

INSPECTION REPORT

GLADESMORE COMMUNITY SCHOOL

London

LEA area: Haringey

Unique reference number: 102157

Headteacher: Mr T Hartney

Lead inspector: Dr Calvin Pike

Dates of inspection: 29 November – 2 December 2004

Inspection number: 268811

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

Gender of pupils: Mixed

Number on roll: 1271

School address: Crowland Road
London

Postcode: N15 6EB

Telephone number: 020 800 0884

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Niran Omtoso

Date of previous inspection: 23 November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Gladesmore Community School is an increasingly popular, mixed comprehensive school. It is in the London Borough of Haringey near the borders of Hackney. There are 1271 on roll, with more boys than girls in all years except Year 12. This makes it bigger than the average size secondary school. Until recently, pupils' attainment on entry has been well below the national average partly as a result of particularly weak literacy skills. The attainment on entry of the current Year 7 is just below the average nationally. A large proportion of pupils travel long distances to the school and many live outside the borough. The school's population represents a rich and diverse range of cultures and includes about two-fifths of pupils of Black Caribbean or Black African heritage and a tenth of pupils who are White British. The proportion of pupils for whom English is not their first language is very high. The socio-economic background of pupils is below average overall; the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs is well above the average nationally and the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is broadly in line with national average. The school has a small sixth form of 67 students. The school has achieved Healthy Schools, Sportsmark and Investor in People awards and has gained specialist status as a Mathematics and Computing College.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
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9708	Sylvia Daintrey	Lay inspector	
1795	Joyce Sanderson	Team inspector	English Drama Post-16
17541	Fran Ashworth	Team inspector	Mathematics
4126	Clive Parsons	Team inspector	Science
8052	Ken McKenzie	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Information and communication and technology Post-16
30563	Jackie Pentlow	Team inspector	Religious education
18261	Anthony Hill	Team inspector	Art English as an additional language
15051	Lynne Kauffman	Team inspector	Design and technology
33015	Richard Winter	Team inspector	Geography
8096	Nigel File	Team inspector	History
12408	Alan Frith	Team inspector	Modern foreign language
23308	John Morrell	Team inspector	Music Music Post-16
23268	Kevin Corrigan	Team inspector	Business studies
22590	Bob Castle	Team inspector	Physical education
10759	Lynn Bappa	Team inspector	Citizenship
28002	Sue Taylor	Team inspector	Special educational needs
32379	Bob Brewster	Team inspector	Mathematics Post-16

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	10
Standards achieved in subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	15
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	23
WORK RELATED LEARNING	26
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES	
SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4	27
SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM	44
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	51

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a highly effective and increasingly popular school with much strength and relatively few areas for development. Standards overall are currently below the national averages but the pupils achieve very well. The school's atmosphere for learning is excellent; people work well together. Teaching is good throughout the school and very good in Years 10 and 11. Leadership is very good overall; that of the headteacher is excellent. Management is very good. Although accommodation is good, some of it does not fully meet the needs of the curriculum. The school gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- achievement is good by the end of Year 9 and very good by the end of Year 11 and 13 and as standards are in line with those of similar schools and well above them for the proportion of students gaining 5 A*-C grades in the most recent GCSE examinations
- there is a strong, shared student-focused ethos: students have positive attitudes to learning and behave well and their attendance has improved significantly;
- teaching is most often good and much is very good, with excellence observed in English and drama;
- the headteacher's leadership is excellent and he is supported by a very good leadership team; students' personal development is very good as the individualised support provided is very effective;
- the limited literacy skills of some students, including in the sixth form, are holding up their progress in some subjects;
- assessment is well-developed but information is not used sufficiently to enable pupils to become more independent in their learning;
- the school's accommodation, although good overall, inhibits curriculum development in physical education and music.

The school has made substantial progress since the last inspection resulting in the achievements and standards of pupils being significantly improved. The quality of learning and teaching has improved. All but one of the key issues of the last inspection has been addressed well; many have been very successfully tackled. Considerable change has been made to improve provision overall. The significant outcomes are the results of excellent leadership and very good management of the school as a whole.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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 pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 9.

Overall, pupils' achievements are very good when considering the low levels of attainment on entry. Results are well below national averages in tests at the end of Year 9 and GCSE at the end of Year 11. Even so, the results were better than those of similar schools. Year 11 examination results were above those of similar schools overall and, for pupils gaining five or more A*-C grades, were well above them. Current standards seen in these year groups overall are just below national averages. Good achievement was seen in most subjects. Although it was very good in English and, in Year 10 and 11, in history, students achieved less well in geography and physical education. Pupils with special

educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve very well, matching that of other pupils. Girls out-performed boys in GCSE results in 2004. However, boys' attainment has generally been higher than that of girls and they achieve very well in relation to their attainment on entry to the school.

Pupils' personal qualities are good. They have good attitudes and behaviour. Attendance and punctuality to school are now good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural developments are good not least because the way the school promotes good relationships and racial harmony is excellent.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching and learning are good overall and very good in Years 10 and 11. Teachers use assessment information effectively but feedback to students does not yet sufficiently focus on helping them to become more independent as learners. The curriculum provides very good opportunities for pupils to develop and meets their needs well. Provision for pupils with particular needs is very good. There are excellent opportunities for enrichment, especially through drama, dance and music, and a vast range of clubs and other activities. Resources and accommodation are good overall except in physical education and music where these aspects of provision are more limited and inhibit learning. The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are excellent because teachers are focused on the individual needs of pupils and the range of support is very well managed. The school's links with parents and with other schools and colleges are very good. Those with the community are excellent.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good overall. The headteacher's leadership is excellent. This successfully champions a strong ethos, firmly focused on pupils' achievements. The headteacher is very well supported by a strong team of senior managers with different but complementary strengths who share his commitment to pupils. Senior members of staff provide good role models for other key staff whose leadership is also very good overall. The strong teamwork with senior staff reinforces their leadership skills. Governance is very good. Although requirements for collective worship and religious education in Years 10 to 13 are not in place, governors know the school well and provide effective challenge. Very good management ensures the smooth and efficient running of the school, very good quality of self-evaluation and close and supportive monitoring of teaching and learning.

PARENTS AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are generally very satisfied with the school and the progress that their children make. A very small minority express concerns about support provided. Parents are provided with a good range of information about the school's achievements and pupils' progress but not all reports show clearly what pupils can do to improve. The school consults with parents in many aspects of school life and gives them sufficient opportunity to express their own views. The results of this consultation indicate that parents are very positive about the school and its improvements. Parents appreciate the very wide range of activities provided for pupils and most feel that teaching and achievement are good. Discussions with pupils showed that they are also enthusiastic about the school. Whilst feeling that there is some bullying, they note that it is rare and effectively dealt with by the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise levels of literacy and numeracy skills across the school, including in the sixth form;
- improve standards in geography and physical education;
- meet requirements to teach religious education to all pupils in Years 10 to 13
- share and use assessment information further to refine teaching by encouraging pupils to become more independent as learners;

- refine leadership and management in the sixth form so as to focus more rigorously on tracking progress and raising standards further.

THE SIXTH FORM

The small sixth form provides a relatively narrow, but appropriately targeted range of courses. Whilst numbers of students fluctuate from year to year, the school's links with other schools help to provide suitable choices for study.

OVERALL EVALUATION

There is good and effective provision for students in the sixth form. Results improved in 2004 and showed very good achievement considering attainment on entry but are well below those nationally. The quality of education is good as courses offered meet students' needs. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Leadership of the sixth form is good and its overall management is very effective because a strong group of staff works effectively as a team to ensure students are supported well. However, arrangements for monitoring individual student progress are not yet rigorous enough to ensure data is used to provide challenges which are demanding enough or which encourage students to be sufficiently independent in their learning. There is a very positive ethos in the sixth form which is enhanced by a range of enrichment activities. Students' attitudes reflect this very positive ethos. The sixth form has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection

~~and improvements to the value for money are:~~

- students' attitudes are good;
- achievement is good in most courses provided and very good overall;
- students' literacy and numeracy skills are low;
- the quality of teaching and learning is good;
- the breadth of courses provided is appropriate to meet students' needs;
- students experience a good range of enrichment activities, including through links with local businesses and related services and the use of external visits and trips.

QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES OF THE CURRICULUM

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

Curriculum area	Evaluation
Mathematics	Satisfactory provision: teaching and learning are good. Standards are below average but achievement is good. Relatively few students follow courses in mathematics.
Information and communication technology	Very good provision overall: teaching and learning are very good. Standards are good and achievement is very good.
Visual and performing arts and media	Provision in music is very good: teaching, learning and achievement are very good and standards are high for the small numbers following the course. Provision in drama is satisfactory: teaching and learning are good. Achievement is good. Standards are in line with average.
Business	Satisfactory provision overall: teaching is good. Although standards are below average, achievement is satisfactory.

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

Very good: there is a good and supportive form tutor system and personal, social and health education programme. Students know that there is an adult who know them well. Although students are cared for well and given good advice, systems for tracking their progress and then using information to revise and set challenging targets for the future have been insufficiently robust. Induction to the sixth form is excellent. Guidance and support for

those intending to go to university as well as for those seeking alternative career options is excellent.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SIXTH FORM

Good leadership and management overall: the team benefits both from members who have brought stability and experience to the sixth form for many years and the skills and expertise of new members who have joined relatively recently. Consequently, although there has been insufficient rigor in tracking progress and using data to review achievements regularly and set new challenges for students, these issues are now a point of focus for the team. On a day-to-day basis the sixth form operates smoothly and the move from Year 11 to 12 is supported very well.

STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM

Students hold positive views of the sixth form. They recognise and appreciate both the expertise of their teachers and the commitment they show in supporting them in their studies. Students are confident in being able to rely on them for guidance in their careers. They show trust in the adults that provide advice and care for them in developing as adults. Students have opportunities to contribute their views about the running of the school and to be actively involved in doing so through the School Council. They appreciate the opportunities for study within their own school and across the consortium and the available range of enrichment activities in which they are able to participate.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

Although attainment levels are generally well below the national average in all year groups apart from in Years 7 and 8, students' achievement is very good. Until recently, students have entered the school with well below average attainment but make good progress in their first three years so that by the end of Year 9 current attainment is below the national average. This represents good progress overall. Results for pupils gaining five or more A* to C grades at GCSE have risen faster than in most schools with students achieving very well across Years 10 to 11. Although English is an additional language for a large proportion of pupils, overall achievement is almost in line with the average for schools with similar attainment at the end of Year 9. This success is due to the school's sharp focus on individual student needs and a shared commitment to raising attainment and achievement for all students. The relatively small number of students in the sixth form achieve very well with the vast majority gaining at least a pass grade in their chosen subjects.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Although GCSE results are well below average nationally, the proportion gaining 5 A*-C grades is rising much faster than in other schools;
- The school's shared commitment to raising standards and very good teaching, particularly in Years 10 and 11, ensures that achievement is very good overall;
- Standards are generally well below the national average in Year 9 but the school performs very well compared with similar schools in these years;
- Literacy and numeracy skills are low throughout the school, including in the sixth form;
- All students benefit from the school's focus on individual learning programmes and the wide range of courses available;
- The school collects and uses a vast amount of data to monitor and evaluate student performance although analysis of achievement by ability and performance in the sixth form generally is underdeveloped.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	30.6 (30.3)	N/A (33.4)
Mathematics	31.1 (31.0)	N/A (35.4)
Science	29.4 (29.8)	N/A (33.6)

There were 240 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

1. The school's collection and analysis of a vast amount of data shows that clear progress has been made in raising standards year on year in most subjects and for most ethnic groups, although there is no explicit analysis of the progress made by different ability groups. In Years 7 to 9 in the core subjects, students perform better in mathematics than in English and least well in science. Although National Curriculum test results in 2004 show standards are below the national average in these subjects, when compared with similar schools the school performs particularly well, especially in mathematics. In the foundation subjects, standards are below national averages in

most subjects but teacher assessments indicate that, within the school, design and technology (Food) had the highest standards and religious education the lowest at the end of Year 9. Many subjects attained above the school's target with modern foreign languages exceeding them by the greatest percentage. By contrast, results for physical education were the furthest below the school's targets.

2. Students in Years 9 to 11 entered the school with well below average attainment. As a result of good teaching, knowledge of individual students' strengths and weaknesses and very good individual support for learning they achieve well so that by the end of Year 9 standards are better and are below the national average as opposed to well below. Current Year 7 Students have entered with better attainment levels, particularly in terms of literacy skills although this is still below the national average. There is some difference in the performance of boys and girls. Although boys' attainment has generally been higher than girls' attainment, GCSE results in 2004 show that girls outperformed boys. Girls' performances have improved more consistently in core and most non-core subjects. Girls performed higher than boys across the ethnic groups represented in school with the exception of Kurdish, Turkish or Cypriot students in English, Black Caribbean boys in mathematics, and all four of these groups in science. The school does not formally analyse achievement by ability, as it has by ethnicity, so is not aware of how well students across the ability range achieve compared to others nationally.
3. Standards of work seen on the inspection were generally below the national average by Year 9 although this represents good achievement and progress across Years 7 to 9 in most subjects. Many factors are contributing to this including a focus on improving teaching to meet the learning needs of all, for example in history where the vastly improving level of challenge is beginning to impact of standards. In modern foreign languages challenging targets have been set to for students to aspire to. Whilst achievement in English is very good, standards are below average as poor literacy and language skills hold back students' progress and their ability to contribute in the classroom. Although standards in mathematics are below the national average, the department knows students' needs very well and all abilities are effectively supported in the classroom including the higher attainers. Similarly, standards are below national averages in science but students make good progress because they are engaged well by good teaching that is characterised by the effective use of a range of strategies to reinforce understanding.

