progress is too slow.
- The department contributes exceptionally well to students' progress in literacy.

Commentary

86. In 2004, results in modern languages improved on those in 2003, with almost twice the proportion of students gaining grades A* to C. In both years, boys achieved better results than the girls in German, but worse than the girls in French. Staffing difficulties contributed to the disappointing results in French in 2003.

87. In Years 7 to 9, all students learn French, and the upper ability groups start German as a second foreign language in Year 9. By the end of Year 9, standards in modern languages overall are below expectations, but their achievement is good, because many improve on their low literacy skills. In German, students' standards and achievement are excellent. Students, especially boys, make rapid progress in speaking and writing. In French, progress slows down in Year 9 and standards are below expectations. Lack of personal textbooks limits homework opportunities, especially for more able students. Additionally, in French in Years 7 to 9, most of the more able students are not sufficiently challenged in lessons, and many do not reach the National Curriculum

levels of which they are capable. By contrast, the least able, including those with SEN, make good progress and achieve well, due to the very good support they receive. The department contributes substantially to many students' literacy development, especially in Years 7 and 8, as a result of teachers' exceptionally clear explanations of how language works.

88. In Years 10 and 11, in German, standards are high and students' achievement is excellent, given the limited time students have studied this language. In French, standards are generally average, and students achieve well. Coursework shows they make very good progress in writing; many can confidently express themselves in the present, past and future, using a sound, topic-based vocabulary. In all years, students have very good attitudes to learning. Students use ICT well in lessons.

89. Teaching and learning are good overall. In German, all lessons seen were very good or excellent. In French, two thirds of lessons seen were good or very good; the remainder were satisfactory, often because students were not sufficiently challenged. Most teachers plan their work well, with clear learning objectives and high quality resources. Assessment is very good; marking is detailed and helps students to know how to improve.

90. Leadership is very good and management is good. The head of department is an excellent professional role model for teachers and students, especially boys. Very good use of students' performance data contributes to the department's own evaluation of its work, and is raising GCSE standards. Schemes of work for French require attention. Improvement since the last report is satisfactory; teaching in Years 10 and 11, and standards in German, have improved markedly; however, in French, standards are still too low in Year 9, and able students in Years 7 to 9 make insufficient progress.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership is very good and is a key reason for the very good improvement since the previous inspection.
- A significant minority of students begin in Year 7 with underdeveloped mathematical and study skills which are not supported quickly enough.
- Good use of assessment helps teachers to match tasks to students' individual needs.
- The achievement of higher attaining students in Years 10 and 11 is good.
- Staffing difficulties have slowed the rate of improvement in standards.

Commentary

91. Year 9 test results in 2004 were well below the national average and below that of similar schools. This was largely due to a smaller proportion reaching the higher levels, which mirrored the profile of the cohort when they began in Year 7. A small number of middle to low attaining students began with weak mathematical and study skills, and did not improve as much as they should have. GCSE results in 2004 were below average but better than those of 2003. Most students did as well as expected. However, a small

proportion did not, as a result of two factors: staffing changes which affected the continuity of their work, and poor attendance.

92. Standards of work seen in Year 9 are below average, although higher attaining students reach above average standards. Work seen in Year 11 is below average, although more competent students reach well above average standards. Standards are similar across most

aspects of mathematics throughout the school, but they are weaker in applying mathematics to unfamiliar situations. Many middle to lower attaining students lack confidence if faced with something even slightly different, and find it difficult to interpret word-based questions. When the problems are explained, they are able to carry out the mathematics successfully.

93. Many students began Year 7 with below average attainment, and in the case of a significant minority very low attainment. Achievement is satisfactory for nearly all in Years 7 to 9 as a result of the well planned curriculum. Steps to improve achievement include increasing the number of lessons in Years 7 and 8. However, students in Year 7 with underdeveloped mathematical, social and study skills need a more tightly structured programme to help them improve more rapidly. Achievement in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory for most students. It is good for higher attaining students, who have well planned opportunities to study at the higher levels and additional lessons at lunchtime, and who work hard to take advantage of them. A few students achieve less well than they should as a result of poor attendance and negative attitudes, for example in not completing coursework. Students with SEN generally achieve satisfactorily where smaller classes and teaching assistants help them to make progress. Boys and girls achieve equally well.

94. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. About half the teaching seen was good. Class management is good; students are encouraged to do their best, and teachers work hard to support individuals who have difficulties in understanding particular ideas. However, at times, teachers do not ask enough questions to make students think more widely than the immediate topic. Teachers use assessment well, both in class and in marking homework, to praise progress and to pinpoint where improvement is needed. This helps students to learn effectively.

95. Leadership is very good, and management is good. Analysis of data and good monitoring of the work of the department have highlighted areas for action. However, staffing changes have at times made the task more difficult. The very strong leadership of the head of department is the main reason for the very good improvement since the previous inspection. Teaching has improved considerably, as have students' behaviour and attitudes to mathematics.

Mathematics across the curriculum

96. Students' mathematical skills are below average but generally are sufficient for the tasks they are asked to do in other subjects. They have the necessary measuring skills for design and technology, although they do not always use units consistently. Students have the skills for presenting data graphically, which they use in geography and science. Most students can carry out necessary calculations, and higher attaining students can adapt formulae as needed, for example in science and ICT.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is above expectations because teaching is good, and often very good or excellent.
- Leadership and management are good.
- Assessment is used very well to monitor students' progress.
- Those students with weak foundations in science are not provided with sufficient support in Year 7.
- The use of ICT as a teaching and learning tool is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

97. Students enter the school with below average standards in science. Results in Year 9 were average overall, when compared with national standards and those of similar schools. The attainment of girls was a little higher than that of boys. Whilst achievement overall is good in Years 7 to 9, a significant minority of students do not receive sufficient support early enough in Year 7 and they underachieve as a result. The 2004 GCSE results improved slightly from 2003 although they were again average for A* to C grades. However, the proportion of A* and A grades, especially for boys, was above the national average.

98. Standards in work seen throughout Years 7 to 11 are average, and achievement is good. Students generally have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of scientific concepts. By Year 9, the highest attaining students understand displacement reactions, and interpret distance/time graphs. Lower attaining students understand the nature of forces and metal reactivity. Year 11 higher attaining students represent reactions by balanced symbolic equations. They have a good understanding of inheritance, carry out calculations on power, and interpret velocity/time graphs. Although lower attaining students cannot use symbols in chemical equations, they grasp word equations but are not confident in interpreting graphs. Students' progress is impaired by the well below average literacy and numeracy skills with which they enter the school. The promotion of these skills is satisfactory, but little is done to contribute to developing their ICT skills.

99. In Years 7 to 9, teaching and learning are good, whilst in Years 10 and 11 they are good and often very good or excellent. The principal features of effective teaching are the use of good subject knowledge and high expectations that are communicated well to students. Well focused planning, a lively pace and an appropriate range of methods stimulate students' interest and engage them in most lessons. In a few lessons, however, work did not match the abilities of students. Identifying appropriate learning objectives, coupled with good support for students' learning, enables all students, including those with special educational needs, to make good progress. In the best lessons, students clearly enjoyed their work because they were fully engaged. In less effective lessons, pace was pedestrian and students were less well stimulated as a result. Homework is set which extends or consolidates class work. Assessment is used very effectively to monitor students' progress, to identify and support underachievers, and to adjust teaching and guide curriculum planning. However, the marking of students' work is inconsistent. Where it is thorough, marking provides constructive comments and guidance about how to improve, but some books are marked infrequently and students do not receive the guidance they need.

