

INSPECTION REPORT

Lampton School

Hounslow, Middlesex

LEA area: Hounslow

Unique reference number: 102538

Headteacher: Mrs Sue John

Lead inspector: Brian Rowe

Dates of inspection: 10th - 14th January 2005

Inspection number: 268845

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:	1341
School address:	Lampton Avenue Hounslow Middlesex
Postcode:	TW3 4EP
Telephone number:	020 85721936
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Moira Stuart
Date of previous inspection:	February 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Lampton School is a mixed comprehensive for pupils aged 11-18, situated in Hounslow. The school serves the local area and is over-subscribed. Since the last inspection the school has gained specialist humanities college status, a DfES Achievement Award, Investors in People, Leading Edge status, Enterprise Learning Pathfinder, Sportsmark and Healthy School awards and is a Training school. Many of the pupils come from families that are economically and socially disadvantaged, but some are from professional backgrounds. There are currently 1,341 pupils on roll, including around 300 in the sixth form, making it a much larger than average sized secondary school. There is an attached unit for 15 students who have learning difficulties for speech and communication. Over three-quarters of the pupils come from minority ethnic groups, a much higher proportion than average, and about 35 are at early stages of using the English language. There are over 120 refugees and six pupils in local care at school. About one-quarter of the pupils receive free school meals and this proportion is above the national average. Pupils' attainment on entry is below average. About one-quarter of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs and this is above average. Over 50 have a Statement of Special Educational Needs and this proportion is well above average when compared to other secondary schools. The number of pupils who start or leave school at other than the usual time is much lower than average. Staff turnover is lower than most schools, but there has been difficulty for recruiting staff in some subjects.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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1695	Brian Rowe	Lead inspector	
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30433	Chris Corp	Team inspector	Science Post-16 biology
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18854	Malcolm McGregor	Team inspector	Art
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4223	Garth Collard	Team inspector	History
12110	Roger Bailess	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
20189	Jagat Nagra	Team inspector	Community languages
20767	Jerry Royle	Team inspector	Music English as an additional language
14446	Barry Simmons	Team inspector	Physical education
23137	Ron Fewtrell	Team inspector	Business studies Post-16 economics
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Lampton is a **very good** school that is constantly striving to improve and provides **very good** value for money. The headteacher, very strongly supported by the senior staff, provides **outstanding** leadership. Her vision to ensure that every child will succeed has been a determining factor in creating a very popular school in which pupils, parents and staff are extremely positive. The school has had considerable success in gaining national and local awards and designation as a specialist humanities college. Leadership and management are **very effective** and this ensures that teaching, learning and pupil achievement are **good**.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Inspirational leadership by the headteacher secures everyone's commitment to raising standards and improving the quality of education for all pupils.
- Senior leaders work co-operatively, cohesively and very effectively supporting the head in improving the school.
- The school is a very harmonious and secure community in which every child appreciates that they are valued and that their academic and personal development matters.
- Standards are above average and pupils achieve well because of their very positive attitudes to learning, good teaching and very good personal development.
- The school is well staffed because it has innovative approaches to the recruitment, retention and development of staff.
- The school works exceptionally well with a wide range of partners in the community and other schools, colleges and institutions.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) is not used sufficiently well across the school.
- There is very good provision in English, mathematics, religious education, history and community and modern foreign languages.
- Very good teaching in the sixth form ensures that students achieve very well and are very well prepared for the next stage of their career.

Overall, improvements since the last inspection have been **very good**. With the exception of cross-curriculum information and communication technology (ICT), all the issues identified in the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. The school has removed a significant deficit budget. The inspectors fully endorse the priorities identified in the school's improvement plan and are confident the school has the capacity to continue to improve.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 11 and 13 results

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

Key: A - well above average; B- above average; C- average; D- below average; E- well below average

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

STANDARDS AND ACHIEVEMENT

Since the last inspection the overall results from the national Year 9 tests indicate that standards have been rising in all subjects and are now at the national average. When compared to prior attainment in national tests at the end of Year 6, pupils make good progress and **achieve well**. Results in GCSE examinations show a steady improvement over recent years and were above average in 2004. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 make good progress and **achieve well**. Examination results in the sixth form have been rising over the past few years and were just above the national average in 2004. Pupils in Years 7 to 11 achieve well in relation to their ability and prior attainment. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs and those that have English as an additional language achieve well in relation to their targets. The school evaluates in detail the achievement of a wide range of ethnic groups. All achieve well with the exception of white lower attaining pupils. Pupils develop good literacy and numeracy skills as they move through the school.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, throughout the school is **very good**. Attendance is excellent and punctuality very good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to school. They behave very well and develop very good relationships with each other and staff.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The quality of teaching and learning is **good**. Arrangements for assessing students' work are **good**. There are examples of very good teaching to be found in most departments. Several aspects of the overall educational provision are strengths within the school. These include: the provision for enrichment, the care of pupils and the links with the community, schools, other organisations and parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The overall quality and effectiveness of governance, leadership and management throughout the school are **very good**. A significant strength is the outstanding leadership and commitment of the headteacher to ensure all pupils and staff aim high. The quality of governance is very good. Leadership and management are raising standards effectively. Middle managers are committed, confident and contribute effectively to whole-school planning and curriculum initiatives. The school is an excellent provider of initial teacher training. The school fully meets all statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have **exceptionally positive** views and the school's image in the local community is very strong. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the school. They say that it is a safe environment where everyone is respected and treated fairly. Parents and pupils value the good teaching. They recognise that teachers expect pupils to work hard and do their best. Pupils feel that their opinions are heard, valued and acted upon.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- ensure that pupils use computers regularly and effectively in all subjects;
- accommodation is satisfactory, but still needs improvement.

SIXTH FORM SECTION OF THE SUMMARY REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

The overall effectiveness of the sixth form is **very good** and it is especially cost-effective. Standards are now above the national average with a steady improvement over the last few years. The results are partly dependent on the ability of students who stay on, many of whom enter the sixth form with relatively low GCSE grades. The quality of teaching and learning is **very good**, which ensures students achieve **very well**. The increasing numbers who enter the sixth form are very well supported and guided as a result of caring staff and very good leadership and management.

The sixth form's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Leadership and management are very good and the head of sixth form is well supported by an effective team of heads of year, tutors and subject heads.
- Teaching and learning are very good resulting in very good achievement.
- Community links are excellent.
- Provision in English, French, mathematics, history, economics, media and sociology is very good.
- Students have very good attitudes to learning and work in partnership with teachers to make very good progress.
- Care, support and guidance are very good.
- Accommodation is satisfactory, but still needs improvement.

QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES OF THE CURRICULUM

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

Curriculum area	Evaluation
English, languages and communication English	Provision is very good . A-level results are improving and in 2004 were above average. Students achieve very well due to highly effective teaching and the students' very positive attitudes to their learning. The department is led and managed very well.
French	Provision is very good . Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. Students are motivated by their enthusiasm and achieving very well as a result of careful planning and excellent resources.
Mathematics	Provision is very good . Standards are above average. Very good teaching challenges students and promotes high achievement. Students have very positive attitudes towards their learning.
Science Biology	Provision is good . Students and teachers work in a very co-operative manner. Achievement is good due to the good teaching and the very good attitudes that students have to their learning. Standards are at the national average.
Chemistry	Provision is satisfactory . Students are well supported by teachers who have good subject knowledge. Results have been below expectations but current standards are improving. Student achievement is satisfactory.
Physics	Provision is satisfactory . Experienced teachers provide good support for students. Results have been just below average, but close to expectations and students' achievement is satisfactory.
Humanities	Provision is very good . Standards are above average and

History	achievement is very good because of the high quality of teaching and excellent tracking of student progress. Leadership and management are very good.
Sociology	Provision is very good . Standards are average but students achieve very well because teaching is very good and lessons challenge students to think for themselves.
Visual, performing arts and media Media	Provision is very good . Standards are above average at A-level and achievement is very good as a result of very good teaching and excellent teacher / student relationships.
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel. Physical education	Provision is good . Highly committed and enthusiastic students respond very positively to the consistently good teaching. Standards are just above average and students achieve well.
Business Economics	Provision is very good . Very good teaching results in students working hard and achieving very well. Very good leadership and management are focused on raising standards further.
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 college. 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

The overall quality of support and guidance is very good. Relationships with staff are very positive. Students value the readily available access to well-informed personal and academic advice and support from their subject teachers and tutors. Very good guidance prepares them effectively for the next stage of their careers. The arrangements for induction into the sixth form are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SIXTH FORM

Leadership and management are very good. There is a clear vision for developing and improving the quality of sixth form provision. The head of sixth form is well supported by an effective team of tutors, subject heads and heads of years who have a strong and shared commitment to raising standards. Students achieve very well, helped by the effective system for monitoring their academic progress by subject teachers. Financial management is very good.

STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM

Students are very positive and supportive of the school. In conversations with inspectors, they refuted the negative views identified in a few students' questionnaires and are happy that the school provides very effective careers guidance. They recognise that they are maturing well because they are given very good opportunities to accept responsibility and to work and research independently. They feel that the school values their views and fully involves them in its life and work.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Since the last inspection the overall results from the national Year 9 tests indicate that standards have been rising in all subjects and are now at the national average. When compared to prior attainment at the end of Year 6, pupils make good progress and achieve well. Results in GCSE examinations show a steady improvement over recent years and were above average in 2004. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 make good progress and achieve well. Examination results in the sixth form have been rising over the past few years and were just above the national average in 2004. Based on work seen, pupils achieve well in relation to their ability and prior attainment. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language achieve well in relation to their targets. The school evaluates in detail the achievement of a wide range of ethnic groups. All achieve well with the exception of white lower-attaining boys.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have been steadily rising in Years 7 to 11 for the past six years.
- Achievement in most subjects in Years 7 to 11 is good. It is very good in mathematics, French, history and religious education.
- The unvalidated 2004 GCSE results were above national expectations. The highest standards were seen in French and religious education.
- A-level results in 2004 were just above the national average and this represents very good achievement by students. The highest standards are in English, media studies, mathematics, French, history, sociology and economics.
- The very good teaching and learning in Years 12 and 13 contribute to the very good achievement at A-level.

Commentary

Years 7 – 9

1. The table below indicates that pupils reach standards that are close to the national average in Years 7 to 9. The school reviews and evaluates its extensive performance data in an effective and detailed manner, discussing emerging issues with departments and governors. This process has helped subject leaders to review the teaching and learning and has paid a major part in the raising of standards and achievement across the whole school. The results for 2004, although unvalidated at the time of the inspection, represent good achievement by the pupils, who enter the school with attainment below the national average. The attitude to their learning in a small minority of white boys results in their achievement being lower than other pupils. Achievement is good in most subjects and very good in French, Panjabi and history where the teaching is very supportive and engaging. There is no subject where achievement is unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs or those who have English as an additional language achieve well because of the very good support and guidance they receive.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	31.8 ¹ (33.2)	(33.4)
Mathematics	35.7 (34.5)	(35.4)
Science	33.7 (32.1)	(33.6)

There were 205 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year. Note that at the time of the

¹ The English results are not confirmed and the school is in dispute with the examination board.

Years 10 and 11

2. The table below indicates that pupils reach standards that are above the national average. Pupils' achievement is good based on their prior attainment at the end of Year 9. Many pupils reach standards at or above those predicted from their end of Year 9 results. Standards are well above national expectations in mathematics, French and religious education and above in English, German and business education. Standards are below the national average in information and communication technology, art, music and drama. However, these standards represent good achievement as pupils start their GCSE courses with attainment below the national expectations.

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

	School results	National results 2004
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	57 (52)	51 (52)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	94 (89)	91 (89)
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	100 (98)	97 (96)
Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects)	35.8 (35.5)	34.9 (34.7)

There were 197 pupils in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades.

3. Pupils' achievement in lessons is good in nearly all subjects and achievement in English, mathematics, French, history and religious education is very good. Good teaching and learning and the very positive attitudes of most pupils result in good achievement. There are no subject areas where achievement is unsatisfactory.
4. Standards attained by pupils with special educational needs or those who have English as an additional language are at or above those predicted using their prior attainment. Pupils from a wide range of ethnic groups achieve well, with the exception of white lower-attaining boys who do not have the very good attitudes to learning seen with the vast majority of pupils. The school supports those pupils who find examinations daunting or irrelevant with well-planned alternative courses.

Sixth form

5. Standards in sixth form examinations were close to the average in 2004 and have been rising over the past few years. This represents very good achievement overall as students enter the sixth form below and in some cases well below the nationally expected level.

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	99.5 (88.6)	92.3 (92.3)
Percentage of entries gaining A-B grades	38.6 (27.5)	36.2 (35.6)
Average point score per pupil	244.5 (236.6)	265.2 (258.2)

There were 90 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for 2003.