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	41 (37)	53 (52)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	79 (79)	89 (91)
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	88 (88)	96 (96)
Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects)	27.8 (28.2)	35 (32)

There were 231 pupils in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. The school has made significant improvement with its GCSE results under the inspired leadership of the headteacher and a relentless and shared drive to improve standards, particularly in Years 10 and 11 and these students' GCSE performance. The number of students gaining five or more A*-C has risen spectacularly in three years from 16 to 41 per cent. Whilst below the national average, it is above the

average of schools in similar contexts. Overall achievement is almost in line with the average for schools with similar attainment at the end of Year 9 even though this average includes a large proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language. Analysis of results overtime shows there has been clear improvement in most subjects with the most evident in art, CDT (graphic), CDT (resistant materials), English, French, mathematics, media, Turkish and sociology. Improvements have also been clear in CDT (food), music, drama and history but results dipped in these subjects n 2004. Results over the last five years have been most consistently high in drama and CDT (food). They are consistently lower than the rest in geography, a situation that the department and the school are aware of and taking steps to tackle. Girls have outperformed boys overall in recent years. But, good analysis of the relative performance of minority ethnic groups show that boys in some heritage groups attained higher than girls and most students in Years 10 and 11 are achieving very well overtime.

5. The very good achievement in Years 10 to 11 as detailed above was confirmed in inspectors' observations in lessons and in their scrutiny of students' work. One significant factor in this outcome is the very good teaching observed in Years 10 and 11 which is characterised by well structured and authoritatively delivered lessons which engage students in their learning. teachers know the students very well and are able to provide carefully targeted individual support which reinforces understanding and as a consequence students make progress and achieve very well. However, progress across the subjects is often hindered by poor literacy and language skills.
6. Students with special educational needs achieve very well in their lessons and in smaller teaching groups which are focused on their specific needs, for example for key skills, or literacy. Students with statements make very good progress in relation to their specific targets by the time they are 16 years old. Students who are identified as gifted and talented achieve well. The students for whom English is not their first language make very good progress and achieve very well.

Sixth Form

Standards in GCE A/AS level and VCE examinations at the end of Year 13 in 2004

	School results	National results
Percentage of entries gaining A-E grades	80 (87)	(89.4)
Percentage of entries gaining A-B grades	23 (33)	(32.6)
Average point score per pupil	121.6 (217.5)	(258.2)

There were 23 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

7. Students enter the sixth form with below, often well below average attainment. Although results overall are generally well below national averages, the majority gain at least a pass grade. This represents very good achievement, confirmed by lesson observations and scrutiny of work during the inspection. The achievements of boys and girls are not significantly different given their starting points in the sixth form. Students with special needs or others for whom English is an additional language achieve as well as others.
8. Achievement in A level drama, performance studies and art has been consistently good with all candidates entered for the qualification in recent years gaining at least a D grade. The highest A level grades, and the subject where standards observed were consistently high, were in ICT where six of the eight students entered in 2004 gained

one of the top two grades. There were also a satisfactory number of passes in 2004 in mathematics and in music technology. However, in all courses students' poor literacy and language skills often inhibit progress. Most noticeably this is in the most recent business studies A level where five candidates who entered did not pass, all having great difficulty with the language demands of the examination, and in drama where no students passed the written examination but all did well in performance elements of the course.

9. There has been less focus on monitoring and evaluating sixth form provision and standards achieved as the school not undertaken the same thorough analysis and evaluation it has done for the other years. However, since the last inspection the school has made considerable progress in enabling students to achieve very well in the sixth form and, as a result, has raised standards overall and improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Students' attitudes, behaviour and attendance are good. Their personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are also good.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- There is a high degree of racial harmony in the school because the diversity of students' cultures are widely celebrated and staff are excellent role models.
- Attendance has improved significantly since the last inspection with the result that students are now able to make good progress in their learning.
- Attitudes and behaviour are at least good in most lessons, especially in the sixth form, and the school is tackling the high number of behavioural incidents effectively.
- Students are developing a strong awareness of moral and social issues and an understanding of how they can influence matters both in the school and the wider community.

COMMENTARY

10. A striking feature of Gladesmore is the way in which students, from Year 7 onwards, mix so well together whatever their background. Students value the lack of racial tension in the school and an atmosphere that enables them to learn and develop in a calm friendly atmosphere where all individuals are treated as of equal worth. Staff set a very high example by representing with pride an extremely wide range of backgrounds and by working outstandingly well as teams. Through subjects such as drama, art, languages, history, and design and technology, students are successfully encouraged to appreciate their own heritage and the contribution that a wide range of cultures have made to Britain and the world. Displays promote the achievements of different groups very well. Racist incidents are relatively rare. Bullying and other forms of harassment do occur occasionally, but the school has acted very effectively to deal with students' concerns expressed in a survey conducted a year ago. Students in Year 7, for example, feel very confident that bullying is not a problem and know exactly what to do if they have any worries.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.5	School data	2.0

National data*	6.9	National data	1.2
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The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

11. The leadership team's determined efforts to raise attendance levels – which were a key issue at the last inspection – have resulted in the school reaching the 90 per cent benchmark for attendance in 2002/3 and the 92 per cent benchmark in 2003/4. In the first half of the autumn term 2004, attendance rose still further to 95 per cent and unauthorised absence fell to 1.2 per cent. This tremendous achievement is a result of a large team of staff, including for example a Learning Link Co-ordinator attached to each year group, working very closely together to monitor absence rates, follow up issues with parents and refer problems to the school's very highly effective support systems. Punctuality has also improved significantly. It is now good, with a prompt start to the day and few latecomers, especially in the younger year groups. Reward systems are used very successfully to motivate students to attend regularly and punctually, as was seen during the inspection when an Olympic gold medallist presented prizes and spoke inspirationally about the importance of attendance and punctuality both inside and outside school. Parents and students increasingly understand the link between good attendance and improved learning.
12. Students' attitudes to learning have also improved since the last inspection when they were satisfactory. Students are now positive about learning, with those in Year 11 showing a particularly high commitment to doing well in their courses. Students interviewed during the inspection were generally confident that the school is a good place to be, although a few were reluctant to express themselves at length. In lessons, students respond well to the good teaching and the very good support which they receive. Occasionally when the teaching is not so good, students' attitudes deteriorate. This is most noticeable in Year 7 where some students have not yet developed the skills of self-control needed to stay on task. Behaviour around the school is good with students showing respect for the environment, for example. Permanent exclusions are now rare. Fixed period exclusions continued to rise after the last inspection, when they were already high, but have been slowly falling for the last four years. This term, students involved in incidents of unacceptable behaviour are sent to an in-school suspension centre for one or two days. Although high numbers of referrals are being made, with a disproportionate number being Black Caribbean students, early indications from the school's careful monitoring of this new strategy show that few students have been referred more than once. The numbers of fixed period exclusions and detentions have reduced significantly.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	129	16	0
White – Irish	11	0	0
White – any other White background	54	33	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	60	11	0
Mixed – White and Black African	8	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	3	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	9	0	0

Asian or Asian British – Indian	86	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	23	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	52	6	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	300	87	0
Black or Black British – African	213	48	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	24	4	0
Chinese	6	2	0
Any other ethnic group	284	2	0
No ethnic group recorded	7	0	0

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

13. Students are developing very well as young citizens. They take their responsibilities within school seriously, for example, when on reception duty in Year 8, as peer listeners and prefects in Years 10 and 11, or as representatives on the very active school council. They feel strongly about the issue of gun crime, both within their locality and nationally, and have taken action such as a holding a march and organising a petition to express their views. Their spiritual awareness is better than it was at the last inspection with religious education now making a strong contribution in Years 7 to 9. A significant number of other subjects provide good opportunities for reflection on learning and exploration of feelings and experiences. Assemblies are worthwhile community occasions which raise aspirations and celebrate achievement, although opportunities for student involvement and for contemplation are sometimes missed. The school still does not meet the statutory requirements for holding a daily act of collective worship, nor does it plan for an alternative provision such as a 'thought for the day' in tutorial periods.
14. Students with special educational needs display very positive attitudes when they are taught in small groups where they focus on areas of learning they find very difficult. This is attributable to the highly relevant and structured nature of these lessons that are carefully tailored to the students' needs; it is building their confidence. Consequently the students are able to evaluate their own progress confidently and accept comments about how they might improve from others in their class. Students relate very well together and work very well in pairs. They are developing the skills to become independent learners.

Sixth form

15. Students are very positive about life in the sixth form and happy with the courses they have chosen. They value the very good relationships between students and between students and staff which enable them to develop in confidence and make good progress in their learning. In lessons, their attitudes are always at least good, and often very good. Behaviour is very good. These are significant factors in their very good achievement, as is their good attendance which in the first half of the autumn term 2004 was 92 per cent. Attendance and punctuality were rather casual, however, in the Year 12 tutorial period seen during the inspection. Students are developing well as independent learners and as well-rounded young people. They benefit from a wide range of sports activities, visits and work experience which successfully contribute to

their personal development, as do the opportunities to work with and support younger students, such as in performing arts activities and ICT clubs.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education in the sixth form is very good. Teaching and learning are good, with particular strengths in Years 10 and 11. The curriculum is very good as it is very well developed to meet students' needs. The sixth form curriculum provided through the consortium is good. There is an excellent range of out of school activities that involve a large number of students. The school has exceptionally strong links with the local community and very strong links with other schools and its partnership with parents is very good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good. The majority of teaching across the school is good and much is very good which helps students learn well. The proportion of very good teaching is higher in Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consistently good and sometimes inspirational teaching encourages students to learn well.
- Very good lesson planning reinforces teachers' high expectations and ensures a variety of learning styles.
- Good assessment practice ensures students' progress is reviewed regularly.
- Teachers and support staff work very effectively together to meet most students' needs well although more able students are not always sufficiently well challenged.
- Teachers' have very good knowledge, combined with an infectious passion for their subject, often triggers students' interest and enthusiasm to learn.
- Marking is too variable between departments which results in students not being told how they can improve their work in all subjects.
- The generally good quality assessment data is insufficiently shared with pupils to help them understand how well they are doing and what they can do to improve as independent learners

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 163 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4 (2.5%)	48 (30%)	76 (46.5%)	28 (17%)	7 (4%)	0(0%)	0(0%)

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

16. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is good. In Years 10 and 11 it is very good. Some excellence in teaching was seen in English and drama. Whilst teaching was very good or excellent in nearly a third of lessons seen, the quality is not yet very good overall because some teaching in some subjects or from less experienced teachers was more often satisfactory. Nonetheless, some teaching was inspirational; the quality of support provided by staff other than the class teacher where this is available is excellent; and, students' attitudes to learning enthused by their teachers was very good. All this has a powerful impact on learning and enables pupils to achieve well.
17. A key strength in teaching is the very good quality of lesson planning across the school. This is consistent between and within departments in focusing on pupils' needs and reinforces the high expectations of pupils that are shared by most teachers. Such planning is most often closely related to the overall plans of the department which, in turn, are linked with that of the school as a whole. Lesson planning shows a variety of learning styles which, when employed well, enthuse pupils in their learning and captivate their interests and imaginations.
18. Assessments of pupils' progress are regular and used well in most cases to plan subsequent learning. Moreover assessments are provided by a range of staff and shared effectively to ensure that all those who support learning are aware of pupils' needs and focus carefully on meeting them. Part of the sharing process includes a regular work sampling process involving a deputy headteacher, heads of year and the schools Advanced Skills Teachers as well as others. Outcomes are shared with relevant staff and key issues are published in the weekly internal bulletin. Because of the range of assessments to inform learning and set minimum target grades for all students, most of them are challenged well and they respond positively to the appropriate expectations that are made of them. Consequently, they achieve very well in individual lessons and over a period, especially in Years 10 and 11.
19. The quality of team-work and communication between teachers and support staff in lesson is very good. Lesson plans are prepared together or shared well in advance. Members of the support staff have very good understanding of the individual needs of the pupils with whom they work and they apply this knowledge consistently and well to ensure pupils are able to develop appropriate skills, knowledge or understanding within the lesson. However, whilst most pupils are challenged effectively, demands made on higher attaining pupils are not always sufficient to ensure they learn at a pace or in as much depth as is appropriate.
20. A further strength that distinguishes the quality of teaching and learning at Gladesmore is the application of teachers' very good subject knowledge. In common with many schools teachers' skills and knowledge are very good. But, when combined with an infectious passion for their subject that is common in many lessons, this triggers pupils' interest and enthusiasm to learn.
21. A relative weakness in teaching is the variability in the consistency and quality of marking or written feedback to pupils. Whilst many teachers mark regularly and provide supportive comments to encourage and motivate pupils, not all teachers offer enough guidance about how to improve or achieve future targets. As a result, pupils, and parents who read their work are made aware of weaknesses but they are not aware of what to do to address them. Linked to this issue, although information from regular assessment influences teachers in refining

their own planning, it is not sufficiently shared with pupils or used to encourage ways of learning that will help pupils become more independent.