100. Teachers are well qualified and experienced. Resources are satisfactory overall, but there are too few computers for the effective use of ICT as an investigative and research tool. Several laboratories are too small for larger groups, which impedes achievement by restricting the kind of science lessons that can be taught in them.

101. Leadership and management are good. The head of science provides a clear and well focused direction for the subject. This is reflected in the department's development plan, which provides a well considered guide for improvement. Teachers work well together, and are given good support by teaching assistants and technicians. Good progress has been made since the last inspection, and the capacity for further improvement is also good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students show interest in the subject, have good attitudes, behave well in lessons and enjoy good relationships with their teachers.
- Standards are improving in Years 7 and 8 and in GCSE.
- There is no assessment or tracking of the development of students' ICT capabilities for those who do not take a GCSE course in Years 10 and 11.
- Equipment and facilities are unsatisfactory for students to develop their ICT skills across the curriculum.
- Insufficient use is made of National Curriculum levels to help students in Years 7 to 9 to know how well they are doing, and to what they can aspire.

Commentary

102. Standards of students' work in Year 11 GCSE are satisfactory and in line with national expectations, showing marked improvement on those indicated by the results of 2004, which were well below national levels. Standards in Year 9 are below expected levels. Although Year 9 students understand the principles of using formulae for calculations in their use of spreadsheets to record data, they lack understanding of how spreadsheets can be used to model events and make predictions. The Key Stage 3 national ICT strategy is now implemented, and standards of work in Years 7 and 8 are rising, for example by improving students' understanding of how to use different software programs. In Year 7, students devise effective slide show presentations, and in Year 8 they create web pages for the Internet. Students on the GCSE course in Year 11 have a good understanding of the structure of databases; for example, they grasp the concept of field types and know how to validate data and use input masks. Achievement overall is satisfactory. Students who do not take the GCSE course have no specific ICT input but rely on their ICT experiences in other subjects. The school does not yet monitor their attainment and cannot, therefore, know whether they reach a satisfactory standard. Achievement by students in Year 9 is satisfactory and in line with their capabilities; by Year 11, achievement is good in GCSE work as students make good progress in learning to use more advanced software.

103. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Most teachers have good understanding of their subject and of GCSE assessment criteria, which are used effectively to help students to understand how to attain more highly. Less use is made of National Curriculum levels in assessment of students in Years 7 to 9, which restricts the clarity of information students have as to how well they are doing and how to improve. Most lessons are planned well to promote learning. However, in some lessons not enough account is taken of students' capabilities, and activities are not sufficiently challenging. Teachers have good relationships with students, which fosters both interest in the subject and good behaviour. These are significant factors contributing to students' learning and progress in lessons.

104. Leadership of the subject is good. The head of department has the vision and determination to improve standards and increase opportunities for students to develop their skills and understanding. Committed management has ensured that the curriculum is being improved, and that teaching is being well supported. Good progress since the last

inspection has resulted in an improved curriculum, and in improved standards and achievement.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

105. Subject departments have planned use of ICT in their work, and teachers have undertaken training to develop their skills in the use of ICT in their subjects. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well in some curriculum areas. For example, its good use in music enables students to make effective use of software in composing, and Internet research and word processing enhance work in modern foreign languages. However, inadequate access to sufficient appropriate equipment limits the use of ICT in science, design and technology, geography and history. Banks of laptop computers have gone some way to providing more ICT resources, but they are limited in quantity and are proving unreliable. Although the imminent installation of interactive white boards and staff training will go some way to improving the situation, a lack of adequate facilities and an underdeveloped network system limit the development of ICT skills and learning throughout the curriculum.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision has declined since the last inspection.
- Results at the end of Year 9 and in GCSE have fallen to well below national averages as a result of inconsistent teaching quality.
- A serious lack of resources restricts the use of modern teaching methods.
- Staffing difficulties and frequent changes of leadership of the department in recent years have affected standards. The new subject leader is determined to rectify the weaknesses and there is evidence of some progress.
- The behaviour and attitude of a small minority of students in Years 8 and 9 impede achievement.

Commentary

106. Since the last inspection standards have fallen and are now well below national averages at the end of Year 9 and in GCSE. In the 2004 GCSE examination, almost all candidates gained a grade, but the proportion reaching the higher grades A* to C was less than half the national average. Girls now consistently outperform boys and the gap appears to be growing. Accordingly, achievement is unsatisfactory. Levels of attainment in the work seen are unsatisfactory in Years 7 to 9 but improving in Years 10 and 11. Achievement is not as high as it could be because students, notably boys in Years 7 to 9, have weak basic skills, particularly in literacy.

107. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Some is very good or outstanding. Where there are weaknesses in satisfactory teaching, or in the one unsatisfactory lesson that was seen, the

learning objectives are not sufficiently explained to students, pace is slow, and time overruns. In turn, students have few notes for future reference and too little work is consolidated. The challenge and expectation of what students can do is also frequently too low, and higher attaining students are not making best progress. The poor attitudes of a minority of boys who misbehave in Years 8 and 9 take a disproportionate amount of the teacher's time. Learning is less effective than it should be as a result. Students with SEN do not make sufficient progress because the work is not suitably aligned to their abilities. Where teaching is at its very best, intentions are made clear to students and all are supported. Inspiring teaching and a lively pace generates a very good response from all in the class and, building upon prior attainment, it fosters very good learning. Marking is inconsistent, and although students' performance in tests and examinations is monitored and tracked, not often is enough done to help students to understand how they can improve.

108. The curriculum is improving. For example, fieldwork now plays a greater part in examination work, but the progress made is yet to be extended to all year groups. Resources are very limited. Textbooks are often shared and a lack of ICT restricts the range of teaching methods that can be used, which has an adverse effect upon achievement.

109. In the past four years there have been four different subject leaders. This has led to inconsistency and inadequate planning, which are responsible for the decline of the subject since the last inspection. The new head of department faces considerable challenge to recover the situation. She has made a very good start and her leadership is far sighted and accurate. She recognises the issues and appreciates that recovery will take time. A good management review has established appropriate priorities in a development plan, although co-ordinating the work of many teachers in the department who carry extensive school-wide responsibilities is a hurdle to overcome. Signs of improvement include an increase in the number of students choosing the subject in Year 10, which is double that of the previous year.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve well because of consistently very good teaching and learning.
- The approach to implementing a national initiative to improve teaching and learning is very good.
- Leadership and management are very good; teachers form a very effective team.
- Resources for learning are unsatisfactory and the unreliability of laptop computers hampers the development of independent learning.
- Students learn to be good historians but achievement is limited by below average literacy skills.
- Tracking the achievement of individual students is not yet used effectively to set them targets for improvement.

Commentary

110. In 2004, attainment in history at the end of Year 9 was well above average. Standards seen in class were above average and this represents very good achievement by students who entered the school with below average standards. Girls achieve better than boys. Standards are rising because of very good teaching. In 2004, GCSE results at grades A* to C declined to well below average from being above average in the previous year. Boys' results were much better than those of girls. Poor attendance and unsatisfactory attitudes to learning by some girls substantially reduced overall attainment. Year 10 students write perceptively about the impact of war on civilian life in 1917, but standards of handwriting, grammar, punctuation and reading aloud are below average for many, and this limits achievement. These continue to be issues, though to a lesser extent in the present Year 11, where standards seen are generally average.