6. Results at A-level in 2004 are above the national average and achievement is very good in English, French, Panjabi, mathematics, history, media studies, economics and sociology. This achievement is closely linked to very good teaching and learning and the very positive attitudes of the students to their work.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attendance is excellent. Punctuality is **very good**. Pupils behave **very well** and acquire **very good** attitudes. Their personal development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance is now excellent because pupils are given every incentive to be in school.
- Sixth form students enter into a genuine partnership with the school in their desire to work hard and do well.
- Pupils' very good attitudes make strong contributions to the standards they attain.
- The pupils enjoy taking responsibility for themselves and others.
- Pupils relate very well to others and relish their rich mix of cultural heritages.
- The careful promotion of personal development throughout the school ensures pupils' correct conduct.

Commentary

7. The school now has excellent procedures for promoting attendance and recording absence. All absences are thoroughly checked. On occasions staff even check dental appointments. This rigour is recognised by parents and pupils and secures constantly improving attendance. Pupils comment that they like the school and do not want to miss any of the activities. The very high attendance figures reflect the current allegiance of pupils and parents to the school, as well as the improved procedures.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2003-2004 (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.9	School data:	0.6
National data:	7.2	National data:	1.1

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

8. Pupils arrive at school and in lessons in very good time because they are committed to the school. Pupils have a very good work ethic and are determined to succeed. They willingly apply themselves to their learning. The high level of pastoral support, with its emphasis on inclusion, ensures that all pupils feel they belong and respond positively to the school's encouragement of their commitment to education. The pupils involved in an alternative curriculum with a restricted number of examinations speak enthusiastically and confidently about their lessons.
9. Pupils and staff represent a wealth of different ethnicities and this is celebrated in many areas of school life. Mutual respect is evident between all members of this vibrant community. Everyone raves about the East Meets West annual talent show. Pupils are valued for their individuality and helped to do well in as many ways as possible. They respond positively to this and develop during their time at school into confident young people. Strong multi-cultural education is a significant feature of the school. Pupils value strongly social, cultural and ethnic

diversity. Staff promote many opportunities for collaborative or group work to develop further pupils' social skills. Pupils eagerly share and support each other in their learning.

10. The school achieves high standards of conduct by consistent and sensitive application of the behaviour policy and by rewarding pupils for observing it. As a result, pupils behave very well in lessons. The same responsible conduct is shown around the school, even on narrow corridors and cramped staircases. At breaks and lunchtimes students socialise well, without any conflict or unduly boisterous behaviour, despite limited dining accommodation and a small playground.
11. Pupils state that bullying is unacceptable within the school and rarely happens. They were confident that such matters are dealt with promptly and very effectively. The school recognises the disproportionate number of white boys who receive exclusions. Staff work extremely hard to keep them in school, excluding them only when there is no alternative. The current number of pupil exclusions has fallen as a result.

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	306	45	4
White – Irish	2	1	0
White – any other White background	38	3	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	5	1	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	11	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	12	4	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	523	19	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	129	17	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	20	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	43	4	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	24	0	0
Black or Black British – African	110	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	15	12	2
Chinese	8	0	0
Any other ethnic group	94	4	0

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

12. The school promotes the personal development of pupils very well, assisting them to become mature, responsible and informed young citizens. Religious education makes a strong contribution to the good spiritual development of all pupils. Their response to the Asian tsunami disaster, and the strength to be gained from unity of thought and purpose, were palpable during several inspiring assemblies. Moral development is very good. The "Thought for the day" provides tutors with good ideas for a morning meditation. Most tutors use this carefully to encourage debate and reflection. Teachers raise moral issues in many subjects. As a result, pupils develop strong personal values and a keen sense of right and wrong.
13. Pupils with learning difficulties and those who use English as an additional language have very positive attitudes to learning. They respect and value in particular the extra support they receive. They are capable of admirable focus in lessons when they are fully absorbed by the activity. An excellent example of positive behaviour and a desire to learn and achieve well was seen by pupils with special educational needs in a music lesson when following a course to teach the basic skills.

Sixth form

Students' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are **very good**. Their attendance and punctuality are also **excellent**.

Commentary

14. Students are delighted with the stimulating atmosphere of the sixth form, enjoying the rich programme of academic, social and cultural experiences it provides. Teachers inspire a passion in their students for their subjects and a confidence in learning for themselves. Sixth form students are determined to succeed in their lessons and wider activities and work very hard. They are ambitious for themselves and for others. They embrace the many opportunities to be involved in the school, such as participation in the school council, mentoring younger pupils and assisting with extra-curricular activities. They fulfil these positions very responsibly and provide superb role models for younger pupils.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education provided by the school is **good**. The overall quality of the curriculum in Years 7 to 11 and the sixth form is **good**. The opportunity for enrichment, including out-of-school activities, is **very good**. The quality and quantity of accommodation and resources to meet the needs of the Years 7 to 13 curriculum are **satisfactory** overall. Resources to meet the needs of pupils are **good**. Arrangements to ensure pupils' care and welfare are **very good**. Pupils and sixth form students receive **very good** support, advice and guidance. The extent of the school's involvement of pupils and students in its work and development is **good**. The partnership with parents is **very good** and there are **excellent** community links. Relationships with other schools and colleges are **excellent**.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning in Years 7 to 11 is **good** and in the sixth form is **very good**. Assessment of pupils' work is **good** in all years.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching motivates pupils and supports them to achieve well throughout the school.
- Effective teaching promotes very positive attitudes and personal development in pupils.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT to enhance learning.

- Regular school reviews ensure that senior staff are aware of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning, but there is insufficient rigorous monitoring by some subject leaders.
- Teaching and learning are very good in Years 7 to 11 in history, religious education and Panjabi and in Years 12 and 13 in English, mathematics, French, history, sociology, media studies and economics.