22. Teaching in smaller teaching groups which are focused on the specific needs of students with special educational needs is very good. Consequently they achieve very well. These lessons are characterised by detailed planning, highly relevant and challenging content and very good relationships between teachers and students. Teaching in lessons is supported by well-trained, very competent teaching assistants, who liaise closely with subject teachers. They plan work together and work as a team so that support in lessons for students with special educational needs generally is very good. There is comprehensive information provided about students, including those with special educational needs. This allows all staff to plan effectively for them in lessons. Comprehensive assessment systems provide frequent updates of data so that the students' current needs are well known. There are insufficient teaching assistants in the lower mathematics sets for those students aged from 11 to 14 years which means that they make relatively less progress than they do in English where such additional support is available. Extension work for students who are gifted and talented is planned into most lessons, but this tends to be an additional piece of work, rather than the planning of adapted approaches and resources to meet these very specific needs. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are taught very well. They make very good progress whether in separate small groups or in full classes. This is because members of staff know of their needs and prepare well to ensure they are met. The teaching of small groups is very well focused to enable students to understand and use English as fully as possible, building carefully on previous learning. Within full classes, students for whom English is an additional language are supported by additional teachers or assistants who work well with the class-teacher to plan and follow-up lessons, helping these pupils to make good progress.

The sixth form

23. The quality of teaching and learning in the sixth form is good. This is because of the combination of good preparation and supportive relationships within each lesson. In subjects inspected, teaching was very good in ICT and music, and good in business studies and drama.
24. Teaching is not as consistently strong in the sixth form as it is in Years 10 and 11 because systems to review students' progress and raise future standards by setting progressively more challenging targets has not been sufficiently rigorous. Consequently, whilst expectations of students are high and support provided for them is very good, the steps needed from them to make improvements are not yet well-enough defined or shared with them to enable them to become more independent as learners.

The curriculum

The curriculum is very good. The school provides a very broad, balanced and innovative curriculum which caters exceptionally well for a diverse range of students enabling them to fulfil their growing aspirations. Improvement since the last inspection is excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curriculum development and planning are imaginative and innovative because the curriculum is designed to engage all students fully.
- There is a broad range of challenging and interconnected curriculum pathways which fulfil the needs and aspirations of students.
- Parents and the wider community are integral partners in the school's curriculum development and collaboration with partner institutions is excellent.
- The work related curriculum is excellent.

- Arrangements for students to take an active part in the citizenship curriculum are very thorough and well planned.
- The school makes very effective use of the wider experience of staff, particularly those who came via the Graduate Trainee Programme.
- The school does not meet the requirements for religious education in Years 10 and 13 or those for collective worship throughout the school.

Commentary

25. The school's curriculum provides very well for its students. Curriculum development in recent years has had a very significant impact upon all aspects of the school's work and on the aspirations, attitudes and attendance of students. The head teacher, governors and senior staff have a clear vision for the future direction of the school, for which they have won the support of parents and students by involving them in discussions about the curriculum and workshops related to it. The school works very effectively with the wider education and business community. It has successfully involved partner institutions and the wider community thus developing an excellent work-related programme.
26. The curriculum provides a wide choice for students. It is individually tailored to meet students' specific needs and aspirations in many cases. A clear strength of the curriculum is the range of strategies used by the school to ensure all students are included fully and achieve very well. The very good support which is having a positive impact overall comes from a number of inter-related teams who provide targeted support at a number of stages or areas of learning. For example, a *transition team* of teachers and assistants are very effective in supporting students through the *Get on Track* programme, as they move from primary to secondary school. In Years 10 and 11 additional support is provided to assist students meet the demands of course work. A strong group of teaching assistants who support students with statements in and outside the classroom and expertise provided by staff of 'The Cottage', an on site support provision, encourage students through a number of motivation projects. Additionally, the ethnic minority achievement (EMA) team supports students for whom English is an additional language and the literacy team is geared to boost progress and enable students with limited literacy skills by involving them in the 'Catch-Up' programme.
27. In addition to the more traditional aspects of the curriculum, the Collegiate of Tottenham school initiative, *Make Friday Special*, provides a very large range of vocational courses at levels 1 and 2 together with a core of English, mathematics and physical education. Underachieving students in some subjects can choose more of the subjects in which they can succeed. Extensive vocational and work-related programmes are individually tailored to suit the needs of specific students. There is detailed liaison between partner institutions and courses are planned well in advance. Much onus is placed upon students to be independent and to make sensible choices. This strategy is meeting the course aims and is proving very successful in raising attendance rates to very high level, far higher than they used to be with a more traditional curriculum model. Another successful initiative in providing a more suitable curriculum has been through providing targeted coursework support for individuals and groups.
28. There are challenging adaptations to aspects of the curriculum in Years 7 to 11. For example students in Year 9 now follow a short GCSE course in ICT where they are rising to the challenge, supported by very good planning, good teaching and a high

- level of ICT resources. The school's Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) programme, including provision for citizenship and careers education is good and supports the needs of all pupils. Citizenship is well-planned and taught and fully meets requirements. Careers provision and work experience is relevant, well planned and supported by staff through visits and appropriate follow-up work. The curriculum is further enhanced by the collaborative work of drama, music and dance teachers who have together prepared student for international award winning performances. In the sixth form, this collaboration is formalised in the provision of a popular Performing Arts course.
29. Detailed curriculum monitoring procedures are used to gauge the impact of these strategies. The school is encouraging students to use and apply the fifty-nine community languages spoken through the provision of a range of suitable language qualifications that recognise students' wider capability and interests. This can often be a basis for wider success. The school provides a vast variety of enrichment activities weekly and annually including visits to other parts of the UK as well as to other European countries and America. The weakness in the curriculum is that the school does not meet the requirements for religious education in Years 10, 11 and in the sixth form.
30. There is a rich range of activities which enhance the timetabled curriculum, giving excellent provision for students. Of particular note is the scope of Saturday school provision. The local community, colleges, universities, sports clubs and local as well as central London business contacts are used effectively to enhance teaching and learning in a significant number of subjects. Most subjects have clubs for extracurricular activities and homework. The library provides a good range of learning and support materials in addition to its newspapers, books, periodicals and very good ICT facilities. The members of the library staff are very diligent and effective in the support they provide for learners.
31. The provision for special educational needs for students of all ages is very good. There is a very good range of interventions to support the learning of all students with special educational needs, including those with behavioural and emotional difficulties. The provision is of high quality and includes some activities rarely found in schools, such as music therapy and drama therapy which meet the very specific needs of some young people.
32. There is very good co-ordination of the wealth of provision to ensure that each student's access to the curriculum is not impaired and that they are not receiving an overload of interventions. Computer access for students with special educational needs is very good.
33. Provision for students who are identified as gifted and talented is good. a clear system for identifying students who are gifted and talented starts whilst they are still in primary school and is constantly reviewed to ensure that all students with this type of special need are identified. Additional curriculum experiences are being planned for students who are gifted and talented. Students participate in some external events such as the science and mathematics events that are run by Gladesmore for the other secondary schools in the local education authority.
34. Students with low levels of literacy skills in English on entry to Year 7 receive specialist teaching in small groups in place of modern language lessons. Teachers have produced very good additional materials to support cross-curricular themes. Year 7 students have very attractive homework booklets to consolidate learning. If necessary, students continue a planned programme of literacy lessons in Years 8 and 9. The expectations throughout are high: students working to achieve above average

expectations. Very good accommodation and resources, notably Smart boards and a computer suite, support learning very effectively. The progress of students is meticulously checked and used as a basis for monitoring and planning. The current Year 10 students have benefited from this programme but as yet there is no GCSE statistical evidence on the efficacy of the programme.

35. There is a very good range of teaching and support staff across the school that have a significant impact in raising standards for students. Whether as teachers, advanced skills teachers, members of the Ethnic Minority Achievement (EMA) team, or key workers and learning support assistants in classrooms, the members of staff work very well together as an effective team to enhance the quality of learning for students. Additional technicians and external visitors are inducted to the school well and show commitment to the school's overall ethos focused on raising achievement. The school offers a range of intervention programmes which provide additional support for students. These include *Get on Track; Boys' Motivation; Coursework Support Team; Diversity Team; In School Suspension Centre; Parental Involvement Co-ordinator; On Call Mentors*; and, *the Cottage*. Members of staff involved in these programmes, whether in lessons, in small groups or in working with individuals, make a substantial contribution to raising students' confidence, self-esteem and their readiness to achieve well. Underpinning this provision is an excellent programme of continuing professional development for all teachers and other staff in school. It is extremely well managed to ensure staff needs and the overall needs of students are met. As part of this programme the school's staff tutor also directs an effective programme that inducts staff who are not yet qualified as teachers to enable them to work towards acquiring teacher status, thereby ensuring that the school 'grows its own' teachers and minimises issues associated with recruitment and retention of teaching staff in the future.
36. Resources are good and support the delivery of the curriculum well with a good range of materials used effectively to support teaching and learning. The library is well resourced, with a wide range of print resources as well as 16 new computers and an interactive white board. The teacher librarian promotes reading very effectively through a wide range of activities such as regular quizzes and book displays. The library has improved significantly since the last inspection.
37. Accommodation has been much extended and improved since the last inspection. It is currently good overall. In many areas, it is enhancing students' learning and it is particularly good in drama, where the use of lighting as well as props is bringing performance to life, or in the *City Learning Centre*. However, a few aspects of accommodation are limited and inhibit learning. This is especially evident in physical education where curriculum is restricted as a result. More widely, students complain, and the inspectors agree with them, that toilet facilities are limited or of poor quality in some areas of the school. These issues are being addressed through plans associated with the school's recent success in receiving additional funding through *Building schools for the future*. Improvement since the last inspection has been excellent in this aspect.

Sixth Form

38. The sixth form curriculum is very good; it has become more broad and balanced and has some innovative aspects which cater for a wider range of students. The improving curricular offer provides a good range of pathways to employment or further and higher education.

39. There have been significant developments in the post 16 curriculum recently. The school management and governors have enlisted support from many sources both academic and business as well as the wider community, in order to ensure that the post 16 curriculum meets the broadening aspirations of students. Open entry to courses helps to facilitate students' needs. The ICT curriculum exemplifies the schools broadening aspirations, particularly in relation to courses in addition to AS and A level. As well as having teaching staff with recent relevant ICT related business experience it also has links with other academic institutions in further and higher education. Courses range from the Advanced Vocational Course in IT to BTEC National and a Higher National Diploma Course in collaboration with Middlesex University. The breadth of the range is completed with a very relevant "on-line" vocational ICT technician course provided in collaboration with CISCO Systems.
40. Much work has gone into developing the comprehensive current sixth form PSHE programme. This includes study skills which link with the key skills programme. There is preparation for progression through a careers programme, good advice and assistance with applications for higher education as well as work experience opportunities. The programme also ensures that students are well informed about and have opportunities to discuss, health, citizenship and environmental issues at local, national and global levels. Personal development, health and relational issues are well covered, usually by external providers. All students are offered a week of work experience and are expected to attend events related to progression beyond school. Assessment data is now being used effectively to inform curriculum development post 16

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements for students' care, welfare, health and safety are very good. Provision of support, advice and guidance is excellent in the main school and very good in the sixth form. Students are very well involved in the work and development of the school.

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The school has created an extremely wide-ranging and successful variety of programmes to support students' learning and raise achievement.
- Great care is taken to ensure that the learning environment is safe and that the individual needs of all students are very well known and met.
- There are very good arrangements for seeking students' views and acting on them.

COMMENTARY

41. The outstanding provision for supporting and guiding students as they move through the school is a major factor in their ability to achieve highly by the end of Year 11. Provision has significantly improved since the last inspection when support, guidance and welfare were described as "sound". The support for students starts when they are still in primary school with the visits of three transition assistants who prepare them very effectively for transfer to secondary school, and then continue to support them during Year 7. An exceptionally strong team of deputy headteachers, heads of year, form tutors and co-tutors work seamlessly together to provide both continuity and rigour in monitoring students' academic progress and personal development. Through a range of mechanisms such as the twice-daily contact in tutor groups and the termly progress checks, they are very quick to identify any problem or underachievement and

put in place a strategy to deal with it. The emphasis is always on guiding students to re-focus on learning so that they can fulfil their potential. Members of staff run a very wide range of support activities outside the school day, including the Saturday school, to boost students' achievements as they approach examinations, and all students in Year 11 have access to a mentor who provides additional advice and assistance.

42. The school places the highest priority on pinpointing students who experience barriers to learning and helping them tackle their difficulties. Exceptionally skilled teams of staff run innovative programmes dealing with issues such as anger management, self-esteem and lack of motivation. Particular attention is paid to students who are gifted yet underachieving and to Black African and Caribbean boys as a result of the school's previous self-evaluation that highlighted underachievement of these students. Where appropriate, the school makes very good use of external agencies, such as the Traveller Education Service or the Safer Schools project, to meet specific needs. Provision for students with special needs and for those for whom English is an additional language is very good.
43. The school has worked highly effectively to ensure that students feel safe and secure.. For example, the 'on-call' learning mentors supervise the students at lesson changeover times and outside the school gates at the end of the school day; the on-site police officer patrols the adjacent park at lunchtime. The assistant headteacher, who is responsible for child protection, the 'looked after' children, and the anti-bullying programmes, carries out her role extremely well. She ensures, for example, that any concerns, especially about the most vulnerable students such as refugees who arrive on their own, are scrupulously recorded and dealt with, liaising with whichever authority is responsible for them. The health and safety issues identified at the last inspection have been dealt with well. Students, especially girls, are rightly concerned about the state of the toilets. They are helping the school's case by keeping the building contractor informed of deficiencies.
44. The school consults students annually through a questionnaire and more regularly through the high-profile school council. Through extensive annual questionnaires, students are consulted on a wide range of aspect of schools life and the ethos in general. The council's successes include bringing about changes to the school meals service, being part of the interview process that selected the latest deputy headteacher and launching break-time surgeries. Students are very effectively involved in monitoring their own progress and setting their targets. They also run peer listening and operate a *buddy* system to support other children.
45. Students with special educational needs are very closely involved in the monitoring of their own progress and the setting of their next targets. The key workers facilitate this. Very close working with a range of outside agencies ensures that students' needs are identified and any advice given to the school is put into place. For example, where the educational psychologist has recommended that students develop their touch typing skills, this has become part of the literacy withdrawal programme. There is very close liaison between staff working on learning and behaviour and a merger is planned to ensure that this continues.