111. Teaching and learning were very good in half of the lessons seen and good in most others. This promotes very good achievement in Years 7 to 9, and the good achievement now evident in Years 10 and 11. The implementation of a national strategy for improving teaching and learning is having a very good effect. Teachers maintain high expectations of work and behaviour, and improve the weak learning skills of students in Year 7. Thus, students are actively engaged in a wide variety of enjoyable tasks which are well chosen to suit their different learning styles. For example, Year 7 students created mimes to show how William took control of England after the battle of Hastings. In Year 9, they develop good thinking skills, for example in resolving a map of the conflict between allies and enemies in Europe in 1914. The quality of additional classroom support is good, but there is not enough of it. Students with all levels of prior attainment, including those with special educational needs, are able to learn at their own level and pace. Marking is very good and shows students clearly how to improve. The arrangements for tracking students' achievement lack a sharp focus. A very good analysis is drawn from data related to prior

attainment but it is not yet used effectively as a tool to set individual students targets for improvement. The poor condition of computers limits the development of independent research and learning. Resources for learning are unsatisfactory because there are not enough textbooks above foundation level.

112. Leadership and management are very good. Teachers form a very effective departmental team. Oversight and support by the school's leadership team are increasingly helpful and monitoring is securely in place. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The most recent examination results in the full GCSE course are high and students currently following the course achieve well.
- The subject makes a very good contribution to students' personal development.
- Marking does not pay enough attention to showing students how they can improve their work.
- Lesson planning does always cater for the needs of different groups within the mixed ability classes.

Commentary

113. Over recent years, examination results have been below average. In the 2004 short course examination, a significant proportion of students did not do as well as expected. A relatively small number of students chose to be entered for the full GCSE examination. Creditably, results were high and these students achieved well.

114. In Year 9, standards are below average. Most students have a sound understanding of belief and practice in Christianity and other world faiths studied, and can explain the way that belief influences the lives of members of faith communities. However, they seldom express their ideas in any depth. The written explanations of the lowest attaining students are very limited and often incomplete. Achievement by all students in Years 7 to 9 is satisfactory. Some of the learning activities do not challenge the highest attaining students sufficiently or are not adapted to support the weaker students. These students, together with those who have SEN, rely therefore on opportunities the teacher can create to provide one-to-one support in lessons.

115. Standards seen in Year 11 are below average overall. The written work of most students is relatively brief and explanations are not fully developed. Standards of work seen in the increasingly popular full GCSE course are average. Students following the full GCSE course are very well motivated to learn and so achieve well. Achievement in the short GCSE, where a minority of students are not well disposed to learn, is satisfactory overall.

116. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching is better where teachers have more experience of teaching religious education and where students are taught in

groups of broadly similar prior attainment. Non-specialist teachers who contribute to the subject are conscientious and appreciate the support provided for them. Lessons are well planned to ensure that students are provided with a good range of interesting activities. Relationships are good and teachers' high expectations of behaviour generally earn a positive response from students. Assessment is more effective in Years 10 and 11 than in Years 7 to 9, where new procedures are not yet fully embedded. Students' work is regularly marked in an encouraging manner but comments seldom indicate to them how to improve. The content of the programmes of study and the ethos within which they are taught ensure that the subject makes a very good contribution to students' personal development.

117. Subject leadership and management are satisfactory. Monitoring lessons has led to improvements in teaching, but not enough attention has been paid to the ways in which the needs of different groups within mixed ability classes are met.

118. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory because the major issues raised have been resolved. However, the subject still relies on a significant contribution from teachers who do not have a specialist qualification.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards at the end of Year 9 are well below average overall, but higher in food and textiles. This is the result of good teaching in textiles and very good teaching in food technology.
- GCSE results were below average in food, textiles and graphics but standards in the work seen reflect rising achievement.
- The leadership and management by the recently appointed subject co-ordinator are an emerging strength.
- The workshop accommodation and resources are poor and have a direct impact on standards of work in the use of resistant materials and in electronics.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT, including computer-aided design work (CAD) and computer-aided manufacture (CAM), to support teaching and learning.
- Students of all ages know exactly what they have to do to improve the quality of their work.

Commentary

119. Students enter the school with well below average technological experience and skills, but by Year 9 the achievement of students of all abilities, including those with SEN, is satisfactory, even though standards remain well below average overall. However, standards of work seen in food and textiles are significantly higher than those in resistant materials, which are too low. Standards are improving in graphics. Students are able to apply design principles to a range of problems. They show confidence and safe habits

when using sewing machines, appliances and kitchen tools. Their graphics skills lack sophistication and lower the quality of all design work. In electronics, students grasp basic principles, but their application of them in assembling devices is not secure enough in lessons. Importantly, their literacy and listening skills are unsatisfactory and hinder their concentration, their acquiring of technical knowledge, and the independent working needed in a workshop environment.

120. GCSE standards were below average overall. In Years 10 and 11, standards of work seen in food and textiles reflect consistently good achievement by all ability groups. Standards are improving in graphics but at a slower rate than in food and textiles. Achievement in graphics is unsatisfactory because technique lacks refinement and detail, which impedes the quality of all design work. Achievement in work with resistant materials and in manufacturing is unsatisfactory because students' knowledge of materials lacks depth, and their accuracy and the quality of the finish on their products are poor. Students with SEN achieve similarly to their classmates. Boys' and girls' achievement is broadly the same, although girls manage their coursework more efficiently.

121. Teaching is good overall, with very good teaching in food and consistently good teaching in textiles. In good lessons, lesson planning and activities are effective, and with the good use made of time this leads to good learning. Elsewhere, expectations for students are too low and extension tasks for more able students are not systematically built into all lessons. In turn, standards and achievement are lower than they should be. Teachers know and use effectively the learning targets for students with SEN, which ensure that achievement is in line with that of other students. However, the reinforcement of literacy, numeracy, and ICT is not well enough established in all teaching to support students whose basic skills are underdeveloped. Assessment is thorough, and marking provides students with very good guidance for improvement. Teaching methods are sound, but too little use is made of ICT to support individual research and learning, and CAD and CAM are not systematically used to enhance the quality of design and manufacture.

122. Accommodation for work with food has been refurbished but poor accommodation and resources hamper teaching in workshop and graphics areas.

123. Leadership and management are good. This is an emerging strength after an unprecedented period of unsettled staffing. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory. A clear vision has been established, with drive and determination to raise standards. Management is increasingly well informed, using analysis of assessment information about students' performance to make self-evaluation perceptive and accurate, but the findings of lesson observations are not yet used sufficiently to extend good practice.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good and standards overall in GCSE examinations are improving because of good teaching and the positive attitude of the students.
- Leadership and management are good and are having a positive impact on the quality of work and the aspirations of the students.
- The professional relationship between the teachers and students produces a very good learning partnership.
- The quality of teaching is good and is improving the skills, understanding and confidence of all students.
- Opportunities for students to use computers in art are limited.