Commentary

15. Teaching and learning are good in Years 7 to 11 and very good in the sixth form. The overall quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly since the last inspection. There is now a much higher proportion of excellent and very good lessons and teaching is a strength of the school. During the last few years important strategic decisions have been made to raise standards and improving teaching and learning has been an important priority for staff development. Effective management has ensured that improvement to teaching and learning has been accomplished in many subjects. The pupils are very positive about the school and the teaching they receive. They are very well behaved overall and have very positive attitudes to their work. Teachers make a substantial contribution to their personal development.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 182 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
6 (3)	51 (28)	88 (49)	37 (20)	0 (0)	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. The above table indicates a high proportion of good and very good teaching. During the inspection the most effective teaching was observed in history, religious education and Panjabi. There are examples of very good teaching to be found in most departments. Although teaching is good in Years 7 to 11, it is strongest in Years 10 and 11. This is because subject leaders deploy the most experienced teachers to the examination groups and pupils have especially positive attitudes and a determination to succeed. However, despite this good overall profile there are still aspects that need to be improved. These are related in some lessons to insufficient planning to match work to pupils’ ability. In a few lessons teachers did not have high enough expectations of what pupils could achieve, especially the most able. Most subjects make insufficient use of ICT to enhance learning and promote even greater achievement. In a few subjects there is insufficient internal self-review leading to strategies for improvement, but in others this is a very strong feature.
17. Pupils have very positive attitudes towards their work and readily conform to school rules and conventions. Many have well developed learning skills, but some, mostly boys, find it hard to study without support from staff. Pupils’ literacy and numeracy skills are below average when they start school, but soon improve due to effective teaching. Pupils are competent using ICT and when given the opportunity use these skills to support their learning.
18. Pupils with special educational needs and those who use English as an additional language are well taught across all curriculum areas. Since the last inspection the school has changed its supportive education structure. This has brought greater stability to the support provided and a consequence is that teachers are much better informed about the needs of pupils with language, learning and behavioural special needs and their planning is more efficient. In addition, most learning support assistants enhance pupils’ learning and behaviour very well.
19. Assessment has improved significantly since the last inspection and is good throughout the school. Assessment is a real strength in modern foreign languages, business studies and

history. Procedures for assessing the progress of pupils are good within most departments. In nearly all subjects, work is marked constructively and thoroughly and assessment is used to set targets. Pupils are given a clear guide on how their work might be improved. This helps pupils understand what they need to do to reach higher standards in examinations and to achieve well. Pupils benefit from being involved in judging their own performance and, in the best practice, that of their peers. There is a whole-school assessment policy to which subject policies align. However, there is inconsistency in the actual use of assessment to inform planning throughout the school. ICT is used well to increase access to data for reviewing progress and identifying underachievement in pupils' progress.

Sixth form

20. Teaching and learning in the sixth form are very good. During the inspection, 43 sixth form lessons were observed. Half were very good or excellent, 95 per cent were good or better and all were satisfactory or better. A scrutiny of students' work and talking with students confirmed this very good level of teaching and learning. The teaching has improved over the years because of the intervention of the senior management team who monitor the quality of teaching and learning and the support given to students on a regular basis. This improved teaching is having a direct impact on students' achievement and standards of work. Regular feedback on how well students are doing is provided and they are appreciative of this drive to raise standards. Teaching and learning are very good in English, mathematics, French, history, sociology, media studies and economics. Not all teaching is good or better and, although satisfactory, further improvements are required in chemistry and physics.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum for all pupils in Years 7 to 13 is **good**. The opportunity for enrichment, including out-of-school activities, is **very good**. The quality and quantity of the accommodation is **satisfactory**. Resources to meet the needs of pupils in Years 7 to 13 are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school ensures that all pupils have access to a curriculum which suits their needs and interests.
- Many opportunities are taken to celebrate and capitalise on the rich diversity of the pupils with a wide variety of out-of-hours activities.
- There are good curriculum links with local primary schools.
- There are insufficient vocational courses offered to suit different career choices and the aptitudes of all pupils.

Commentary

21. The school provides a good broad curriculum to allow the many different pupil groups the opportunity to pursue their interests, whilst retaining all statutory requirements. In Year 9 an enriched curriculum has been established to include philosophy, an alternative to modern foreign languages. Options in Years 10 and 11 are offered according to pupils' interests and needs, which means that pupils are generally well motivated and develop very good attitudes to learning. In addition, two courses run which cater for those whose needs are not met by the traditional academic curriculum. These pupils experience statutory and examination subjects wherever possible, to retain a balance in their study. There is good liaison with parents about curriculum provision for pupils. GNVQ ICT has recently been introduced, but other vocational courses are still being considered. At GCSE, a dance course has been recently established. The school is aware that more vocational courses would benefit many pupils.
22. The curriculum is managed well to provide courses in physical education, modern foreign languages, mathematics, history and English, which link the pupils' primary and secondary experience through very effective transition arrangements. Summer schools are run for literacy, numeracy, gifted and talented pupils and personal development courses. Literacy support

continues for those who are not confident with their literacy. Panjabi, French and German are all available as second languages from as early as Year 8. Subjects work well together to ensure that pupils make connections in their learning and recognise that skills are transferable. Pupils are arranged in groups in such a way as to allow the flexibility for them to profit from a good range of activities. The school evaluates and reviews well, giving both teachers and pupils the opportunity to evaluate their success, in order to provide the best curriculum for each pupil. The school has developed a good, relevant curriculum which makes learning accessible for pupils with a wide range of learning and behavioural difficulties. The introduction of the ASDAN course has provided additional opportunities for pupils to develop key skills. There is a good programme for personal, social and health education, which includes sex and drugs education. The programme is closely linked and complements the provision for citizenship.

23. The quality of extra-curricular activities is very good. A very extensive range of enrichment courses and out-of-hours support for learning is available to pupils. Pupils can have steel pan lessons, study Arabic, Latin, ICT, dance and statistics as well as other subjects. They are used to receiving visiting speakers and to hosting events where the school celebrates the rich variety of its community by entertaining the audience with dance and music from different cultures. Revision courses are run to support examination work. Pupils have opportunities to go abroad for languages and history in particular and they go on frequent field visits with geography as well as to museums and art galleries. They see live theatre performances, participate in a wide range of sports and celebrate World Book Day as well as entering competitions.
24. Considerable improvement to the school's accommodation has taken place since the previous inspection. Improved sound proofing, a reduction in temporary classrooms, increased specialist teaching areas such as for media studies, the soon to be opened Language and Learning Centre and sports hall contribute to the overall satisfactory accommodation. The accommodation for drama is unsatisfactory, as is that for physical education until the new indoor area is complete. The sixth form area lacks space for private study. Nine temporary classrooms remain and the heavy use of all teaching areas results in a lack of flexibility in the use of the building. Good use is made of all areas so that where accommodation difficulties occur, they do not reduce the quality of the learning.
25. Resources to support pupils' learning are good. The school has adopted very effective strategies to reduce staffing vacancies so that subject specialists teach all lessons. Good stocks of textbooks are used and many subjects, such as history, produce their own resources matched closely to the needs of the pupils. Resources for ICT are still inadequate and pupils are not able to use computers regularly in all subjects. The school employs a good number of support staff and teachers to meet the needs of all pupils. All staff are well qualified and have the experience needed to teach the full range of courses the school offers.