Sixth form

46. Students are very pleased with the advice they received as they made their choices within the 14-19 curriculum. They are guided well by their tutors on both academic and other matters. Teachers provide good support outside lessons and students are fully

involved in setting and reviewing their targets. Students run their own sixth form council that has successfully obtained extra resources and facilities. Whilst arrangements for submitting university applications were running close to the deadline for their completion, progression to life after the sixth form is very well supported by work experience, university visits and careers interviews.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

MAIN STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- The school is a genuine community school, playing a leading part in the regeneration of the area and gaining the confidence of all ethnic groups within the locality.
- Links with parents have improved, with parents now being very satisfied with the provision for their children and they are kept very well informed about what their ~~children are doing~~ links with primary schools to ensure the smooth transition of students into Year 7 and very good links with local providers of 14-19 education which widen the curriculum opportunities for students.

COMMENTARY

47. Gladesmore is truly at the heart of its community. It has worked extremely closely with community-based projects to improve the surrounding area so that the school is now a safe place for students and staff to be. Students, for example, have designed and planted a rose garden in the adjacent park where they can sit quietly at lunch times. The school is at the forefront of making learning opportunities available outside school hours and to the community as a whole. For example, the Saturday school is attended by over 500 children, parents and other adult learners and the on-site City Learning Centre, set up and managed by Gladesmore, provides a very popular programme of evening courses in ICT and numeracy. Exceptional efforts have been made to ensure that the various ethnic groups in the locality are very well served by the school. Extensive links with businesses support students' work-related learning very well. External agencies are keen and active in working with the school to help raise the achievements of the students. Students go out into the community to undertake visual and performing arts projects and to visit places which enhance their learning, such as a synagogue in religious education or the London College of Printing in design and technology.
48. As a result of the school's improved reputation and involvement in the community, parents are becoming increasingly confident in coming into Gladesmore and hence more involved in their children's learning. This is having a very positive effect on students' academic achievement, attendance and behaviour. Relevant members of staff play highly effective roles in maintaining a frequent and productive dialogue with parents. For example, the Attendance Officer not only undertakes home visits and telephones parents to check on reasons for their child's absence, but also tells them about other events and services that they might like to know about. Parents whose first language is not English are encouraged to attend basic English classes and family learning sessions run by the EMA faculty so that they can help their child better; they also have good access to translated material and staff are easily available to act as interpreters. Parents of students in Years 10 and 11 receive very good information about how they can support their child with GCSE coursework, revision and

examinations. As part of its development plan to increase parental involvement, the school held a very successful mathematics evening earlier in the term for parents of Year 7 students. Parents receive very useful progress checks each term and attend the review days in large numbers to discuss their children's targets. They also have the opportunity to complete questionnaires in which they show high levels of satisfaction with the school.

49. An excellent feature of the transfer arrangements from the main feeder primary schools to Gladesmore is the use of transition units in English and mathematics. These enable students to know that their Year 6 work is valued and staff to build upon students' previous learning. There is very good liaison with the local college to provide alternative curriculum pathways in Years 10 and 11. For example, teachers accompany students to college on the one-day vocational courses known as 'Make Friday Special'. There are very good links with Middlesex University which sends undergraduate volunteers to mentor students and raise their aspirations.
50. There are very good links with the parents of special educational needs students. Most parents attend their child's annual review meeting and where this is not possible a follow-up meeting is held. There are excellent links with the local primary schools so that the special educational needs of students are very well known prior to their entry to the school and are planned for.

Sixth form

51. The school's very strong links with parents, the community and other schools and colleges are maintained in the sixth form. Parents are involved in formal discussions about students' progress twice a year. The enrichment of courses and students' personal development is greatly enhanced by the school's excellent community links. Provision is also broadened by the joint teaching arrangements with the local college and three other secondary schools. The school is taking a leading role in establishing the East Haringey collegiate which will provide a joint sixth form provision on a new site in a couple of years' time.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher's leadership is excellent and rooted in a passion and well-defined vision to enable all students to achieve well. Other key staff most often provides very good leadership, strengthened by a shared vision of how their department, year group or area of responsibility contributes to the school's improvement. The school is managed very well and some aspects of this are exceptional. Governance is very good even though some required elements of provision are not in place.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership of the headteacher is excellent, achieving a strong, shared commitment to students' learning and achievement.
- The leadership of the senior managers and other key staff is very good overall. A key feature of their work is the interdependent teamwork and complementary strengths of team members across the school.
- There are very good and consistently used self-evaluation systems that ensure the school knows its strengths and areas for development very well, informed effectively by the use of data in all areas.
- Development planning is excellent, linking whole school and other planning very well to reinforce a shared understanding and focus on the most key areas for improvement.

- Financial planning and management are excellent, directed by and supporting the school's overall focus on raising standards.
- Governors support the school and hold it to account very well hence contributing to its excellent leadership and very good management.

Commentary

52. The headteacher's leadership of the school is excellent, leading to the clear improvements that have taken place in standards, teaching and learning, curriculum, buildings, links with parents and the community and in financial management since the last inspection. He has achieved this by developing extremely effective and interdependent working teams across the school, all with a shared and infectious commitment to improving students' achievements and raising standards.
53. The senior leadership team provides a valuable role model of practice. They bring different but complementary strengths and a common passion to support students and staff as part of leading the ongoing improvement of the school. The line-management roles within teams and for members of the support staff, and relevant sections of the school improvement plan, are clear. The line-managers meet their responsibilities to each other and the school as a whole very well. Monitoring information is shared fully and used well to improve long-term whole school planning that is linked explicitly to plans for departments, year groups and all other aspects of the work of the school. Planning for improvement, as identified in the school improvement plan, is excellent and is enhanced by clear and efficiently executed financial management. Middle managers are effective and have a good understanding of whole school plans to which they have themselves contributed. Monitoring by middle managers is very effective but not consistently used to help raise standards in all areas.
54. The work of the special needs co-ordinator is focused on the high achievement of students with special educational needs for both learning and behaviour. Leadership and management of special educational needs are very good. It is very reflective and self-critical, constantly searching for better ways to provide for the students' needs. At the same time there is an awareness of the amount of change the school system can deal with. There are very clearly defined roles for the special needs staff and they work as a very cohesive, mutually supportive team. The status of teaching assistants is very high and their work is highly regarded by other staff. Special educational needs staff are able to influence the teaching in the classrooms so that there is an on-going improvement of the practice of planning adapted strategies and resources to meet the students' needs. The day-to-day running of the department is very efficient and paperwork and records are very accessible.
55. The school has well-informed and developed self-evaluation systems. These are used to refine future targets and ensure resources are appropriately directed to bring about improvements in the future. Development planning is excellent, linking whole school and other planning very well to reinforce a shared understanding and focus on improvement.
56. Financial planning and management are excellent, directed by and supporting the school's overall focus on raising standards. The school's finances are allocated well and openly to meet its priorities in address students' needs. The budget is balanced, even though school funds have been used to support the development of the City Learning Centre, a provision enjoyed by other schools of the local authority. In addition, the school has been very effective in triggering additional grants and funding to enhance its provision so as to help to raise standards for students. Governors are fully involved in the finance and budget process. They have information that enables them to monitor expenditure and compare and contrast spending patterns regularly. As a result of the quality of provision and associated costs, the school gives very good value for money.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	8,344,815	Balance from previous year	421,014
Total expenditure	8,939,937	Balance carried forward to the next	595,122
Expenditure per pupil	7,028		

57. The school's systems to ensure effective and supportive continuing professional development for all staff are excellent. This supports the inclusive ethos of the school community, recognising each person's contribution to student development and providing the opportunity for all to enhance their skills as appropriate. There is, for example, a very good and comprehensive performance management system for all staff and teachers linked to the school's overall needs. Similarly, a very well managed programme for new staff makes an excellent contribution to the development and training of new and well-established teachers alike. This reduces the challenges of recruitment and retention of teachers and effectively supports a successful whole-school approach to reforming and improving the workforce to the benefit of staff and students.
58. Governance is very good. The governors have established very good working relationships, both amongst themselves and with the headteacher and senior management of the school. They have clear ideas about how they wished the school to move forward when they appointed the headteacher and have been fully involved in setting his performance targets. The governing body has contributed to the establishment of the school's successful ethos and they rightly regard this as being of central importance. Governors have a clear sense of priorities, with good knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses, including awareness of the subject areas that are in need of development. They are particularly aware of the importance of community languages and of support for the development of students' literacy. The headteacher and bursar provide accurate, up to date information and governors make sure they acquire knowledge from external sources as well. Personal visits by governors to the school are fairly common, but their value is not fully realised because there are no systematic arrangements for organising and recording them, nor are there links between individual governors and faculties. Governors responded well to the issues raised in the previous inspection report, but have made least progress with the development of the school's spiritual dimension. They are aware of the few ways in which the school does not meet statutory requirements.

The sixth form

59. Leadership and management of the sixth form are good overall as a result of the developing strengths of the team of staff who take collective responsible for the sixth form. They bring a combination of stability and experience as well as the expertise of new members who have joined more recently. Although there has been insufficient rigor in tracking progress and using data to review achievements regularly and set new challenges for students, these issues are now a point of focus for the team. On a day-to-day basis the sixth form operates smoothly and the move from Year 11 to 12 is supported very well.

WORK RELATED LEARNING

The effectiveness of the school's provision for work related learning is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Work related learning is very well led and firmly established at the school.
- The very good range of vocational courses and innovative curriculum developments provide a stimulating environment for students.

- Careers education is very well planned and evaluated and the work-related learning programme is excellent.

Commentary

60. The school is committed to a programme of individual learning pathways and this is reflected in the extensive range of vocational, applied and work related courses offered. In those that are established, for example in applied ICT, students reach average standards. Those studying NVQ courses on the new and innovative 'Make Friday Special' programmes are motivated, positive and are achieving well. With the extensive links with the local college and businesses students are able to study a range of NVQs courses including hair and beauty, health and social care, motor mechanics and music and video technology. There is also a full time programme run as a Sports Academy for Year 11 students at the local college. The school's programme for work-related learning (WRL) is carefully planned in accordance with national guidelines and departments have been audited to establish what are called 'hot spots' where WRL can be explicitly developed. For example, in citizenship students independent' learning is encouraged through research for presentations, they learn to work effectively as a team and how to conduct interviews.
61. There is an extensive work experience programme for students in Year 10 which is planned and monitored with the Education Business Partnership to ensure attachments are safe, appropriate and lead to students having an enriching experience. Preparation of students for this is thorough and includes the development of a range of relevant skills such as letter writing and interviewing using role play. Evaluation is also thorough with employers reporting that students are motivated, work responsibly and have a good awareness of health and safety factors. commendably, modern foreign language students evaluate their experiences in French. Year 12 are also involved in work experience with attachments which are carefully targeted to match their skills and aspirations.
62. Students have very good careers guidance through a well-planned programme of advice from Year 7 onwards delivered through the PSHE lessons. Tutors are trained to ensure it is effectively delivered and as a consequence, teaching engages students' interest in their career choices. Students also have very good access to the Connexions service which provides interviews for all. As is a feature of the ethos of and practice within the school, students evaluate the advice they are given. There is a well resourced careers area of the library which is regularly used by students. The school is also very advanced in its planning for developing enterprise activities for example students have already spent a day learning enterprise skills at the Guardian newspaper and participating in the Haringey Pathfinders programme.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 and 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management are excellent.
- The quality of teaching is very good.
- Students achieve very well though literacy skills are weak.
- The arrangements for ensuring a smooth transition for Year 6 pupils moving into Year 7 are excellent.
- The links with teachers of literacy and English for those beginning the language are very good.
- Teachers use assessment effectively both in planning and marking work.
- Standards are below average at the end of Year 9 but close to average at the end of Year 11.

Commentary

63. Students enter Year 7 with well below average attainment in English and weak literacy skills. At the end of Year 9, results of National Curriculum tests show standards are still well below average nationally, but well above those of similar schools. At the end of Year 11, GCSE results are just below average and the standards of work seen are close to expectations. These students entered Year 7 with well below average attainment and had not benefited fully from the systematic literacy development now in place in Years 7 to 11. Grades in GCSE English literature are similarly just below average. At the end of Years 9 and 11 current standards are just below average in lessons. Over time there has been an improved trend in grades. Students perform as well as in their other subjects. For the last two years, results in media studies have been broadly average. Results, lessons and work seen confirm the pattern of very good achievement.
64. At the end of Year 9, students can listen well, though may not always do so. They speak confidently, sometimes with a lively turn of phrase, but are not necessarily practised in the use of formal English. Their reading skills are satisfactory: all understand the narrative but only the more able appreciate the impact of language. Junior fiction in the library is well used. Writing, which is emphasised in most lessons, develops well. The examples of writing kept in the Best Work Folders show pride and clear improvement in presentation of work as well as literacy skills. By the end of Year 11, students show development in their understanding of the use of language. For example, they confidently explain why a speech is persuasive and how it might be improved. They find analysis of poetry is more difficult because they do not always grasp the deliberate ambiguities of the language. In media studies lessons, Year 11 students applied the same type of analysis when designing CD covers, understanding the unique selling point as a persuasive technique. Writing skills improve so all can obtain a grade in English, but many still do not write accurately. Their knowledge and understanding of the set texts in English literature and of media in Media Studies compensates for errors in these examinations.