Commentary

124. Standards on entry to Year 7 are below average. Initial assessments used by the teachers, together with a scrutiny of work, indicates that students have limited skills and a below average understanding and knowledge of art. By the end of Year 9 standards are generally average for the majority and above average for a significant minority. Good teaching develops their drawing skills, understanding of the use of colour, and three-dimensional work. Achievement overall is good but a few do not do as well as they could because of weak listening skills and a failure to follow instructions. GCSE results in 2003 and 2004 were below the national average. In 2004, GCSE results showed a significant improvement on those of 2003. All candidates gained a pass grade and, overall, their art results were above the average for all their other subjects. A scrutiny of work and discussions with the students indicated that achievement is good, and many show pride in their achievements. The majority of students profess to enjoy the subject and work hard. Their work in three dimensions, their ideas based upon the work of famous artists, and their use of colour continue to improve.

125. Teaching is good, and often very good. Lesson planning is very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations. Students enjoy the lessons because of the sense of achievement generated. All students, including those with SEN, are included in the lessons and are given very good individual support. Key words are introduced into most lessons in order to improve their understanding of language. Discussion plays an important role in all lessons and therefore students are reasonably articulate. Sketchbooks indicate that research skills are improving year by year. The professional relationships between the teachers and students are very good, which promotes rising achievement because of the positive working atmosphere created in lessons. Regular references are made in most lessons to the work of significant artists and cultures, in order to raise students' creative and visual appreciation. The classrooms and public areas around school contain good displays of work, which encourage students to raise their aspirations. Assessment is good and is used effectively to target achievement and influence lesson planning. A majority of students are aware of their targets and, by the end of Years 9 and 11, many students exceed them. Homework is set and used effectively in lessons. Teachers make constructive comments when marking work which help students to improve.

126. Accommodation is satisfactory but the storage of work is presenting the teachers with problems because of the wide range of creative opportunities on offer and the amount of work produced by the students. Resources are sufficient and used effectively. However,

students' research skills and their development of higher levels of creative work are restricted by limited access to computers, digital cameras and specialist software

127. The leadership and management of the department are good, based on very good planning, high expectations and an effective team of teachers who have complementary skills in the subject.

128. The previous inspection identified several areas relating to improving standards, achievement and the quality of assessment. All have been addressed, and therefore improvement since the previous inspection is good.

Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management are very good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good or very good.
- There is a very good range of well supported extra-curricular activities.
- Examination results are well above average.
- The increase in take-up for instrumental teaching has been very good.
- The accommodation is unsatisfactory and affects the quality of learning.

Commentary

129. Overall, standards are above average. Because no students entered for GCSE in 2002 and 2003, it is not possible to identify trends. However, results in 2004 were well above national averages. Standards in work seen in Years 10 and 11 are also well above average. Standards of musical performance are high, and this is reflected in the flourishing extra-curricular groups. Students' compositions are very well varied in style and exploit modern composition techniques very effectively. By Year 9 the students are attaining average standards. They control keyboards well, but fingering systems are underused. Students play with a good sense of rhythm and compose effective melodies. Their ability to notate music is below average when dealing with pitch, but their understanding of rhythm patterns is better. They perform well in pairs, and as a class.

130. The students' achievement is very good overall. Students enter the school in Year 7 with below average attainment and do well to attain average standards by Year 9. All groups achieve well and there is no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls. Students with

SEN, and gifted and talented students, achieve well as a result of a high level of well matched individual help. In Years 10 and 11, students achieve very well in attaining above average standards. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls. Gifted and talented students do very well.

131. The quality of teaching and learning is very good overall. All lessons seen were good or very good. In Years 7 to 9, teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well planned and the teachers have very good subject knowledge. Teachers' expectations are high and all groups are suitably challenged. Much of the teaching is charismatic and motivating, leading to good concentration and learning. A high level of individual attention is well matched to students' needs; however, at times, the tasks set could be more varied to match the needs of different groups of students. Not enough use is made of homework in these year groups. In Years 10 and 11 teaching and learning are very good. There is an even higher level of individual attention, and this combines with very good use of ICT and of independent working to enhance the quality of learning. Relationships between teachers and students are very good. Although some improvements have been made, the accommodation is still unsatisfactory and affects learning.

132. Leadership and management are very good. The head of department provides charismatic leadership and is an excellent role model. Management is equally good. In turn there has been outstanding improvement since the previous inspection. This is manifested in rising standards, the development of many extra-curricular activities and instrumental teaching, and improvements in resources.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve well in response to good teaching.
- Standards are above average.
- Very good leadership and management lead to an improving department.
- The programme of extra-curricular sport is very good.
- Some underachievement occurs as a result of absence, a high rate of non-participation and the limited teaching time available.

Commentary

133. The proportion of Year 11 students gaining A* to C grades in the 2004 GCSE examination was above the national average, and above that of most other subjects in the school. This was an improvement on the results of 2003 and earlier.

134. During the inspection, activities were observed in games, gymnastics, swimming, health related fitness, aerobics and GCSE theory lessons. By Year 9 standards are above national expectations, reflecting the results of teacher assessments in 2003 and 2004. Standards in Year 11 are also above expectations, in both the core and GCSE courses. Students join the school with standards mostly below expectations, and they achieve well by Years 9 and 11 in acquiring knowledge and understanding and in developing a range of practical skills. Achievement is stronger in practical than in theory work, and students

achieve best in games. The least achievement was observed in a Year 7 gymnastics lesson, in which learning was restricted by poor basic skills. Students with SEN achieve well; so do gifted and talented students, who benefit from initiatives such as the short GCSE course. There are no significant differences in achievement or standards between boys and girls. Although most students have positive attitudes, some underachieve because of high rates of absence and non-participation.

135. Teaching and learning are good. A particular strength is the emphasis on independent and collaborative learning, along with support for students' initiative, seen for example when students help to organise parts of lessons and evaluate their progress. Teachers give good feedback on how students can improve. Good subject knowledge feeds into well structured practices, which keep students focused, and teachers make good use of limited lesson time. Briskly paced activities in theory lessons lead to a strong, productive work ethos. High expectations lead to good progress, particularly in developing ball skills and tactical awareness in a range of games.

136. Leadership and management are very good. The head of department manages a cohesive team of specialist teachers. The options evening for Year 11 provides realistic advice to potential Sixth Form students and, where appropriate, draws attention to vocational courses on offer in the school or elsewhere. Very good monitoring and a strong emphasis on review and evaluation have helped to improve standards. The department benefits from good access to swimming, but indoor space is limited and sometimes restricts learning. The short time available for practical activities in lessons and the limited indoor facilities also sometimes restrict learning. Teachers do well to minimise the effects of these deficiencies. There is a popular programme of extra-curricular sport and a good record of sporting success in competitions.

137. Significant improvement since the previous inspection is reflected in a rise in overall standards and achievement, along with greater consistency of teaching, improved learning and a wider range of extracurricular activities.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

No subject in this section was focused upon during the inspection, but three lessons of business studies were sampled in Years 10 and 11. Students achieve well and attain above average standards as a result of well structured lessons and good teaching which motivates and supports them. Year 11 students work hard and are determined to do well. They have developed the skills and techniques to answer examination questions well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Arrangements for PSHE clearly incorporate the components of citizenship, and they enhance many aspects of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through lessons, assemblies, thought for the week, and other activities such as the form and school councils. The programme is taught by form tutors in Years 7 and 8, and from Year 9 onwards by a small, dedicated team under the leadership of co-ordinators for Years 7 to 9 and for Years 10 and 11. Lesson materials for each year group are well researched and prepared so that all teachers know what to do. Arrangements for careers education and sex education are fully in place. Teaching was good overall in the sample of PSHE lessons seen. In one very good Year 7 lesson, for example, very well organised activities fostered a high level of mature group discussion about smoking and health, with students showing very positive attitudes and confidence in their contributions.

Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Good guidance for the teachers who teach the course is provided by co-ordinators who lead each key stage, and there are well researched and prepared materials for each year group.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Arrangements for assessment are not fully developed; currently, work is evaluated rather than assessed to show evidence of progression.
- The distinction between citizenship, other subjects and PSHE is not clearly defined.

Commentary

138. Citizenship is provided within the weekly PSHE lessons, by form tutors in Years 7 and 8 and by a specialist team in Years 9 to 11. Standards achieved by the end of Year 9 and Year 11 are at least in line with national expectations. Students in Years 7 to 9 make good progress and achieve well because of the well planned course materials and their willingness to contribute to and engage in discussion during lessons. Particularly valuable topical contributions are made by a wide variety of outside speakers who are in sympathy with young peoples' situations and needs. Written work in students' *Themes* folders is satisfactory overall, but some is not complete.

139. Students are clear about the standard of their work, although the process of recording levels is still being refined. Within the programme of study for citizenship, the strands of becoming an informed citizen and developing skills of enquiry and communication are best developed, but those for developing skills of participation and responsible action are less so. However, the school has worked hard to overcome this more difficult section through the use of speakers, clubs and the activities week each summer. Students' achievement in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory overall. Many make good progress, because the course is structured towards developing maturity in thought and attitude, as was seen in the handling of sensitive areas such as crime, smoking, careers and sexual health.

140. Teaching and learning are good, and frequently very good. This is because of the carefully planned course, including careers guidance and the training of teachers. In Years 7 and 8, all form tutors are involved but some find the subject easier than others. Most students learn well and say they see the value of the course and the subject topics it contains. The school council, with elected representatives from each year group, is especially effective because it is responsive to the issues students raise and takes action to resolve them in conjunction with staff.

141. Both leadership and management are good because of the skill, effort and dedication of the co-ordinators and their teams. Particularly effective is the co-ordinators' ability to communicate with their teams, through planning, clearly stated objectives and suggested approaches, with work booklets for topics. National Curriculum levels are reported at the end of Year 9. Although assessment is not yet comprehensive, plans are in place for appropriate accreditation of work in the older year groups.

142. Citizenship was not a national curriculum subject at the time of the last inspection and was therefore not included in the previous report.

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM

In the inspection, eight 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
English	1	100.0	82.9	0.0	17.5	20.0	28.7
English literature	9	88.9	85.9	11.1	19.1	26.7	30.2
Mathematics	1	100.0	61.9	0.0	17.1	30.0	22.1
Science (biology)	5	100.0	65.2	0.0	11.1	20.0	20.6
Humanities (history)	6	100.0	80.7	33.3	19.5	41.7	28.6
Information technology	3	33.3	67.0	0.0	10.9	6.7	21.4
Physical education	5	100.0	73.2	0.0	11.4	24.0	23.1
Business studies	15	100.0	76.4	53	16.4	44.7	26.2
Performing arts	Information not available in 2003						

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
English	14	100.0	99.4	21.4	36.9	74.3	80.9
English literature	13	92.3	99.5	30.8	46.5	76.9	86.5
Mathematics	1	100.0	96.7	100.0	55.6	100.0	88.8
Science (biology)	3	100.0	96.4	33.3	39.2	66.7	78.6
Humanities (history)	6	100.0	99.0	0.0	44.6	66.7	84.6
Information technology	3	66.7	95.6	0.0	24.6	33.3	69.5
Physical education	4	25.0	98.0	0.0	30.9	15.0	75.2
Business studies	32	82.8	65.0	21.9	14.6	59.4	60.1
Performing arts	Information not available in 2003						

ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

English was the focus of the inspection, but lessons in French and German were sampled. In 2003 and 2004, results in AS and A2 examinations were below the national average in both those languages. However, all students passed and their achievement was good. Current standards are average overall and students' achievement is good. In a very good Year 13 German lesson, and in an excellent Year 12 French lesson, the teacher's superb use of the foreign language contributed to students' very good progress. An increased number of Year 11 students plan to study modern languages in 2005.

English

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good, and students are very well motivated.
- Very good assessment practice helps students to improve their performance.
- The department is very well led.
- Students make good progress between Year 12 and Year 13 in both English language and literature.
- Writing skills and skills in reading aloud are below average.
- Links with provision for performing arts in the school are underdeveloped.

Commentary

143. Provision in English in the Sixth Form is very good. Many students start the course with below average attainment, because their literacy and study skills from Years 7 to 11 are well below average. Entry criteria have been raised this year to ensure that all those who embark on the course have a reasonable chance of success. Examination results at AS and A2 level in both language and literature in 2003 were below average when compared to those of schools nationally but, given the original starting point for most students, this represents good achievement. Students have limited knowledge of the linguistics and grammar elements in the English language course at the beginning of Year 12, but evidence from work seen in portfolios and in class shows that they are making good progress. Their work reveals an increasing confidence in their use of language and in their knowledge of writers and poets. Good progress is made by Year 12 and Year 13 in both language and literature work. Based on students' attainment in GCSE, this represents good achievement; most of the current Year 13 students in English literature are on target to gain a Grade C or above in the 2005 examinations.

144. Teaching is very good. Students benefit from the shared expertise of teachers who are able to teach to their strengths and interests. This helps literature students to develop good, critical approaches to the interpretation of texts. Whilst many students struggle to deduce and infer at the deeper levels in response to an author's intentions, they can express a strong personal preference for works read. Teachers help them to identify with confidence different styles and forms of presentation. Students comment from an informed viewpoint on the effectiveness of narrative or persuasive writing and understand the main principles and theories of how children acquire and use language. They use effectively the technical language associated with the subject. Writing skills are below average. Students listen well, but they are not confident or expressive readers when asked to read aloud in class.

145. Learning is good. The small class sizes ensure that students have closely directed teaching with a strong emphasis on developing their independent learning skills. Very good approaches to assessment help students to see how they can improve, and the department has produced very high quality advice and guidance on how to meet the demands of the criteria for each grade in the examinations. This provision aids those who find learning less easy. Students are very well motivated by the teaching they receive. They are enthusiastic learners and work cooperatively in group tasks.

146. The department is very well led. Management is good. A strong team ethos is emerging with the sharing of sets between language and literature teachers. Appropriate targets are set in line with the school's development plan. The head of department, appointed since the last inspection, has introduced effective new procedures and materials to support students' learning. Internal organisation is tight and the departmental documentation and planning are very good. Recent self-evaluation processes give a very clear view of the department's strengths and the areas for improvement. These changes demonstrate the good improvement made since the last inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

147. Literacy skills in the Sixth Form reflect the general levels found throughout the school. The school has a challenging task in raising students' performance in speaking, listening, reading and writing from the well below average levels found as students enter the school in Year 7. By Year 12 standards are average. The transfer to A level from AS can be very challenging. Though several students still show insecure skills when reading aloud, and have poor handwriting and a weak grasp of grammar, standards by the end of Year 13 across the Sixth Form are average.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching by subject specialists results in good learning and achievement.
- Good relationships between students and teachers lead to a very productive working atmosphere.
- There is not enough planned discussion between students to help them to challenge one another's ideas or to justify their own.