Sixth form

26. The sixth form curriculum is good. Students are introduced carefully into their new subjects and given as much personal choice as possible. The school has been innovative in its efforts to provide a wide range of courses like photography, psychology, music technology, critical thinking and combined language and literature. GNVQ examinations are offered in business and enterprise, ICT and leisure and tourism, whilst other vocational courses are still under consideration.
27. Opportunities for enrichment are very good, offering students many options in which they can take responsibility working with younger pupils or the outside community. Students organise fund raising events for charity, help plan school functions, work on the school council, present assemblies, conduct a mock parliament and support learning in lessons lower down the school as well as offering a helpline to younger pupils. Teachers also take students to conferences to supplement their courses.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements to ensure pupils' care, welfare and safety are **very good**. The school provides **very good** support, advice and guidance and has **good** procedures for involving pupils in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Day-to-day procedures for ensuring pupils' well-being are very effective.
- Staff track pupils' progress very carefully.
- Processes for seeking sixth form students' views are highly effective.
- Constant and consistent support ensures that students achieve very well.
- Very well planned induction procedures help incoming pupils to settle quickly.
- Pupils receive very good advice to help them make decisions about subject choices and career paths.

Commentary

28. The school takes very good care of its pupils so they feel safe, secure, valued and respected. This is now a major strength of the school. All pupils feel that there is always someone they can trust to help them if they have concerns or problems. For instance, Somali pupils relish the Somali support club. They gain in confidence and their motivation to succeed increases because of the interest staff take in their individual well-being. Health and safety arrangements are rigorous, for example, risk assessments in departments and Internet screening. Child protection arrangements are very good. Staff receive appropriate training and new and student teachers are made fully aware of procedures. The school has earned a Healthy Schools Award and successfully encourages pupils to consider personal health and environmental issues. The school nurse provides very good support for sick and injured pupils. Proficient and very willing support staff ensure that information about pupils' needs flows very efficiently.
29. All pupils value the very good support provided by their tutors and heads of year. Pupils comment that tutors track their personal development very carefully and are alert to any change in their demeanour. The system, called Sleuth, enables staff to take prompt action to arrest any further deterioration and to help the pupil get back on track. The system also stimulates positive commendations. The school communicates concerns and commendations to parents, who value this quick response. Pupils with particular needs know that specialist staff, such as learning mentors, provide sensitive and well-considered help. The school provides an excellent alternative curriculum for those pupils whose attendance or behaviour prevents them accessing normal school life. These pupils now achieve well and enjoy their education because of the exceptional care taken to foster their self-esteem. Staff work very effectively with partner primary schools to ensure a smooth transition into Year 7. Pupils confirm that they settle well in their new surroundings, and quickly establish very good relationships with staff. Teachers routinely track pupils' academic progress. They assess pupils' work regularly and share the outcomes with pupils. Teachers involve pupils in evaluating their own work and setting targets for improvement. Pupils know what they need to do next to improve.
30. The school provides very good careers guidance for each individual so that pupils approach the next stage of their education or training confidently. The exceptionally well-organised and highly celebrated work experience programme is a real strength of the process. The school liaises very well with outside agencies. For example, its career partner, Connexions, attends parents' consultation evenings and runs a careers club at lunchtimes. Staff often seek pupils' views about the school on an informal basis. Pupils comment that the year and school councils now work well and recognise the value of these groups in formal school improvement planning.
31. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good guidance and support. The learning support centre and the learning mentors provide very good support for pupils with emotional and behavioural or social difficulties which impact on their learning. Pupils with learning difficulties are soon assessed and supported in their learning. The needs of all these pupils are well known to most teachers through the work of the social inclusion representative in each department.

32. The care, guidance and support for pupils with English as an additional language are very good. Pupils' language competence is assessed on entry to the school. The good links with feeder primary schools ensure that pupils' needs are quickly addressed and additional support organised to promote a smooth transfer. The progress of pupils who are at an early stage of language development is carefully monitored and assessed on a termly basis. Correspondence and newsletters are translated into the mother tongue and, when required, interpreters are on hand to support parents during consultative evenings. The school has good links with the home and works closely with parents. Pupils commented on the good support that they receive in the school.

Sixth form

33. Students express their views thoughtfully and responsibly because they know that the school takes their ideas very seriously. The school, for instance, includes students in the group which monitors the promotion of equality throughout the school. Students lead the focus groups within the school council. These new groups cover a wide range of school life and already make a significant impact on school development. The staff foster a strong sense of corporate responsibility within the students through the constant promotion of involvement in all aspects of school life. A clearly defined programme of support and guidance begins as soon as students declare their intentions in Year 11. Academic progress is very well monitored, first at subject level through individual discussion and review, and by pastoral staff, who have a very good overview. High quality feedback gives students clear guidance on how to improve. Very well-informed staff provide individual students with the care and attention they need to make informed choices about their future careers.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **very good** links with parents and **excellent** links with the community and other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is exceptionally outward looking and embraces any chance to work with other schools and organisations.
- Outstanding business links significantly enhance the curriculum.
- The school works particularly well supporting parents of pupils experiencing difficulty in school.
- The school provides very good information for all parents.

Commentary

34. The school is genuinely committed to working in partnership with an extremely impressive range of schools, colleges and other organisations. This enhances the range of opportunities available to pupils, students and staff. The school leads in developing innovative practice, in association with many other schools. National as well as local government rightly praise and value the many teaching and curriculum developments at Lampton school. The school makes an excellent contribution to the initial training of teachers through exceptionally well-developed links with several colleges and universities. Staff activate enthusiastically the plans to capitalise on the existing close links with primary schools through the recently acquired specialist school status. The additional funds attracted by the status enable the staff to share their expertise in a wide selection of subjects and activities. Parents praise the arrangements for pupils' transfer from primary school, which are very good. These include private interviews for all prospective parents. Transfer of pupil-related information with partner schools or colleges is highly productive and systematic.
35. Parents praise the school's exceptionally good links with the local community. Many visitors enhance the curriculum by sharing their interests and skills with the pupils and students. Pupils benefit from an outstanding work experience programme. Local employers offer very good

support because they know how effectively the staff prepare, motivate and advise the pupils. Activities organised through the Hounslow Education Business Partnership are outstanding. Pupils' and students' understanding of the world of work, and their aspirations and self-confidence, are greatly enhanced by their involvement in many competitions and events. Pupils' enthusiastic participation prompted an invitation to present a speech to a national conference on business partnerships.