65. The quality of teaching and learning is very good in English, including literacy, and in media studies. In the best, sometimes excellent, lessons, students are excited and enthralled by the teacher's reading of a story, so that all make progress. Most lessons are very well structured, beginning with interesting short activities that are then developed and consolidated later in the lesson. The electronic white boards are effectively used, particularly for reinforcement. The use of ICT in media studies is very good and benefits from the assistance of effective support staff. In English and media studies the teachers' questioning is usually challenging and, combined with careful timing, encourages students to think. Much learning is collaborative, encouraging listening and independence. Students with special educational needs and those beginning to learn English achieve similar very good progress because of support from the teachers and planned group work. Gifted and talented students sometimes tackle extension work or accept responsibility for leading a group, but opportunities are not always consistently provided. All teachers have full data on students and track progress carefully. Students know their targets well. All work is carefully marked, with very good guidance on how to improve.
66. Leadership and management are excellent. The head of department leads a large team of teachers, ensures smooth co-ordination and commitment, teamwork and a strong departmental ethos. A very clear analysis of student data underpins the provision and leads to rewriting of schemes of work as necessary. The planning of the Year 6 transition by buying texts for six primary schools, exchanging and training the teachers for the lessons, then collecting and marking the work, ensures that learning is truly progressive despite the change of school. Close planning with the teachers of English as an additional language has resulted in better assessment and support for students learning English. The department works closely with the literacy teacher to link effectively to the English syllabus. The range of extra-curricular activities is considerable and well supported. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good. Standards have improved at the end of Years 9 and 11; the quality of teaching has improved further and some innovative practices introduced.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

67. Most students entered Year 7 with poor literacy skills. Their difficulties centre around extreme use of colloquial English or limited understanding and use of English. Reading and writing skills are very underdeveloped. As they progress through the school they improve substantially but generally still have below average skills at the end of Year 11. Listening skills are emphasised in English and literacy lessons but students vary in their attentiveness, improving in Years 10 and 11. Almost all students become confident speakers but may often use colloquial or casual phrases instead of the appropriate formal language. At the end of Year 11, they are articulate. Technical vocabulary in all subjects is contained on a school database that is used and taught effectively.
68. In some lessons, opportunities for developing reading skills are good. In design technology, ICT and the Humanities, there are good opportunities for reading aloud. Comprehension skills do not hinder progress in any subject. There is much emphasis on the development of writing. In science, geography, history, citizenship and religious education there are good opportunities for extended writing, for example, accounts of experiments, historical arguments and letters. There is extensive use of writing frames to help students develop and organise ideas. Teachers' model paragraphs and this provides good support. Again, the use of casual or informal language detracts from

the quality of the work. One good feature is the emphasis in lessons on the use of connective words that helps students make further explanations. By the end of Year 11, all students have sufficient writing skills for the demands of coursework and examinations; though reaching the highest grades is likely to be difficult for many.

Modern foreign languages

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in years 10 and 11 and improving in Years 7 to 9.
- Teaching is good in all three languages in all age groups.
- There is not enough opportunity for students to develop their ICT skills to improve their language learning.
- By attaching high value to the students' own languages, the school raises attainment and enhances self-esteem.

Commentary

69. The students who learn French, Spanish or Turkish in the school achieve well in all age groups, responding well to the challenge and making good progress. Students who speak English as an additional language achieve at least as well as others, benefiting from skills they have acquired through learning English. However, students with special educational needs are withdrawn from languages for support with English language and literacy skills. In Years 7 to 9, two in every five boys and one third of girls are withdrawn for this purpose. Results of teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 were well below average in 2004 but, considering the current range of attainment are likely to be much better than this in 2005. The number doing Turkish in Year 9 is very small, with standards above average, and standards in French and Spanish are average. In Years 10 and 11, the number of students taking a language has declined, but rose in 2004, owing to the fact that more girls chose to continue. Only one boy in five takes a language in Years 10 and 11. GCSE examination results were well above average in 2003 and 2004 in French, and very high in Turkish. Standards seen during the inspection in Years 10 and 11 were above average in French and very high in Turkish. The school has introduced Spanish in Year 10 and standards seen were very varied, but average overall.
70. Teaching and learning are good in each language in all age groups. In Years 7 to 9, teachers use the foreign language most of the time and establish warm relationships with students. They provide many opportunities for creative activity and some opportunities for independent learning. Planning is good, but students make very little use of ICT to promote their language learning skills, neglecting the opportunities offered by the word-processor, the Internet and email. In Years 10 and 11, some teachers use the foreign language all the time, but this practice is not entirely consistent. Relationships remain warm and there is a focus on high attainment in GCSE, with teachers highlighting the particular skills, which examiners look for. There is less opportunity for students to develop independent learning skills than with the younger students. Teachers work well together as a team and the department ensures consistent practice in lessons by monitoring marking and teaching. Teachers have adopted a set of common principles for responding to students' work and share the development of courses and schemes of work.
71. The department is well led and managed, with a very good vision for the development of community languages, accompanied by a clear set of priorities. The department's plans to raise attainment are starting to make a positive impact, but the plans to make students more independent have yet to be effective. The department's survey of students' own languages raises their self-esteem by attaching value to their sense of identity. It is linked to the school's

management systems and provides information for all members of staff. The department offers students the chance to take qualifications in many different languages, providing very effective support and revision so that they can do well. The calendar of after-school clubs provides enrichment and contributes to a positive view of language skills throughout the school. The department does not analyse performance data adequately, failing to keep track of the comparative success rates of boys and girls in Years 9 and 11 or to investigate why particular students choose to continue in Years 10 and 11. The department has not yet established firm systems for ensuring that all students use ICT. The department has improved well since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of average and above average attaining students is often very good.
- The department is very well led and managed.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is very well used.
- Progress is not as steady for some of the lower ability students.

Commentary

72. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Attainment has improved so much that the school's results in recent examinations are better than almost all other similar schools at the end of Year 11. The addition of Statistics GCSE has given a creditable number of students an extra qualification. The degree to which results are analysed has improved and students are now given regular targets to aim for.
73. Standards in mathematics, whilst remaining below the national averages at the end of Years 9 and 11, have been steadily improving over the last few years. Students of average and above average ability make good and sometimes very good progress from Year 7 through to Year 11. This is due to the expertise and subject knowledge of the teachers, who create a rapport with students so that they want to learn. Students are skilfully questioned to elicit their ideas, to find out whether they can think things through logically and apply knowledge in new situations. Equally, students' questions are well answered and they are praised for having a go, not criticised for being wrong. In the best lessons there is a purposeful atmosphere, where no-one is wasting time, work is relevant and students are keen to complete it.
74. Lower attaining students generally make satisfactory progress and achieve satisfactorily although there is a less positive atmosphere in some of the lower ability classes. Teachers have to work hard to convince students that mathematics is a worthwhile subject at which they can succeed. Occasionally, there is too little practical activity and too much teacher talk. Unfortunately the interactive whiteboards, so effectively used in many classes to enhance the materials, to focus attention, to demonstrate ideas, were not always turned on in lessons of lower attaining students that were observed. There are also lessons where students with special needs or those at an early stage of learning English do not have the support they need to understand what is being taught.
75. The mathematics department is very well led and managed. The head of department has clear aims and provides a very good role model for teaching. She leads a strong team who work and plan closely together. Lessons begin promptly with a puzzle or brainteaser to start everyone thinking. The lesson's objectives are explained and the key words are displayed to help students with their literacy. Staff are asked to team-teach to overcome problems or to share expertise. The department promotes a positive image of the subject to students of all backgrounds and has very high aspirations for everyone. Occasionally this results in the curriculum for the lowest ability students being insufficiently tailored to their needs and interests to keep them involved. The department liaises well with parents.
76. There is a very wide range of maths clubs providing extra help out of class time. Some of these use different materials and approaches to help students in areas they have found difficult. Others are designed to stretch the thinking of the ablest students. Gifted and talented students are offered extra tuition to enable them to enter examinations when they are ready, rather than when they are the right age.

Mathematics across the curriculum

77. Numeracy skills are well below national averages on entry. They improve in some areas of the curriculum where their use is encouraged effectively. Students are generally confident about using their mathematics in other contexts, for example when substituting values into a formula in science or calculating calorific values in food technology. Discussions with the science department have led to improved use of graphs but this cooperation between departments and monitoring of how well students use their mathematical skills has yet to spread to other areas of the curriculum.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students make good progress in Years 7 to 9 and achieve well; they carry this good achievement through to their work in Years 10 and 11.
- Teachers and students work well together to produce a very good environment for learning.
- Teaching and learning are good; all lessons are taught securely and many are taught very well.
- Leadership and management are good; there has been much improvement in provision in recent years and good capacity to continue.

Commentary

78. Outcomes of national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2004 were very similar to those of 2003, whereas results fell nationally. Overall results, although well below those achieved nationally, were above those in other schools where students had similar Year 6 tests results three years earlier. The proportion of students reaching the higher level, Level 6, was very high in comparison with these other schools. Students currently in Years 7 to 9 continue to make good progress and achieve well even though they are currently below national averages. GCSE results in 2004 represented satisfactory progress from the Year 9 results two years earlier, but single science results were lower than they should have been. Although standards are just below averages nationally, students now in Years 10 and 11 are performing much more at the level expected, with coursework and module test results reflecting an overall improvement in standards. Consequently these students are making good progress and achieving well.
79. Students achieve well because teachers plan lessons to meet specific learning outcomes and use a good variety of strategies to ensure students do so. Students behave well, respond well and engage with the activities. Consequently they make good progress. In most lessons teachers evaluate learning, through asking students probing and challenging questions or monitoring their progress through set tasks. They subsequently modify the flow and pace of the lesson at key points to ensure that students understand and learning is secure. Most lessons have a good visual aspect, so that teachers model an activity or process, talking students through it, or they relate key words, written and spoken, to the process or object concerned. This supports all students in their understanding, but is particularly important in ensuring that students for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well.

80. All lessons have a variety of activities, supporting the broad range of learners present, and are based on good working relationships. This produces a very good ethos and partnership for learning and encourages students to take increasing responsibility for their own learning. Teachers provide good continuity for learning, through a very clear lesson structure and through establishing links with previous ideas. The students enable this effective continuity by willingly drawing upon their prior experiences, offering suggestions, ideas and answers. There is some very effective use of ICT to support learning, but this is not yet sufficiently consistent between teachers to guarantee students equality of experience.
81. Leadership of the team has developed a culture where teachers feel confident and try out new ideas to support learning. Consequently teaching and learning in most lessons are good, and are very good in a high proportion. Good systems for monitoring and tracking student progress have been developed and lead to rigorous and targeted interventions so that underachievement is tackled early and effectively. Reflective analysis and evaluation of provision has resulted in very good improvement since the last inspection and clear and appropriate plans to improve provision still further. The expertise of individual teachers is being utilised very well to develop the skills of the whole team so that the capacity to achieve continued improvement is good. Consequently leadership and management are good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **very good**. All students have ICT lessons in all years and follow an ICT examination course from Year 9 onwards.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Initial examination results at GCSE have been very encouraging.
- The leadership and management of ICT are very good.
- The high level of ICT resources provides good access to the ICT curriculum for all
- ~~Teaching~~ and learning in ICT lessons are good.
- The use of ICT across the curriculum is good.
- The time available for the ICT short course examination is below what might be expected to enable students to attain higher grades.

Commentary

82. The first “Applied GCSE” ICT results this year were above the average for this particular course and represents good achievement for the students. The achievement of students in Years 7 to 9 is good, students respond well to a challenging scheme of work. Standards seen during the inspection in Year 9 were in line with national averages, though most students showed good competence when using ICT in other subjects. This is an improvement over the standards indicated by teacher assessment last year and moves students nearer to the ambitious targets set for this year. A group of students in Year 8 have reached the stage where they successfully and confidently demonstrated a good range of ICT skills in a challenging simulation via a video-conference link with the NASA centre at Leicester University. This year, the ICT curriculum has become more challenging in Year 9 with the introduction of a short GCSE course which the school uses as a stepping stone and a booster for a pilot group that is intended to go on to the Applied GCSE in Years 10 and 11.

83. Standards by Year 11 are above average. The majority of students take a GCSE or GNVQ course. Some students demonstrated very good understanding of appropriate ICT applications. Achievement is good in response to teaching which is good overall and in some lessons, very good. Well-planned lessons have good pace, which helps to maintain interest and they are appropriately reviewed at the end to reinforce learning. Teaching also focuses upon literacy and numeracy skills ensuring that they continue to develop within the new contexts explored in ICT, particularly number skills when using spreadsheets. Students with special needs, including those who are gifted and talented, achieve well in ICT lessons. They are well supported by ICT teachers and specialist support staff, when they are available, in undertaking challenging tasks.. There are activities both in lessons and in extra curricular time to stretch the more able students. Because assessment is frequent and thorough, students are aware of their progress and are frequently reminded about what they need to do to improve further to meet the challenging targets which are set. This is particularly true of years 9 to 11 where all follow an examination course.
84. Achievement and standards have improved because there have been very significant changes in this area in recent years in terms of staffing, resources and the curriculum. The department is very well led and managed and mainly staffed by ICT specialists. Members of staff work well as a team. Teachers are deployed effectively to make best use of their expertise; many have relevant ICT and business experience. Resources are good, the number of computers is above average for a school of this size. The large number of Interactive whiteboards which have now been installed, are used to very good effect by teachers and the students, who are frequently invited to demonstrate their understanding for the benefit of the whole class. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good.