Commentary

148. The focus of the inspection was on Year 12 and Year 13 courses in mathematics. The range of options covers pure mathematics, statistics and mechanics and further mathematics. Standards on entry to Year 12 advanced level mathematics courses have been below average. However, GCSE requirements have been sensibly tightened for the current Year 12, and standards on entry are now average. The 2003 A-level results were above average. Results in 2004 were similar. One student took further mathematics and received a Grade A pass. The number of students taking advanced level examinations is too small for any specific trends to be identified in standards or by gender.

149. Standards of work seen in Year 13 are above average, showing good achievement. Students have very good algebraic skills and can apply them effectively, for example in working out partial fractions as a prelude to integration. They are able to apply their skills to problems in statistics and mechanics. Students in Year 12 make rapid progress in learning new skills because teaching and learning are firmly based on a strong foundation from Year 11. For example, they quickly grasp the basic ideas of calculus and learn to apply them well.

150. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers know their subject well and can explain it clearly. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used effectively to improve learning, for example in showing the graphs of exponential functions and how these relate to given problems. Students are hardworking and keen to learn. They feel, rightly, that their work is assessed well and that there is always good guidance to help them improve. Teachers use questions effectively to make students think, but the small size of some groups means that students do not get enough opportunity to debate mathematical ideas and to challenge one another's methodology.

151. Leadership is very good and management is good. The day-to-day organisation runs smoothly and liaison between subject teachers is good. The head of department uses considerable ingenuity in providing a wide range of options for students, using part time staff well to do this. This flexible approach enabled a high attaining student last year to study further mathematics and to be accepted to study mathematics at a prestigious university. There was little reference to post-16 issues in the previous report. Attitudes and teaching were mentioned and have both shown good improvement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

152. When mathematics is used by other students, their skills are below average but are adequate for demands made on them. In biology, for example, students can carry out necessary calculations and present and interpret data. In sports studies they can use statistics in the analysis of performance.

SCIENCE

The focus of the inspection was on biology, but provision in physics, chemistry and geology was also sampled.

153. In a well planned physics lesson, the teacher used a good starter activity to ensure that students were familiar with the ideas they would need in the rest of the lesson, before going on to develop the idea of an electric field. A practical demonstration helped students to understand the concept, and clever use of examination questions gave them a good appreciation of the standards expected. However, students had limited opportunity to contribute to their own learning, for example in discussion and problem solving activities.

154. In a very good Year 13 lesson on lava flow, geology students used a variety of experimental techniques to investigate the geology of volcanoes. All students showed a very high level of commitment to their work, and learned very well. In another very good lesson, this time in chemistry, the teacher's excellent use of models, and challenging questions, helped students to understand the origin and importance of stereo-isomerism in the natural world.

Biology

Provision in biology is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students learn very well, and frequently gain higher grades than expected from their GCSE grades.
- Attitudes to the subject are very good.
- Teaching is very good overall, and leads to very good achievement.
- Although teachers' own use of ICT is excellent, and has a good impact on learning, students themselves do not make enough use of ICT in their day-to-day studies.

Commentary

155. When students enter the course, their standards are below average overall, though some have a good range of high GCSE grades. Teachers cater well for individual needs, and students make very good progress in relation to their ability. AS and A-level results have varied over the last few years, but have been comparable to the national average. However, tracking students' progress from their overall GCSE score through to AS and A-level shows that nearly all gain higher grades than expected. Good advice on entry means that few students eventually find the course too difficult and drop out during year 12.

156. In lessons, developing appropriate technical vocabulary and helping students think as biologists lead to good progress. Work seen in folders and during lessons indicates that some students reach very high standards, whilst those of more limited ability understand the main biological ideas and can express them well. Standards are broadly in line with national averages in Year 12 but improve steadily, so that they are above average in Year 13. High attaining students are well supported in their quest for the highest grades, and gain entry to university in highly competitive subjects such as medicine. Because nearly all

students do as well as could reasonably be expected of them in relation to their ability, achievement in the subject is very good.

157. Teaching is at least good, and sometimes excellent. A scholarly atmosphere and excellent attitudes mean that students become fully involved. They ask challenging questions of their teachers who, in turn, challenge them to think deeply about the subject. Teachers are skilled in bringing those who are less confident into the discussion so that they learn well. In an example of one the best lessons, on cell division, the teacher linked the understanding and knowledge of the

process to the significance of the outcome very clearly. As a result, students not only learned about cell division but about the inter-relationships between different parts of the subject. In a Year 12 lesson on enzymes, however, students showed limited understanding of microbiology in their handling of agar plates.

158. Good use of homework helps to consolidate students' knowledge. Coursework is generally well conceived and presented, with the use of ICT where appropriate. Excellent use of video animations to show the process of meiosis helped students to understand how cells divide, but students themselves do not use ICT as much as they should for research, for analysis of experimental results, or in presenting their evaluations. Assessment of students' progress is good, and based on national standards. The department sets realistic targets and carefully monitors progress towards them in the medium and long term. Teaching and learning are, therefore, very good overall.

159. The department is very well led. The head of department, who had been in post only for a short period at the time of the inspection, has a very clear vision for the department and places the highest priority on catering for the needs of individual students. She manages resources well, pays due attention to matters of health and safety, and maintains an awareness of modern developments in biology. Little comment was made on Sixth Form biology at the time of the last inspection. Since then, numbers choosing the course have increased considerably, standards are high, and students achieve very well. Improvement since the last has therefore been good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in Year 13 AVCE are high, and students gain higher grades than expected from their GCSE grades. Achievement is therefore good.
- Students have very positive attitudes towards the subject.
- Relationships between teachers and students are very good.
- Leadership of the subject is good.
- There is insufficient good or better teaching.
- The accommodation for the subject is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

160. The numbers of students taking courses leading to AS and A-level in ICT have been very small over the last few years. Comparisons with national statistics are inappropriate for groups of only a few students, but success rates have been broadly as expected. In 2003, for example, two of the three students who completed the A-level examination passed. More recently, vocational courses have been introduced. These have proved very popular but have not been taught for long enough to provide good comparative examination data.

161. In the *Presenting Information* unit of the syllabus, standards of work by students in Year 12 are in line with expectations and similar to those seen nationally. After extensive

Internet research, students have created a variety of business stationery to their own design, such as business cards and advertising leaflets. Higher attaining students have good evaluative skills, but weaker students tend to describe rather than analyse. In their current work they have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of spreadsheets, as they design and customise spreadsheet layouts of invoices for a hotel.

162. Standards of work by students in Year 13 are high. Students are working on a unit requiring higher level skills in using a database. They understand the file structures in relational databases and use their understanding well to design a database for a transport company. They understand the importance of validation of data and know how to apply input masks and create drop down boxes to assist data entry.

163. Achievement is good. Students starting on the advanced course have a very wide range of experiences of ICT. Some have not taken a GCSE course in the subject, others have taken only a short course. To reach expected levels indicates good achievement. Achievement by Year 13 students is equally good, as they build on their knowledge gained in the first year of the course (AS) to reach above expected levels.

164. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge and explain the use of software well to students. Lessons are well planned and clear objectives help students to understand what is expected of them. In good lessons, very effective use is made of examination board criteria. This helps students to appreciate the quality of work required of them to gain high marks in their projects. In such lessons, students' very positive attitudes and the very good relationships between teachers and students all contribute to good learning and high achievement. In lessons which were satisfactory rather than good, the teacher did not give students enough opportunity to think for themselves, preferring to present them with solutions to problems as they arose.