36. Staff work very hard and effectively to include parents in their child's education. Staff know the students and their families very well and involve parents quickly when any intervention is necessary. Very active parent-governors ensure that parents' views are included in future school development planning. Parents report that any concerns are handled very effectively using correct procedures. Staff communicate particularly carefully with the parents of children who have any special education or additional need. The school arranges very effective support from a wide range of agencies and ensures that parents are partners in this collaboration. Those parents who speak little English receive comprehensive help from staff who are proficient in the appropriate community languages.
37. The school has excellent relationships with parents of pupils with special educational needs. There is almost 100 per cent attendance for the annual reviews of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need, as well as some visits to pupils' homes by the special educational needs co-ordinator when required.
38. The school provides very good general information for parents. The prospectuses for the main school and the sixth form are attractive and informative documents. Annual reports are good. Teachers provide good detail about pupils' and students' performance, particularly in terms of the efforts made by pupils and their attitudes to lessons. Reports also include useful suggestions for securing further improvement. Parents value the pupil progress checks and annual target review day, which enable parents to monitor their child's progress during the year.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The governance of the school is **very good**. The headteacher provides **excellent** leadership. Other key staff with management responsibilities provide **very good** leadership. The overall effectiveness of leadership and management throughout the school is **very good**. The school is aware of any barriers to raising achievement and has **very good** strategies to overcome them.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Outstanding leadership by the headteacher, who has a clear and realistic vision of what the school should achieve.
- There are clear lines of management responsibilities for all member of the senior management team, who demonstrate a strong commitment to raising standards.
- The governing body is very committed and their work is very well informed.
- The leadership team provides very effective support to the headteacher, staff and students across the school.
- The school is an excellent provider of initial teacher training.
- A few departments have not developed routine and rigorous self-evaluation.

Commentary

39. The leadership provided by the headteacher is outstanding. She is a very visible presence around the school and is very approachable to pupils, parents and staff. She has a clear and realistic vision of what the school seeks to achieve. She fosters an open style of management and communication that has created a high level of morale amongst teaching and non-teaching staff. She supports her staff fully in taking on new initiatives and developments that will provide pupils with the widest range of educational opportunities. She ensures that the contribution of each member of staff is valued whether teaching, supporting teachers with very efficient administration or ensuring that the site and buildings support the learning environment. The

school is very aware of any barriers to raising achievement and has very good strategies to overcome them.

40. Since the previous inspection the headteacher has overseen very significant changes and improvements that have enhanced the quality of education the pupils are receiving. These include much improved examination results, considerable accommodation improvements, the gaining of humanities college status and the school being oversubscribed. The headteacher is also involved in a number of national educational initiatives. She works tirelessly on behalf of the school, exploring every avenue that will bring in extra resources and improved opportunities for the pupils. She ensures that the school takes every opportunity to be part of funded initiatives and many effective strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to raise standards have been put in place. She is harnessing the considerable potential of both staff and pupils and considerable progress is being made.
41. The leadership team, that comprises of the three deputy headteachers and five assistant headteachers, provides very good support for the headteacher. The format of this team has recently been changed and expanded and their roles and responsibilities have been adjusted. This has resulted in much improved curriculum management and the day-to-day running of the school being carried out more efficiently. Senior managers, linked with departments, systematically monitor the implementation of school policies and quality of teaching and learning. This enables them to be aware of where the strengths of the school lie and where support is needed.
42. The school is very fortunate in having a very capable and committed governing body that is very well led. Governors have specialist knowledge and skills that they readily use to the benefit of the school. They are strongly committed and their work is very well informed, providing a strategic and policy framework for the operation of the school. Examination results are presented and critically discussed by the governing body and that enables them to be closely linked to the day-to-day life of the school. They constantly challenge the head and her staff to justify the decisions they make and they are fulfilling very effectively their role as critical friends.
43. Overall, leadership and management by subject and pastoral leaders are very good. Managers are committed, confident and contribute effectively to whole-school initiatives and planning. They work well to build effective teams with a clear focus on raising achievement. Skills in the use of performance data are generally well developed and used. There are very good monitoring and evaluation procedures that are used effectively by the majority of departments. Some departments could do more to share the good practice identified by their monitoring. Target setting and the monitoring of achievement are well used to raise standards and achievement. Policies for behaviour and assessment inform classroom practice effectively and ensure a good level of consistency across the school.
44. The leadership of the learning support manager is very effective and this results in very good teamwork throughout the school. There is very good co-ordination between the work of different teams of departmental and pastoral staff and the specialist teams in the three learning support centres in the school. The learning culture in the school for pupils with special educational needs is outstanding. It is inclusive and all pupils feel valued. The special educational needs co-ordinator manages well the learning support team, who know pupils' needs and take care to maximise their learning.
45. The management of pupils with English as an additional language is very good. The co-ordinator works closely with the English department providing supplementary resources for pupils. Pupils' needs are addressed on entry to the school. This information is passed to subject leaders when a programme of support and partnership teaching is negotiated. The provision in the school is carefully monitored and all results are analysed by ethnic groups.
46. Very good procedures are in place for performance management and these are having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. New staff are given a very thorough introduction to the way the school works before they take up their posts. They are very well supported by their colleagues who observe them teaching and give constructive feedback on

how lessons can be improved. All teachers receive very well-planned training, including residential conferences, which enhances their professional development. The school is an excellent provider of initial teacher training and teaching posts are often filled by individuals who have trained at the school. The workload of teachers has been managed well by employing staff to supervise examinations and cover classes when teachers are absent.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	5,793,832	Balance from previous year	- 46,042
Total expenditure	5,580,638	Balance carried forward to the next	167,152
Expenditure per pupil	4,417.29		

47. The school spends its budget wisely and has removed a significant budget deficit since the previous inspection. It manages its many business links imaginatively to bring in further funds and is very successful in pursuing specific grants and funding and applying these to enhance both the staffing and curriculum provision. Best value principles are applied well and there is careful monitoring of expenditure at all levels.

Sixth form

Leadership and management of the sixth form are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The sixth form is cost effective and provides a very good standard of education for its students.
- The head of sixth form and the sixth form team support students' personal and academic development very effectively.
- Leadership and management in subjects promote high expectations providing good or very good provision in the majority of subjects.