Information and communication across the curriculum

85. The use of ICT across the curriculum in years 7 to 11 is good. Students enter year 7 with below average ICT skills but make good progress enabling them to use ICT appropriately in all subjects. By years 10 and 11 students have good ICT skills and knowledge which is used to enhance their learning in all subjects. The use of ICT by subject departments is good overall. ICT use is good in the English department and is a strength of the mathematics department. The use of ICT is at least good and frequently very good in some aspects of design and technology. Requirements in respect of computer-aided design and manufacturing are fully met. The use of ICT is also a strong feature of the art and PE departments. ICT is used effectively to promote a better understanding of many aspects of the citizenship programme. From year 7 onwards the extra curricular mixed age “DJ group” uses music technology effectively and creatively.
86. An excellent and challenging videoconference activity with the NASA Centre at Leicester University allowed year 8 students to demonstrate their skills in a lunch time session. In a simulated volcanic eruption complete with pictures from the simulated event, the students had to use their ICT skills to monitor the eruption and evacuate the population from threatened areas. They were put under pressure and worked very hard to accomplish their task using their ICT and communication skills well.
87. In most subjects teachers and students use interactive whiteboards well to enhance both teaching and learning. Interactive boards are used well in science but the use of ICT for monitoring and measuring (data logging) in practical science work needs to develop further. There is also more scope for the use of ICT to enhance teaching and

learning in the modern foreign language department. There has been a significant improvement in the use of ICT to assist in the improvement of students' achievement in all subjects since the last inspection.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students are achieving well and in Years 7 to 9 attainment has recently improved.
- Teaching has improved and caters for a wide variety of learning styles.
- Teachers are preparing students for GCSE examinations more thoroughly.
- Lesson resources do not always cater for a wide range of abilities.
- Examination and test results are not analysed thoroughly.

Commentary

88. Standards of work seen on the inspection are below average by Years 9 and 11 but achievement across Years 7 to 11 is good. Standards at GCSE level in 2003 were very low compared to national averages and low compared to results obtained in many other school subjects especially at the higher grades. Standards at GCSE in 2004 fell further. This is explained by the school as being due to or as a result of the loss of a subject specialist teacher at a critical time as well as problems with the structure of the coursework, which was over complicated and took time away from examination preparation. Attainment recorded by teachers at the end of Year 9 in 2003 was low compared to national averages. However, standards in 2004 have improved significantly and are much more in line with performance in other school subjects because teachers have introduced more regular and rigorous assessment tasks. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory because teaching, learning and achievement have improved. Students make good progress in lessons and achieve well because teaching and learning are good across the age range where carefully structured lessons and well-prepared and interesting resources cater for a wide variety of learning styles.
89. Good learning is demonstrated when students are involved by, for example, marking a past examination question themselves and when they are encouraged to think hard, discuss issues with each other and give good oral and written responses. Students with special educational needs achieve in line with expectations. Some resources are planned especially with these students in mind although their use is not yet extensive enough. Girls achieve as well as boys in lessons. Girls are encouraged to participate orally and are not shy in speaking even when there are many more boys in the class. The achievement of able and gifted and talented students is satisfactory and they are working at average or above average standards. Higher attaining but under-achieving students are encouraged to answer challenging questions orally and this provides some of the extra challenge that they need. However, whilst extra tasks are provided in some lessons giving opportunities to write in more detail, separate and more challenging resources are not always supplied. The subject makes good contributions to literacy across the curriculum, for example, where students are encouraged to write letters in a persuasive style. The subject makes good contributions to numeracy. Students can draw and analyse a variety of graphs, for example, to show indicators of

development. ICT skills are particularly evident in assessed pieces of work and for example, on producing a tourist information leaflet on St Lucia. Work is marked regularly. Assessment is good because it is now regular and thorough. Students are now more involved in the assessment of their own work. They have a good understanding of what steps they need to take to improve. They appreciate the opportunities to discuss how they could do better as well as the help they get at after school and weekend sessions. Student attitudes are variable. The majority are positive about their learning, but when the work is anything less than captivating their interest, some take the opportunity to chatter.

90. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Leadership is competent and committed and there are clear lines of responsibility. The department is supportive of new teachers and is now sharing good practice. Good teamwork is emerging which is helping to raise standards. In Years 10 and 11, students benefit because subject specialist teachers work well together in lessons. The department is beginning to monitor its performance and tackle weaknesses such as making improvements in lesson preparation and resources as well as improving examination performance through the organisation of coursework sessions after school. The department has identified priorities for the subject's development which is beginning to be based on analysis of student performance, although currently this is not thorough enough, for example in identifying any differences in performance between boys and girls. Good aspects of leadership and management are beginning to be applied more consistently such as work sampling, lesson observations, target setting and the monitoring of achievement for individual students.

History

Provision in history is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Energetic new leadership is broadening and deepening teaching and learning.
- Well organised and knowledgeable GCSE teaching motivates students to achieve very well.
- Students' sense of identity is well developed through knowledge and understanding of the diversity of British society and of the European, Commonwealth and global dimensions of their lives.
- Independent learning and higher level understanding, and skills are underdeveloped in Years 8 and 9.
- ICT is not sufficiently used to support students in redrafting to improve their writing or to make teaching vivid and memorable.

Commentary

91. Standards are below average. In 2003 GCSE results were above national averages but in 2004 were below provisional averages. Standards of work seen were below average by Years 9 and 11.
92. Achievement is very good in Years 10 to 11. GCSE students do as well in history as in their other subjects and achieve very well because they are well motivated by teaching which generates interest and curiosity. Achievement is only satisfactory in Year 9 as above average students are not yet learning independently or demonstrating higher level skills and understanding. Students with Special Educational Needs and the many with English as an Additional Language achieve very well.
93. Teaching and learning are good. Teaching is good and sometimes very good with positive and enthusiastic student response due to high expectations. GCSE teaching is thorough with very clear learning objectives. New schemes of work are being developed to widen teaching in Years 7 to 9. Literacy strategies deepen thinking and understanding, encouraging more extended written responses, but with only 60 minutes teaching per week the impact is only slowly beginning to be seen. Students' sense of identity is very well developed through exploration of diversity within British society, African civilisation and Black Peoples of the Atlantic, and through examining the World Wars as global conflicts. Students use ICT at home, in the library and in the history homework club. ICT is not used to improve achievement through re-drafting historical writing or to provide sufficient visual impact.
94. Leadership and management are very good. The new subject leader has accomplished much in three months and the Departmental self review is very good. Leadership has vision to transform teaching. Improved summative assessments are being trialled which provide some evidence of understanding in order to chart progress but formative assessment is not used to develop student responses as they progress through each unit of work.
95. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. GCSE standards and teaching have improved. ICT use has improved so that all GCSE coursework is word processed and one interactive whiteboard is well used. ICT use is however underdeveloped.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **unsatisfactory**. Although provision is unsatisfactory in that the legal requirements in Years 1 to 13 are not fully met the quality of what is provided is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school does not meet the statutory requirements to provide religious education for students in Years 10 to 13.
- Good and very good teaching is contributing to a steady rise in standards.
- Students are confident in expressing view with reasons.
- The thorough assessment scheme enables students to monitor their progress
- ~~carefully~~, lessons there is insufficient variety of materials to suit the needs of all students.

Commentary

96. Standards at the end of Year 9 as measured by the teacher assessments in 2004 were just below those expected by the agreed syllabus. Only a small proportion of students take religious education in Years 10 and 11 and in this respect the school does not meet the statutory requirements that all students should study religious education. The percentage obtaining grades A* to C in 2004 was above the national average. This is a significant improvement over the last inspection when the standards at the end of Year 9 were well below expectations and no students took the GCSE examination. Work seen in books and lessons confirms this continuing rise in standards with the work being in line with that expected at the end of Year 9 and work in Year 11 being above average. The students are particularly strong in giving their views on issues and supporting them with well reasoned arguments.
97. Students join the school with variable knowledge; skills and understanding that are overall below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education that the school uses. This is exacerbated by the fact that students come from a variety of schools some of which do not follow the same agreed syllabus. Students also have poor literacy. In years 7 to 9 the students' attain better levels than predicted by their previous levels and so achievement is good. In years 10 and 11 students' achieve levels well above those predicted by prior attainment levels and so achievement is very good. Students with special educational needs and English as an additional subject achieve the same as other groups.
98. Teaching is good overall, being better in Years 10 and 11 where it is very good. The best teaching is challenging, has good pace and a vitality that stimulates the students' interest. The lessons encourage students to express their views, give reasons for their answers, apply their knowledge and give examples to show their understanding of issues. There is an appropriate emphasis on the literacy skills of the students and on extending their vocabulary. In the best lessons, there are effective support materials available for students with weaker literacy skills. Attitudes of the students to religious education are good. The good teacher-student relationships ensure that all students are included and feel confident in expressing personal views and this contributes to the students making good progress. Good homework tasks develop the application of principles covered and there is a comprehensive detailed assessment system that gives very clear guidance to the students as to the level of their assessment tasks and what is needed to raise the work to the next level. In all years the marking of the students' books gives positive encouragement but a number of comments are not followed up. Relatively weaker aspects in lessons are when the discussion is teacher led and this limits the amount of student contribution and in some lessons the tasks are not geared to the individual ability and literacy levels of the students.
99. The leadership and management of the subject are good, although overall leadership that has allowed the provision to be non-compliant is unsatisfactory. The department

has moved forward since the last inspection. There is a clear vision for continuous improvement. New schemes of work allow students to reach all levels of attainment and strategies to ensure consistency of delivery have been put into place. Visits to places of worship have recently been introduced for some students but there are no speakers sharing different faiths to enhance the curriculum and a number of new developments still need embedding. ICT is still developing.

100. Since the last inspection a suitable course has been introduced in years 7 to 9, a GCSE course has been introduced, standards are rising and there is a good assessment structure. The quality of these improvements is very good however most of the improvements are recent and the statutory requirements are still not being met in Years 10 to 13 so overall improvement is satisfactory.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Assessment promotes students' understanding of how they learn and can improve.
- Very good teamwork ensures good support for students with special needs and those with English as a second language.
- Very good teaching and learning contribute well to raising standards.
- Students' pride and enthusiasm in their achievement further motivates and ~~leadership and management~~ are excellent.

Commentary

101. Standards are below average at the start of Year 7 because students have limited design skills. By the end of Year 9 very good assessment strategies have boosted students' performance to the national average, indicating good achievement. Girls' performance is better than that of boys because boys lack focus on design research. Students with special learning needs and those from different ethnic backgrounds make equal progress to their peers, because of the very well integrated use of specialist staff who support in many lessons. High achieving students make good progress but gifted and talented students have yet to be sufficiently challenged by work provided.
102. In 2003 GCSE results were above national averages with the department exceeding its targets in all areas of design and technology. This improvement continued in 2004 with a slight dip in food technology. Students achieve very well in Years 10 and 11. Their performance is better than in other subjects they study. Students from different ethnic background and those with special needs achieve very well because they are so effectively supported by specialist staff. All students are motivated to be involved in their own improvement by being helped to know what they must do to improve. A sixth form initiative introducing Health and Social Care is very popular and adds to the vocational links with the local college.
103. Learning and teaching are very good overall because teachers focus on assessment to empower learning. From Years 7 to 11 teachers plan a well-structured approach to designing and making. However cramped classrooms constrain the teaching styles

used. Good well-maintained equipment enables students to hone their skills with a wide range of tools and techniques. A very strong team of technicians ensures teachers are well supported. Excellent corridor display cabinets, often used in lessons to set the standards of work expected, illustrate the high quality skills students achieve when designing for a specific need. Students are full of good, creative ideas and group discussion stretches development of their ideas. Students enjoy the subject and apart from the immature behaviour of a minority in Year 8, they are proud and confident about their designing and making.

104. Leadership and management of the department are excellent. Leadership has created a very good and ambitious team, often developing the personal skills and interests of individual teachers by enabling them to take on whole school initiatives such as the coordination of diversity. Management makes very good use of team time to monitor and share good practice to raise standards. The work of the advanced skills teacher has been disseminated throughout the department and started to lead to very good work on students' use of National Curriculum levels for personal motivation. The team spirit of the staff has created a passion for learning amongst students. Provision is enriched by regular clubs and visits and shows a very good improvement from the previous inspection.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design

Provision in art is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership and management of the department are very good; members of staff work well as a team and have appropriately high expectations of standards of work and behaviour.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and often very good: students achieve very well as a result.
- Students are generally positive towards their work and behave well in lessons.
- The use of annotation in sketchbooks is a weakness across all years.
- The display of work in the department and around the school is of a high standard and reflects the multi cultural ethos of the school very well.