165. Leadership of the subject is good. There is vision to develop the subject further, and the introduction of A-level and Key Skills courses since the last inspection is an indication of the good progress made since then. The Key Skills course provides further opportunities for all students to gain an ICT accreditation. However, the accommodation for the subject is unsatisfactory, as the three main ICT rooms have very little space for students to work on the paper documentation required for advanced courses.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

166. Sixth Form students make use of ICT skills in some subjects, but this is generally confined to the use of the Internet for research purposes. Where they are required to complete projects they make effective use of word-processing skills in the presentation of their work. In mathematics, students use computers to create graphs, and in music they use specialist software to compose music. However, provision for cross-curricular ICT in the Sixth Form is unsatisfactory. There is a lack of specialist software and reliable computers, and limited use of ICT in teaching. Students are competent users of the technology, but their ICT skills and knowledge are generally underused.

HUMANITIES

History

Provision in history is **good**.

- Students achieve well because teaching and learning are very good.
- Results at AS are consistently above average.
- Leadership and management are very good. Teachers form a very effective team.

- Below average literacy skills limit achievement.
- The poor condition of computers severely restricts opportunities for independent learning.

Commentary

167. In 2003, results at AS level were well above the national average and represented good achievement. In 2004, attainment was again above average and better than expected, given students' prior GCSE results. Boys did better than girls. Standards seen in class are slightly above average and this represents good progress against students' below average attainment on entry to Sixth Form. In 2003, A-level results were well below average. Results improved in 2004 and rose to match the national average. Though all students passed the examination in both years, few of them obtained higher grades. Standards seen in class are average and students achieve well. Whilst students find the transition from GCSE to AS relatively easy, the step up to advanced level is more challenging because of the higher level of skills required. Perceptive analysis has brought about a number of shrewd changes to teaching and learning which have improved the results in Year 13.

168. Numbers are high enough to maintain viable groups, although a few students give up the subject at the end of Year 12, following their AS examinations. Students say they choose to study history because they enjoy it.

169. Teaching and learning are very good and are sometimes exemplary. Teachers are very good subject specialists who manage their materials and students very well. Very good relationships enable students to work easily in pairs or groups. Very good question-and-answer sessions promote a fast learning dialogue. Students are actively involved in their learning. They are provided with printed prompts to help them to revise previous learning. They are also given very good banks of statements which help them establish chronology and match cause and effect. These help to develop their thinking skills. Students are taught good note-making skills, built around mind-maps and annotated photographs. They make good use of the notes they have produced. Stimulating activity precedes the completion of good word frames around which essays are written. During the inspection, students wrote speeches to empathise with one viewpoint whilst studying Ho Chi Minh's statement to the 1954 Geneva Conference. Their performance of a role-play of the trial of John Hampden was excellent. Very good oral skills disguise below average writing skills. The disrepair of computers severely limits independent learning. Though all work hard in class, students do not read enough outside school, and few have developed the higher level thinking skills they need to achieve the top grades. Marking is very thorough and shows students clearly how to improve.

170. Leadership is good and management is very good. Teachers form a very effective team. There is not enough time available in Year 13 to cover the course in sufficient depth, because the time offered is less than is usual nationally. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

Example of outstanding practice

Exemplary, imaginative and skilful teaching and learning in an AS lesson on the breakdown of Charles I's personal rule included an excellent role-play exercise about the trial of John Hampden. The teacher was in confident command of her materials, relationships were very

good, and the pace was fast.

Recall was reinforced by matching tiles written in the previous lesson to explain the king's attempt to rule without parliament, the resultant tension over taxation, and the consequent questioning of the royal prerogative.

This led easily to drawing up opposing views and an allocation of roles in the exercise which followed. The antagonists briefly rehearsed their arguments and the trial began with a succinct statement from the presiding judge, followed by dispute and a summing up. The opinions were put very well. The students marshalled cogent arguments which were fluently expressed and very well discussed in the cut and thrust of a brief but lively debate. Students clearly understood the underlying tensions generated by the re-negotiation of the distribution of power through the practical experience of arguing them.

Teaching and learning were of a very high order, achievement was excellent, and standards in oral work were above average.

ENGINEERING, TECHNOLOGY AND MANUFACTURING

No subject in this curriculum area was the focus of the inspection. However, lessons in product design and food technology in Years 12 and 13 were sampled. In the two lessons observed, students displayed very good attitudes to learning, and teaching was good or very good. Overall, achievement is good and standards are broadly in line with national averages.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA

The focus of the inspection was on performing arts, but lessons in art and music were also sampled.

171. Fine art is a popular subject in the Sixth Form, and most students achieve well and complete the course. In the very good lesson seen, students were working on individual assignments based on natural forms. The flexibility of the lesson enabled the teacher to support students of all abilities, and standards of work varied from in line with the national average to above average. High expectations, excellent individual support and excellent relationships between students and teachers led to very good achievement.

172. Teaching in another lesson, this time with a group of able musicians, was also very good. The lesson was skilfully constructed to involve discussion, opportunities to listen to excerpts, and question-and-answer sessions. Clear explanation by the teacher improved students' understanding of their set works and led to good achievement.

Performing arts

Provision in performing arts is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching by an enthusiastic and committed group of experienced, specialist teachers leads to good learning.
- Achievement in lessons, in examinations, and throughout the course is good.
- Students are very positive about the subject and work hard.
- Performing arts play a major part in the personal development of students.
- Recruitment for the arts is disappointingly low in the Sixth Form.
- There has not been a strong tradition of large whole-school performances. This is unusual in a school of this size.
- There is a potential for confusion in the status of departmental and other management roles.

Commentary

173. Many students start the course with below average standards of attainment in GCSE. The standards reached in AS and A-level examinations are average, although individual students have gained high grades. Their achievement, therefore, in lessons, examinations, and throughout the course is good. Students come to a sound understanding of the main theories, history, and practitioners in the art forms studied. They know the major dance forms and choreographers, and can compare soundly the styles and practice of each one

studied. In drama, they have secure knowledge of major dramatists, directors and theatre forms. In music, they receive individual skills training and are introduced to the work of major composers and performers from both the classical and the popular musical traditions.

174. Students are very positive about the subject and work hard. They pursue many extra-curricular activities enthusiastically and their practical performance skills are well developed. The emphasis currently is on small-group recital and performance events. There has not been a strong tradition of large whole school performances, which is unusual for a school of this size, and this is an area for consideration in the school's aim of increasing take up of the subject at the examination level. Recruitment at GCSE level is strong for the arts but is disappointingly low in the Sixth Form. However, the healthy numbers in Years 10 and 11 are positive trends and are indicative of the impact of new staffing on generating an interest in the arts, particularly with boys, since the last inspection. A talent contest devised by students was very good proof of this development.

175. Students benefit from the enthusiastic and committed work of a group of experienced, specialist teachers who are ambitious for the future development of the subject and for the success of their students. The very good teaching students receive is rooted in teachers' very secure command of each arts element: dance, drama and music. A strongly supportive and encouraging way of working is apparent in all lessons, and is responsible for the good learning and for the good progress that students make.