Commentary

48. Leadership is very good and there is a clear vision for developing and improving the quality of sixth form provision. The school has responded well to the increasing size of the sixth form by effectively expanding the sixth form management structure and the head of sixth form is very well supported by an effective team who have a strong and shared commitment to raising standards. Relationships between teachers and students are very good with comprehensive procedures to care, support and guide students. The community and citizenship programme provides very good opportunities for students to develop into mature responsible young adults. Effective leadership and management in several subjects promote very good achievement thus providing good and very good provision in the majority of subjects.

49. Management is very good. There are good systems in place to monitor and review students' progress, ensuring that students are clear about where they are and what they need to do to improve. Assessment information to track students' performance ensures realistic targets are set for individuals and for the sixth form as a whole. Day-to-day management is efficient and supported by mutual respect among subject managers and students.

50. The school attracts over 75 per cent of students from Year 11 into the sixth form. It also attracts a few students from other schools who are well integrated into the life sixth form. Facilities are

inadequate, but the school makes every effort to manage the situation to minimise the negative effect on students' learning.

Specialist college status

51. Following the successful bid for specialist status the school held a very successful 'launch day' in October 2004 to celebrate the launch of Lampton School as a specialist humanities college. Achieving specialist college status is already having an impact on the school in raising its profile in the community, improving links with other schools and broadening the curriculum. Specialist school status has attracted extra funding that is being used to build a 'language and learning zone', which is due to open in 2005. This should improve resources for pupils and contribute to raising their achievement.

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

Work-related learning

The provision for work-related learning is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Careers guidance and support for pupils are very good.
- The excellent work experience programme.
- Excellent links through the enterprise and business initiatives support work-related activities.
- There has been a thorough audit of subject provision by the co-ordinator.
- There are very good contributions to work-related learning by English and business education.
- Development and monitoring of work-related learning opportunities across all subjects are not fully in place.

Commentary

52. It was not possible to observe any specific work-related teaching during the inspection. Judgements are based on discussions with pupils, staff and analysis of documentation. The school has appointed a work-related learning co-ordinator who is working closely with external agencies to further develop existing provision. The effectiveness of leadership, management and organisation is good. A comprehensive audit has been carried out of the contribution made by departments and areas for development are clearly identified. Because of the existing very good provision for business and enterprise and extensive involvement in projects with other schools and external agencies the school is very well placed to broaden further its work-related provision. All pupils have a very well organised work experience placement, which provides excellent opportunities to gain practical experience of the world of work. These opportunities and other provision have a positive impact on pupils' achievement, especially the vocational subjects.
53. There is a celebration of work experience to reward pupils' experiences. These experiences are evaluated and in English are used very effectively as the stimulus for written work and presentations by pupils. In Years 10 and 11 there are very good contributions made by the business education department to the development of knowledge and business skills. Other

subjects are beginning to identify ways in which they can contribute to work-related learning, but in many cases this is at an early stage.

54. The school has an excellent and extensive network of business links that it uses very well to provide motivating business and enterprise opportunities for pupils. Visiting speakers raise awareness and provide pupils with further opportunities to learn about the world of work. All pupils in Year 9 and 10 take part in activities and games to develop their enterprise skills and understanding of business practice during annual enterprise days. These make a significant contribution to raising self-esteem, pupils' motivation and achievement.
55. Career guidance and information are excellent and pupils express high levels of satisfaction with the service provided. The Connexions adviser based in the school provides further help and advice including individual interviews about career pathways. There is also provision for extended work placements as part of an alternative curriculum for some pupils. The overall quality of provision is good.

The Speech and Language Centre (SLC)

The provision in the Speech and Language Centre is **very good**.

56. The Speech and Language Centre (SLC) provides highly effective support for pupils with significant speech and language difficulties. Some pupils have additional special needs such as autistic spectrum disorders, mild hearing loss and motor control difficulties. The leadership and management of the teacher in charge of the Speech and Language Centre are very good. Supported by a full-time speech and language therapist, she has developed a wide range of teaching strategies aimed at improving concentration, memory, reading, writing, organising, listening and following instructions and physical co-ordination. Pupils make very good progress and achieve well in a wide range of subjects. Some of the teaching and learning strategies used in the Speech and Language Centre are also used by pupils in their mainstream classes. Pupils have been taught a wide range of mind-mapping techniques, thinking skills and visualisation techniques. Pupils with motor co-ordination difficulties have made rapid progress in developing better balance as well as developing better learning skills. Teachers from the Speech and Language Centre also provide very good support to pupils in mainstream classes.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good leadership resulting in consistently good teaching is raising standards.
- Good relationships, a harmonious environment and a systematic approach to learning are fostering very positive attitudes from the pupils.
- Teachers are fully aware of different styles of learning and plan well to accommodate them.
- Although work is regularly marked in some depth, errors of literacy are not addressed rigorously.

Commentary

57. Pupils enter school with below average standards and by the end of Year 9 they are in line with national averages. This represents good achievement in Years 7 to 9. At GCSE, pupils attain above average standards indicating very good achievement. When compared to similar schools, standards are well above average. Over the past three years there has been a notable rising trend in examination results. All groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who use English as an additional language, make similarly good progress.
58. Teaching and learning overall are good in Years 7 to 9. The National Key Stage strategy² has been fully implemented and lessons are well planned, organised, resourced and timed to sustain pupils' interest, although the end of lessons are not always effective. Pupils know the objectives and the course content in advance so that they see the relevance of the lesson. Pupils engage with interest and co-operation. Teachers question carefully, teasing out the salient points. They give pupils opportunities to discuss and to take responsibility for their learning. They are innovative and energetic in organising different activities to cater for different learning styles so pupils enjoy the subject and express their opinions articulately. They ask questions easily and develop ideas and arguments cogently. In the best lessons, different resources are used to enable pupils of different abilities to improve their extended writing. Books are regularly marked with constructive comments as to how to improve and pupils know their standard because they are explained in their exercise books. However, marking is less effective in Years 8 and 9 as errors in spelling and verb tenses are not addressed well enough.
59. In Years 10 and 11 teaching and learning are good overall, with examples of very good teaching. Pupils are well informed of examination criteria, which teachers use to assess work. Tasks help pupils to prepare for examinations very well. They are encouraged to solve problems and to explore texts in a variety of ways. Assignments and resources are carefully chosen to be real, topical and stimulating so that pupils respond enthusiastically. They are helped to collate and organise notes so as to substantiate their personal responses with evidence from texts. Background information supports their understanding of writers. Teachers use media to help pupils respond imaginatively to literature and ICT to help learning. Good homework reinforces and extends learning. Marking is regular, thorough and helpful.
60. Leadership and management are very good. The subject leader is ambitious for the department, energetic, efficient and a good role model. A cohesive team responds enthusiastically to new ideas. Assessment data informs teaching and tracks pupils' progress. Action is taken to remedy any underachievement and communication is good both within the department, to line managers and parents. Good records assist teachers in effective teaching.