Commentary

105. In 2004 results of teacher assessments at the end of year 9 were in line with national expectations. Those on National Curriculum level 5 and above have shown a steady increase in recent years. The proportion of students gaining GCSE grades A*-C in 2004 was in line with national averages and in line with others school subjects. They have improved significantly on 2003, because of the significant gain in boys' results. Minority ethnic groups have done as well overall as others in GCSE examinations, with Asian students doing particularly well. Targets set for 2005 anticipate a continued rising trend in student performance.
106. Students arrive at the school with a mixed experience of primary schooling and with standards generally below national averages. The department establishes an assessment baseline in the first term and builds on the basic art skills of line, tone, colour and form, to raise the general standard of art work in Year 7. Students learn

from observational studies of natural forms, using their skills to prepare for work in a good range of media, including collage, clay, printmaking, digital art and withy constructions; mixed media work is a particular strength. The strong multi ethnic curriculum, extended through a very good enrichment programme, ensures that all students are able to explore a range of cultural themes as they work. Annotation in sketchbooks is a weakness across all years and does not show the contextual background of students' research work very clearly. Students achieve very well overall. As a result, by the end of Year 9, standards are in line with national averages and students maintain this standard through Year 10 and 11.

107. The qualities of teaching and learning are good and often very good in all years. Teachers have a good command of their subject, are well supported by technicians and teach with commitment and enthusiasm. They plan very well to ensure that all students have access to the curriculum; as a result, students with special educational needs and those whose first language is not English do as well as others in lessons. Students have generally positive attitudes to work and behave very well, although a small number in Year 7 present teachers with challenging behaviour that requires patience and determination to confront. Teachers have very good relationships with students and appropriately high expectations of good behaviour; this ensures that lessons are productive and enjoyable for all.
108. The department benefits from very good leadership and effective management, with the strong teaching and technician team working well together to maintain high standards. The recently appointed head of faculty has brought many new ideas into the department and has a clear vision for the future development of the department. She uses the school's self review activity very positively in analysing standards and setting targets for development. She is disciplined, well informed and enthusiastic and a very good role model for students and staff. The department has made a good improvement since the previous inspection.
109. The faculty is responsible for display around the school, with a full time technician responsible for the very high standard display in all faculty areas, which reflects the cultural diversity of the school very well. Computers and interactive whiteboards are used in all years and their use is developing well as teachers familiarise themselves with digital art programmes.
110. The sixth form was not given a full inspection on this occasion, but in a lesson seen and work sampled standards are at least good in all areas of work. The small numbers taking advanced level examinations are committed to their work and work independently as they research their chosen examination themes. Some individual pieces of work are of a very high standard, reflecting the high expectations that teachers have of them and their very personal exploration of the themes.

Drama

Provision in drama is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve well and respond to the good teaching.
- GCSE results have matched or exceeded the national figures in 2003 and 2004.
- Weak literacy skills hinder progress in some aspects.

Commentary

111. GCSE results were well above average in 2003 with half the students obtaining A*/A grades, but they dipped in 2004 and were broadly average. All students generally obtain a grade. They do better in drama than in their other subjects. One reason for the dip in results in 2004 was the greater weight given to the written papers whilst the strength of most students is in performing. Many find written work difficult because their general vocabulary is limited and they do not develop ideas well. Students enter year 7 with very weak reading and writing skills that improve as they move up the school, but still affect much of their work adversely. By the end of Year 9 students have made good progress in drama skills. They devise scenes to a given theme, portraying characters effectively. They understand the meaning and use of such conventions as thought –tracking. The ability to work together and assess their ideas and those of others sensibly is developing well. By the end of Year 11, students improvise developing characters and themes in some detail. In rehearsal, they evaluate constantly and many give very effective performances. Their written work, even of talented students, is often below average. An examination of their writing does show improvement as they draft and re-draft. Teacher's comments are helpful.
112. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have good knowledge and are able by questioning to start students to use their own ideas and experiences. Students respond to the challenge of many activities, learning to work both collaboratively and independently. When a student finds it impossible to accept the viewpoint of others in the group, teachers work firmly and patiently to resolve the difficulties successfully. Students with special educational needs or those less fluent in English make the same good progress because teachers ensure that they are given extra support by themselves and in group work.
113. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The schemes of work are coherent, well linked to school themes and the plays studied for Year 9 SATs. The department is trialling a system of assessment that will provide effective targets for students and provide good information for parents. The teachers work together well and show much commitment to helping individuals and undertaking large school productions with the music and dance departments. There are regular theatre visits but the number is constrained by cost. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory because the department has maintained similar standards in results and teaching.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The effort and determination of the present teaching staff to provide all students with a high standard of musical education is effective.
- The growing number of students taking music at GCSE and instrumental lessons offer all students further achievement opportunities.
- Instrumental tuition and extra-curricular activities are increasing to meet the requirements of the wide range of cultures represented by the school population.
- Accommodation and resources are unsatisfactory and are having an adverse impact on standards.

Commentary

114. Teachers' assessments show that attainment at the end of Year 9 in 2004 was average. As attainment on entry in Year 7 is below average, this represents good achievement. The proportion of students attaining A* to C grades in the 2004 GCSE examination was below national averages. These results were also well below those of 2003 but higher than those of 2001 and 2002. The students who sat the examination in 2004 were less musically able than expected with irregular attendance resulting in some course work not being completed. A staff shortage when these students were in Year 7 also had an adverse impact on standards. However the 2004 GCSE results represent satisfactory achievement.
115. Although standards are below expectations on entry, inspection evidence shows that standards in Year 9 are in line with national averages. Attainment at the end of Year 9 still represents good achievement for these students and reflects good achievement in Years 7 and 8. A shortage of ICT equipment and instrumental resources is preventing full coverage of the curriculum and inhibiting students' progress in some aspects of the subject. However this situation will be resolved when the new building is completed. Inspection evidence shows that standards in Year 10 are in line with course expectations but above course expectations in Year 11.
116. Teaching and learning are good in Years 7 to 9 and Years 10 to 11. Some examples of very good teaching were observed. Students have good recall of learning from previous lessons, assisted by the teachers' good use of questioning. They enjoy the practical nature of the lessons because of the teachers' enthusiastic presentation and their friendly but professional approach. Teachers have very good knowledge of the subject, which they use well to further students' learning. Some use is made of key words, but occasionally teachers are too easily satisfied with undeveloped answers to their questions. Not enough use is made of musical vocabulary. Generally students make good progress because lesson plans offer realistic challenge for the less musically able. As a result, students with special educational needs, including those with English as an additional language make good progress. More musically able students are adequately challenged. Students' learning is also furthered when class management is good and an acceptable code of conduct has been established. In these classes students respond well to the teachers' instructions and are eager to learn new performing skills.
117. Leadership and management of the new head of department are good and good progress has been made since the last inspection. Although there were no issues in the last report, a new broad and balanced curriculum has been devised and very good assessment procedures are in place. Teaching staff have successfully striven to re-establish the department since the staff shortages following the previous inspection and the number of students participating in musical activities and GCSE lessons has risen. Despite continued attempts to improve the accommodation, it is unsatisfactory. The classroom sizes are too small for many teaching groups and students have to pass through the classrooms to reach their instrumental lessons. There is a shortage of practice rooms, especially when the instrumental teachers are in school. The shortage of computers is being tackled but not the shortage of non-western instruments. Visiting instrumental teachers provide a flourishing instrumental teaching programme and there is a growing number of extra-curricular activities to take into account the rich variety of cultures to be found in the school. A large number of students are regularly involved in musical presentations which are continually rising in standard.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The new head of faculty is giving good leadership, management and direction to the subject.
- Standards are beginning to improve: GCSE results in 2004 were above the national average.
- The school has gained a Sports Mark award and achieved notable successes in competition.
- A wide range of activities are provided after school, at weekends and during the holidays that enhance the curriculum overall.
- Currently a reliance on temporary staff constrains standards and achievement.
- Girls' participation in a minority of lessons is unsatisfactory, which constrains their achievement.
- Limited curriculum time is allocated in Year 9 and for those who do not take physical education as an option in Years 10 and 11 and this hinders students' achievement.

Commentary

118. Students come to school with very mixed experiences of physical education. Overall standards are below average. By the end of Year 9 students' standards are still below average, which represents satisfactory achievement. This is confirmed by the 2004 teacher assessments. In lessons seen students are starting to show rudimentary competence in gymnastics, dance, basketball, badminton and football. Students' basic skills are not well enough developed to be applied effectively in games. In a minority of classes between a quarter and a third of girls did not participate in lessons, which slows down achievement.
119. By the end of Year 11, standards in both the core physical education programme and GCSE are currently below average and students are achieving satisfactorily. The core programme for students who do not study physical education as an option subject is limited to one hour per week. This represents half the recommended time and does not allow sufficiently for consolidation, development and application of skills. Scrutiny of present students' GCSE files and classroom work shows standards to be below average. This is a consequence of low literacy skills and, at times, short concentration spans. Whilst results in the 2003 GCSE examinations were below average, their achievement was satisfactory considering their prior attainment. However, the 2004 GCSE results were above average. This showed a good improvement compared to those gained in 2003 because of the combination of the abilities of the students involved and monitoring of the work of the department by the leadership team.
120. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory, though in Years 10 and 11 they are good. Students benefit from knowledgeable teachers who use their expertise well to help students to develop understanding in the subject. Most teachers have high expectations of behaviour and performance and an enthusiasm for the subject. Lesson planning is thorough and effective and class management is good. A minority of teaching has weaknesses linked to a lack of knowledge of the pupils by temporary staff. In these students learning is too limited as expectations and levels of challenges are low. Students with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress.

121. At times, a small number of younger students show little inclination to settle and concentrate and only strenuous efforts of teachers keep them on task. Older students are more focused on their learning. In a minority of lessons the pace, rigor and challenge of the physical activities were not sufficiently demanding. In the range of activities and teaching methods used did not meet the needs of all abilities of students and too little time was spent on skill acquisition and development in competitive situations to enable students to use them confidently in different games.
122. The school provides a wide range of activities after school, at the weekend and during school holidays. Many have led to successes in sporting competitions that reflect the work of the department and the commitment of the students overall. In addition, the department supports extensive work with feeder primary schools that both shares teacher expertise and makes the transition from primary to secondary school smoother for pupils.
123. After the previous inspection standards in physical education declined but the school has been awarded a Sports Mark Award because of the department's good work in the school and in the community. The newly appointed head of physical education shows very good direction and vision for the future. She gives good strong leadership and management to the dept. In her short time in post she has effectively evaluated the department. Already improvements have been made in assessment procedures, curriculum, performance management and risk assessments. Issues related to girls' participation and strengthening staffing for boys' physical education have yet to be resolved. Teachers encourage students to participate, which is reflected in a good level of participation in extra curricular sport. Although there has been insufficient consistent improvement since the previous inspection, there is clear evidence standards are now raising and there is a commitment to maintaining this improvement by the whole department.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

124. The personal social and health education is a good comprehensive programme covering the development of personal relationships as well as the required elements of sex, drug education and careers. The programme is carefully planned to complement that of citizenship without an overlap of topics. Students are generally very positive about the relevance and impact of what is covered although in some cases the teaching methods lack variety and the delivery of the topics is variable.

CITIZENSHIP

Provision in citizenship is **very good**.

Strengths and weaknesses

- The school has fully implemented the requirements of national curriculum citizenship and provides students with an imaginative and very effective curriculum.
- Students make the most of an excellent range of opportunities to become active and responsible citizens.
- Teaching is very good with excellent features and results in very good achievement.
- Leadership and management are excellent.
- Time allocated to discrete lessons is low and means that students do not have much time to fully develop their ideas in writing or in formal speaking.

Commentary

125. All students are taught citizenship in discrete lessons in a carousel arrangement. Some aspects of citizenship are also delivered via 'hot spots' in other subjects of the curriculum and through an excellent range of planned extra-curricular activities. This provision covers all three strands of the national curriculum in citizenship in a very carefully planned and extremely effective manner. However, the time allocated to the discrete lessons is insufficient to allow students to make the most of opportunities to write in depth about their knowledge and experiences or to develop more confidence in speaking in formal situations.
126. Standards of work in citizenship are average at the end of Year 9, and average by the end of Year 11. Students of all abilities achieve very well in the context of their prior attainment. They are learning to understand their rights and responsibilities in a democratic society and can consider difficult and challenging moral and ethical issues. All students show high levels of appreciation and tolerance of opinions and cultures that differ from their own. By the time they are in Year 11, the great majority of students have taken an active part in a very wide range of group and decision making activities. They willingly make suggestions for improvement, both within school and in the local and wider community. A recent focus, for example, has been gun crime, where students have developed their knowledge and understanding through taking a leading role in a wide range of activities including a peace march, making a music CD, designing T-shirts, and sending poems and letters of condolence and support to a family whose child was the victim of gun crime. This means that standards in the third strand of citizenship (skills of participation and responsible action) are above average.
127. Teaching is very good with some excellent features. Teachers are very enthusiastic, and make use of up-to-date and relevant examples to illustrate what they are saying. This means that students are able to build up their knowledge and understanding of what it means to be a good citizen in today's world. Students are very interested in what they are doing and are prepared to work hard and take a very active part in what they are doing. Teachers provide students with excellent opportunities to share, discuss and participate in their learning.
128. Leadership and management are excellent. The citizenship curriculum is imaginative, very effective and has been carefully designed to meet the needs of the students. The head of department and her specialist team of teachers have a very clear vision of what needs to be done and very significant progress has been made with the introduction of this subject, including the assessment of students' work at the end of Year 9. The school shows excellent levels of commitment towards this subject.

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM

In the inspection, 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 [latest year for which national comparisons are available].