176. Performing arts is very well led. Each specialist is a true enthusiast for her subject area and has a clear vision as to how it should be developed. The course is well integrated, although music receives less teaching time than the dance and drama elements; as a result, staff and students are under pressure to cover the work programme. Departmental documentation, planning and self-evaluation practices are of high quality. The management is good but there is a potential for confusion given the status of the individual department heads, who have responsibility for their own subjects, and the roles of the co-ordinator for performing arts and the assistant headteacher who is the line manager.

177. Performing arts play a major part in the personal, social and cultural development of the students and enhance the school's reputation within the local communities and with parents.

178. Provision in performing arts is very good overall and very much improved since the last inspection.

HOSPITALITY, SPORTS, LEISURE AND TRAVEL

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve well in response to good teaching.
- Very good attitudes lead to good learning by students.
- Very good leadership and management of this developing subject area, with a strong emphasis on developing independent learning skills, lead to good achievement.

Commentary

179. The relatively few students who took the 2004 AS and A Level examinations attained a good pass rate. National comparisons are inappropriate for small numbers of students, but the results show improvement since the course was introduced. The inspection showed that standards in the current Year 13 are in line with the expectations of students of similar age nationally, particularly in knowledge of aspects such as physiology and their understanding of the place of sport in Britain and other countries. These standards represent good achievement for both boys and girls. Although they join the Sixth Form with average standards in physical education, students find the transition from GCSE work quite challenging. However, they have very positive attitudes towards the subject and respond well to good teaching. The result is that they make good progress in learning to construct an extended piece of coursework on acquiring skills in a variety of sports. They also make good progress in developing a sound knowledge of the psychology and physiology of sport, and a sound understanding of comparative provision of sport in Britain, America and Australia.

180. Teaching and learning are good, and result in good progress. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, and prepare a range of resources that motivate students. Teachers particularly encourage students to learn actively, as was seen for example when Year 12 students were organised to work in pairs, using their initiative to decide how to present their investigations into the respiratory system. Students enjoy this active approach, and their positive attitudes promoted good learning. Teaching emphasises the development of students' communication skills, although they are not sufficiently encouraged to give extended oral responses. The quality of assessment and feedback is good, helping students to make good progress in developing those areas in which they are less secure.

181. Leadership and management are very good. The department has developed relatively new courses and has gradually increased the popularity of the subject. Staffing is very good. Very good monitoring and a programme of professional development help to improve teachers' skills. The curriculum has been widened to include the Community Sports Leadership Award, which helps to develop initiative and responsibility. The department has come a long way, considering that Sixth Form physical education is a relatively new subject in the school and was not taught at the time of the previous inspection.

BUSINESS

The focus was on business studies, but three lessons were also sampled in economics. Examination results in economics have improved steadily over the last few years, with increasing numbers of students gaining the highest grades, A or B. Teaching in economics is at least good, and sometimes very good.

Business studies

Provision in business studies is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is good and standards are improving.
- Students achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment.
- The subject has a highly committed team of well qualified teachers.
- The department is managed effectively.
- The department has not developed enough links with the local business community.
- Global business issues need to be more in evidence in the course.

Commentary

182. The results attained by AVCE business studies students are well in line with the national average, and frequently above it. The proportion of students attaining the highest grades, A or B, in business has increased significantly over the last three years. These results reflect the overall upward trend in GCSE examination results in business studies and represent good achievement.

183. The standards of work seen at AS and A level are good both in lessons and in students' independent written projects. Levels of achievement in the Sixth Form are good, and a significant proportion of students achieve standards which are well above those that might have been predicted from their GCSE results. By Year 13, students have developed a strong subject knowledge base and good analytical skills which they apply to a range of business problems in market research, human resources, and management. They show a commendable capacity to think through the use of new business concepts in strategic decision making. Their ability to

interpret and critically evaluate evidence and then draw conclusions is well exemplified in their presentations on market research. Year 12 students, some of whom are new to the subject, are developing good skills and understanding of the subject. The course is well designed to meet the needs of all students. Students work very hard and achieve well.

184. The overall quality of teaching is good and promotes very effective learning. Teaching strengths lie in good subject knowledge, the range of teaching strategies, the interesting selection of case studies activities, and the thorough and careful development of students' knowledge base. Teachers have high expectations and set high standards for their students, but are also very supportive. Students respond by working very hard and show real determination to succeed. They enjoy the subject and several of them wish to pursue their studies in higher education. Both ICT and numeracy are very well integrated into lessons. Teachers provide good feedback to students on how to improve their grades.

185. This is a popular and expanding department which is efficiently managed by the new head of department, supported by a well qualified and committed team of enthusiastic teachers with a clear sense of purpose. The curriculum is well planned and offers a wide choice of vocational and academic courses. Progress is regularly assessed, and students understand clearly how they can improve. Resources, including ICT and book resources in the library and the business studies room, are good. There is a very active and successful Young Enterprise group. However, the department needs to be vigilant that lesson content continues to be rich and diverse, and that students have opportunities to learn from the experience of senior executives in regional business development.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND GENERAL PROGRAMMES

186. No subject in this curriculum area was the focus of the inspection, but lessons in general studies and guidance lessons were sampled. All students take a course leading to an AS qualification in general studies, which meets the requirements for religious education in the Sixth Form. The course is well constructed and well taught, with a good variety of imaginatively presented topics. For example, a Year 13 lesson considered the implications of the Financial Services Act, using leaflets available in shopping centres locally, before considering the pressures of financial management on students. Students became fully involved in the discussions, which were ably led by the teacher, and gained both in awareness and in specific knowledge about advertising tactics. In 2003, the most recent year for which national comparisons are available, results were well above the national average, and the number of A and B grades was close to the national average. This represents very good achievement.

187. Guidance lessons concentrate on personal development and, for example, excellent practical support is given to students in their application to university, or when preparing to enter employment. Students themselves recognise the enormous value of these courses, and rightly acknowledge the excellent work the school does to make them interesting and relevant. They also say that the courses admirably complement the excellent one-to-one advice provided by subject and pastoral staff.

188. In addition to these well structured courses, all students are expected to take part in activities of benefit to the school or the wider community. The school participates in the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, and 10 students in the current Sixth Form are expected

to gain gold awards; this is a major achievement. Within the school, during the week of the inspection, the Young Enterprise group mounted an outstanding *Stars in your Eyes* production with students from all year groups. The involvement of Sixth Form students with those from the rest of the school presents excellent opportunities for their own personal development, and promotes Sixth Form students as excellent role models to younger students. Students also benefit considerably from acting as mentors to Years 7 to 11, for which full specialist training is provided. As a result of this excellent provision, Sixth Form students have a presence around the school which represents a major strength of the school as a whole.

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	2	3
How inclusive the school is	2	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3	3
Cost effectiveness of the Sixth Form / value for money provided by the school	2	3
Overall standards achieved	3	3
Students' achievement	3	3
Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3	3
Attendance	4	5
Attitudes	2	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2	4
Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4	4
The quality of education provided by the school	3	3
The quality of teaching	2	3
How well students learn	2	3
The quality of assessment	3	3
How well the curriculum meets students' needs	3	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2	2
Accommodation and resources	5	5
Students' care, welfare, health and safety	4	4
Support, advice and guidance for students	1	2
How well the school seeks and acts on students' views	1	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2	2
The leadership and management of the school	2	2
The governance of the school	2	2
The leadership of the headteacher	1	1
The leadership of other key staff	2	2
The effectiveness of management	2	3

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