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
Performance Studies	1	100	86.4	0	23.8	2.0 (30)	32.0
Music Technology	6	100	86.5	0	21.4	1.7 (27)	30.7

Level 3 GCE A level and VCE courses

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Drama	4	100	99.5	25	40.1	80	83.6
Business Studies	8	38	98.7	0	36.8	1.5 (23)	80.1
Music Technology	1	100	98.8	0	38.9	4.0 (60)	81.1
Mathematics	5	60	96.7	0	55.6	1.2 (24)	88.8
Art	2	100	98.6	50	50.2	6.0 (80)	87.5
Performance Studies	5	100	99.4	20	37.8	5.2 (72)	82.1
ICT	8	88	95.6	75	24.6	7.0 (88)	69.5

Level 2 vocational qualifications

Qualification	No in final year	% gaining qualification		% gaining merit		% gaining distinction	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
ICT – GNVQ Intermediate	6	33	87.2	33	27.9	0	?

MATHEMATICS Post-16

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good attitudes of the students contribute to their progress.
- Teaching responds promptly to the needs of the students.
- Good relationships ensure all are included in the lessons.
- Very small classes limit opportunities for group interaction and support.
- The early stages of language acquisition of some students limit their achievement.

Commentary

129. Performance in examinations in 2004 was well below the national average. However, numbers taking the courses offered are so small that such comparisons are not very helpful. Work of A level students seen was in line with national averages. Binomial theorem questions and others on integration by substitution and by parts were being dealt with successfully in pure mathematics. Equations of motion, impulse and momentum questions of appropriate standard were part of the work on mechanics. Students following the 'Free Standing Mathematics Qualification' courses tackle successfully topics involving financial management that provide a good level of challenge for the students concerned.
130. Students have good attitudes to their studies. They work hard, make appropriate use of private study and utilise the support offered freely by staff outside lessons. Their learning is good as a result, although for a small proportion of students progress is hampered by their limited English skills for which the school is providing a key skills English course and additional support where appropriate.
131. Teaching is good. Well-planned lessons, making good use of ICT, offer appropriate pace and challenge. Questioning is used well to encourage students to think independently. Teachers know their students well. Good use is made of assessment, particularly in class where teachers respond to individual needs promptly. However there are too limited a variety of tasks within lessons to ensure all students are appropriately challenged, particularly those with language rather than mathematical difficulties. Imaginative approaches to otherwise dry topics, simple and compound interest for example, hold the students' attention well. Care is taken to make the work relevant. As a result achievement is good.
132. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The head of faculty is a good role model both through her teaching and the clear vision she has for moving the subject forward. Members of staff work well as a team. Courses offered are appropriate to the students' needs. A well-organised work scheme provides a good framework for the teaching. Processes for monitoring teaching and learning in Years 7 to 11 are not so well embedded in the work post 16. Few opportunities are taken to raise the profile of mathematics as a subject to study post-16.
133. Improvements since the previous inspection have been satisfactory. Teaching is now good. Student numbers are however very small.

Mathematics across the curriculum Post 16

134. Students' mathematical competence is well below the average for sixth forms nationally. For the courses being undertaken mathematical competence is sufficient to allow access to the current curriculum. Thus students can deal with the statistical elements of business studies and to use spreadsheets in ICT well. The 'Free Standing Mathematics Qualification' course is offered to all students and covers the areas of finance and data handling which supports the work in other courses offered across the curriculum particularly well. There is no systematic attempt to develop basic mathematical skills through making use of the opportunities provided by the various curriculum areas however.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY Post-16

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **very good**. Provision for ICT is very good; the department provides a wide range of vocationally orientated courses and good challenge to students who have a wide range of abilities and aptitudes.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching seen was very good overall and ICT teachers work very effectively as a team.
- The ICT curriculum provides an appropriate and challenging in a range of vocationally orientated courses up to HND.
- The leadership and management of post 16 ICT are very good.
- Classroom management is very effective in ensuring there is full participation in lessons.

Commentary

135. Standards in the first group to take the AVCE course in 2004 were good for many candidates with almost half attaining A or B grades. This represented very good achievement for the successful candidates although a number of students were ungraded. There have been very significant changes in the department recently and it now has new and experienced management, teaching staff, and a broader curriculum.
136. Standards seen in lessons and in students' work were above average overall in both main courses, AVCE ICT and BTEC National Certificate in ICT (single and double awards). Standards were also good for the small number currently enrolled on the Higher National Diploma course run in collaboration with Middlesex University. The standards being attained on all courses represent very good achievement for the students. They are committed to their work and strive for success. The department also runs a successful on-line continuous assessment ICT Technicians' course in collaboration with "CISCO Systems". The range of courses provides good, flexible and appropriate progression routes, which is consistent with the school's aims.
137. Teaching and learning are never less than good and more often very good in all courses. Courses are very well planned to cater for what is often a wide range of ability and previous experience. Frequently, several courses are covered in the same lesson because of assiduous planning and skilful teaching. Paper based and computer based learning resources are used effectively. Theory lessons, in particular, have good and often very good pace. Thorough and regular assessment is an integral component of the department's work. Students are well informed about their progress in relation to course criteria and know what they need to do to improve further as they move on to the next stage of their work. Effective and regular peer assessment is a feature of practical lessons, in one busy AVCE Web authoring session, as well as

providing useful feedback, peer assessment also helped to create a very good collaborative and productive working atmosphere, where skills and knowledge were shared. Very good question and answer sessions are used to round-off lessons and reinforce learning. On several occasions, teacher input lost some effect because students were still very busy with their keyboards rather than listening to good advice.

138. The high level of effectiveness demonstrated by this growing department is a result of very good leadership and management which has provided a very good ICT infrastructure with good resources, a good level of experienced, very effective and well coordinated teachers, and a flexible, innovative curriculum. All of these factors are now enabling students to achieve very well in a wide range of ICT courses. Progress since the last inspection has been very good.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum in the Sixth Form

139. The use of ICT across the curriculum in the sixth form is good overall: it is never less than satisfactory and frequently very good. Students have at least satisfactory and often very good ICT skills to enhance learning in 6th form courses. They have good research skills and make effective use of the Internet. Word processing and presentational skills are generally well developed and used extensively for coursework. Interactive whiteboards are used extensively in some subjects where students are adept at using them in order to play a full and active part in whole class ICT based sessions. The music department uses the general school equipment very well in the 6th form where they receive very good support from an ICT technician in AS music technology. The use of ICT in media studies is very good and benefits from the assistance of effective support staff. The art department makes good use of specialist software to create and manipulate images. In the ICT department students are able to create impressive Web sites for specific users as part of their advanced level studies.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA

Music Post-16

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good care and support given by the teacher raises standards and enables the students to develop their skills in music technology.
- Regular performing opportunities give students opportunities for extending their performing skills.
- The excellent relationships between teachers and students help to promote very good learning.
- The allocation of sixth form students to assist with lower school groups gives them opportunities to act as role models and consolidate their learning.

Commentary

140. Results in AS music technology in 2004 were below average with the six students achieving between C and G grades. However the small number of students sitting the examination makes comparison with national figures invalid. These results represent very good achievement when compared with students' attainment on entry to the school. The numbers of students taking the music technology examination is growing,

with a larger number preparing for the examination in the summer of 2005 and more students hoping to start the course in September 2005.

141. Although there is not a Year 13 group, inspection evidence shows that achievement is good and standards in Year 12 are, at present, above national expectations. This is due to the very good teaching and the effort students contribute to their own learning. In the lessons seen students were composing their own arrangement of "Summer Time" using Cubase and Reason software on the computers. Whilst the very helpful worksheet devised by the teacher made significant demands of the students regarding the nature of the arrangement, some students had already met these criteria and were looking to further enhance their work.
142. The quality of teaching and learning are very good. The teachers are always ready to challenge students with probing questions and to extend learning from their own excellent knowledge of the subject. They are excellent role models, very often enabling the students to discover their own learning through skilful questioning and encouragement. Excellent relationships exist between students and the teachers. All sixth form music students are encouraged to help Year 9 students with their computer studies, thus giving them invaluable experience of consolidating their own learning and passing it on in an easily intelligible format.
143. The very good leadership and management are also contributory factors in promoting high standards. The head of department and course teacher have devised a course designed to enable the students to achieve well in the summer examinations. Accommodation and resources for the music technology course are excellent. A range of extra curricular opportunities helps to develop the students' instrumental skills and sixth form students are allocated to organise and run lower school groups. There are further opportunities for improving their skills at the Saturday School which takes place during term time.

KEY SKILLS - Literacy

144. The literacy skills of Year 12 and 13 students are weak and need further development to support their A level and vocational courses. The school has chosen the Adult literacy test as the most suitable accreditation and written appropriate schemes of work. The work of both Year 12 and 13 students was examined. In Year 12 students revisit study skills such as the use of encyclopaedias and the Internet. The latter was popular and students confident in its usage. Few felt that they would consult encyclopaedias. Attendance at lessons was not good. In Year 13, the schemes of work focus on applications for college and university places. Lessons prepare students well for writing their personal statements and examples were seen. These reveal that students receive very good guidance on the actual language they use, the content and the presentation. In some there were errors of spelling and grammar, confirming that basic problems of literacy remain. Students have little understanding of the language skills needed to present themselves most effectively but are being helped to achieve this.

DRAMA Post-16

Provision in drama is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good; students develop very good performance skills.
- Teaching is good.
- Accommodation is very good.
- Weak reading and writing skills impede progress in some areas.

Commentary

145. In A-level examinations the number of high grades are few but usually all students obtain a grade. In AS examinations 2004, the final grades were lower than anticipated because students who scored very well on the performance papers did poorly on the written papers. The school has queried the results but the matter has not been resolved. Most students enter the drama course with high GCSE grades in drama but may not have high grades in the core subjects, particularly English. This does indicate very clearly that they will find the reading and writing parts of the course demanding.
146. Although there is currently no Year 12 drama group, Year 13 students show good achievement. Students during rehearsal explain clearly and confidently what they are doing and why. Their analysis of what they are doing and how it could be improved are often perceptive. On stage, most give good performances because they move well, using both face and voice to convey characters. They have a very good knowledge of conventions and techniques, and use them well. There is very good teamwork. Their written work is below average. Some students have few notes to use in planning coursework. Scripts used in the improvisation are complete and provide a good basis for performance. Several books show little evidence of organisation of notes, handwritten or photocopied.
147. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a very clear understanding of the subject and through questioning, help students develop their skills. In the lessons seen, the students had reached the stage of working independently. Comments and occasional questions from the teachers helped them clarify or refine their work. The students choose drama because of their love of the stage and teachers have successfully fostered the practical skills. Students with special educational needs or those who are not yet fully competent in English make the same good progress. The practical nature of the work and the individual attention of the teacher and collaboration of the group all help to support them. Teachers check and mark notes; their comments are helpful. However, students have not been regularly practising writing skills. The department is aware of this and is planning a day devoted to coursework with support available.
148. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Teachers work closely together and are generous with their help after school. The department hopes to recruit more vigorously next year, as the absence of a Year 12 course is disappointing. The new accommodation is very good, enabling several groups to enjoy purpose built studios at the same time. The department organises a number of substantial visits, for example, to share work with a rural school for a week. It has been able to take two of its productions abroad and has won competitions. Several students have chosen to study Performance Art as well and this includes dance, drama and music, as well as Drama and Theatre Studies. This combination and also the range of extra-curricular drama extend the opportunities for drama and related skills. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory because similar standards have been maintained.

HOSPITALITY, SPORTS, LEISURE AND TRAVEL

Business Studies

Provision for Business Studies is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The positive attitude of students and very good student-teacher relations ensures that lessons are both pleasant and productive.
- Teaching is good where it is characterised by challenging and targeted questions which promote, check and reinforce students' understanding.
- The new BTEC qualifications have provided appropriate and stimulating courses for students entering the sixth form.
- There is no dedicated business studies area but students have very good access to computers.

Commentary

149. As part of improving the provision for business studies, the school has appointed a new Head of Department and introduced a one year BTEC First Certificate in Business and BTEC National Certificate in Financial Services, the latter as part of the UK Careers Academy initiative. These complement the existing A level business course and provide an appropriate qualification for those who wish to follow a more vocational path. Numbers and results of students taking the A level course in recent years have been variable, with just three of the eight entries gaining pass grades in 2004, the remaining students finding the linguistic and technical demands of the course excessive. The eight current Year 13 students are achieving well in lessons, five having gained pass grades in 2004, one a B grade. This latter student provides the benchmark for productivity and application as well as bringing valuable practical experience to the classroom having recently been voted Young Entrepreneur of the Year. Students on all courses have a satisfactory grasp of basic business terminology but find difficulty in expressing them clearly both verbally and in writing.
150. Teaching and learning are good overall with some very good aspects which generally lead to good learning and achievement in lessons. Teaching is most effective where it involves students in their own learning and teachers use targeted questions, liberally praise student contributions and capture those contributions to reinforce understanding, for example in a good Year 12 AS business lesson on types of business finance. Enthusiastic contributions from students in another good Year 12 lesson were used effectively to develop an understanding of the product life cycle. Students in a good Year 13 lesson worked productively and cooperatively in developing their understanding of business forecasting. Students have a positive attitude to their studies and all lessons are characterised by excellent teacher-student relations. Teachers know the students very well and as a consequence those with special educational needs or those where English is an additional language achieve as well as their peers. Assessment on the new courses is very good, teachers demonstrating an expert knowledge of the qualification assessment criteria
151. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The newly appointed head of department is a good role model for staff and students and has a clear plan for developing the subject further. This includes introducing the applied GCE qualification to provide the necessary foundation for sixth form study. Students have good access to staff and computers but there is no dedicated business studies area to provide an appropriate learning environment. One of the rooms used at the local

college for the Year 13 BTEC course was wholly unsuitable being located next to a noisy drama studio. Visits and business partnerships are underdeveloped. The subject was not specifically reported on in the last inspection.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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