² A programme introduced to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

Policies support teaching and monitoring ensures consistency of application. The department is proactive in whole school and local education authority initiatives as well as links with other schools. Teachers work well with other departments to help pupils learn. Staffing shortages are dealt with thoughtfully. Enrichment activities are very good and pupils are involved in theatre visits, competitions, book clubs and debates to broaden their experience.

61. The department has made very good progress since the last inspection. Results are rising, lesson planning has improved, marking is more thorough and pupils know how to improve. English plays the key role in the humanities status of the school as well as being involved with the local education authority sharing good practice.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

62. Pupils start school with literacy levels that are below average. By the time they reach the end of Year 11 their literacy skills have developed well and are at least in line with the national average. The school has worked hard in recent years to promote literacy skills across all subjects and has established a policy for departments to follow. However, the lack of a literacy co-ordinator, because of teacher shortages and the consequent difficulty of monitoring, has caused inconsistency by teachers. There has been regular staff training in aspects of literacy. Some subjects have worked hard on improving writing. In history literacy skills are often a focus for lessons. A central resource base of ideas has been created to enable teachers to promote literacy skills. A reading club is provided for gifted and talented pupils together with literacy support for pupils who have poorly developed skills. Many subjects display lists of important words in their classrooms, but do not always make good use of them with the pupils. The marking of technical errors in exercise books is not helpful enough in many subjects to raise literacy standards, especially with the low literacy levels of pupils on entry to the school. However, pupils speak articulately and confidently in discussions and to adults. The basis has been established for a co-ordinator to improve pupils' literacy levels.

Modern foreign languages

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards of work in Years 10 and 11 are well above average.
- Achievement across all years is very good, particularly in French.
- Very careful marking and assessment give pupils excellent help in improving their work.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to use computers to support their learning.
- In some lessons pupils have insufficient opportunities to practise speaking and listening skills.

Commentary

63. Pupils enter the school with language skills that are below average. By the end of Year 9 their standards are above average in French and a little above in German. Pupils of above average ability reach high standards and achieve particularly well in reading and writing. All pupils achieve very well.
64. In the last two years attainment at GCSE has been well above average in both French and German. Boys and girls both obtained very good results with a significant percentage achieving the highest grades. Lessons observed and work analysed at the time of the inspection indicate that standards are well above average in French and above average in German. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 achieve very well in relation to their earlier attainment in Year 9. This is particularly true for French. In German, however, changes to staffing have resulted in pupils currently making slower progress.
65. Teaching and learning are good overall and there are many examples of very good lessons. A particular strength is the effective use of assessment. This provides both teachers and pupils

with accurate information about standards and progress. Specific targets are set and, combined with detailed and conscientious marking, provide pupils with very good support in improving their work.

66. Teachers have a very good knowledge of their subject. They plan in detail and lessons start promptly with clear focus and work provided to cater for pupils of different ability levels. This means that all pupils learn effectively. Teachers often produce their own resources that help pupils confidently build on previous learning. Carefully guided activities result in pupils reading and writing very well. Pupils' very good levels of achievement are also a result of their very good attitudes and their willingness to work consistently hard in spite of occasional weaknesses in teaching. A few less successful lessons miss opportunities to develop pupils' confidence in oral and listening skills, over-emphasising the learning of lists of words rather than the active use of language. Little use is made of ICT to support pupils' language studies. As a consequence, there are few opportunities to develop pupils' confidence in applying these skills to learning French and German.
67. The work of the languages team is very well led and managed. The new head of department has made rapid progress in providing detailed guidance and support, particularly in French. There is a strong and effective focus on improvement and a very good understanding of how to bring this about. Priorities are clear and firmly established. Community languages are well integrated and supported, contributing particularly to very good provision. Good progress has been made since the last inspection in raising standards and achievement.

Community Languages

68. The school makes a considerable effort to support the linguistic diversity of pupils and encourages and creates opportunities for ethnic minority groups to study their own languages. Last year five pupils took examinations in Hindi while studying in a Panjabi class and scored either A or B grades. Several subjects are taught after school and Arabic, Persian, Bengali, Russian and Urdu are studied. Last year 13 pupils were entered for GCSE in various community languages and one student was entered for AS level examinations in Urdu. Twelve students scored either grade A or B grades. Pupils achieve very well in community languages. During this inspection the focus was on Panjabi.

Panjabi

Provision in Panjabi is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning is very good because teaching is very effective.
- The teacher is a native speaker and has excellent subject knowledge.
- Behaviour of pupils is excellent and they are very keen to learn.
- There is no provision for teaching Panjabi in Year 7 and allocation of time in Years 8 and 9 is below expectations for a GCSE course.
- There are insufficient opportunities for the use of ICT.

Commentary

69. Standards by the end of Year 9 are below the national expectations in Panjabi. It is mostly because Panjabi is not taught in Year 7 and there is inadequate time allocated to teaching in Years 8 and 9. Students start to learn Panjabi in Year 8 with no or very little basic literacy skills. They have to master the script in order to write words, phrases and sentences. Students' answers to the teacher's questions show that their listening and speaking skills are better than their reading and writing skills. Most pupils need the teacher's help to read and write simple sentences. However, considering that students get insufficient time for learning Panjabi, they have little prior experience and they have to learn a new script, their achievement is very good.

70. Standards by the end of Year 11 are above average and pupils continue to achieve very well. GCSE results for A*-C grades in 2003 were well below the national average, but the results improved considerably in 2004 and were well above the national average. Most students present their work very well and take pride in it. In lessons students demonstrate good speaking and listening skills. In a Year 11 class each student can read a section of a text on shopping in Panjabi and answer questions showing good understanding. Pupils with special education needs are also making good progress because they are fully supported in class.
71. Teaching and learning are very good. Lessons are very well planned, paced and contain a good variety of activities that motivate pupils to work hard and learn. The very positive relationships that the teacher establishes in the lesson ensure pupils learn very well. The teacher is a native speaker, has very good subject knowledge and uses the language in the class with a positive effect on pupils' learning. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are excellent and this is a major factor in enabling them to achieve as well as they do. Although lesson planning is good, the schemes of work do not match the National Curriculum requirements or the National Key Stage 3 strategy. ICT is not sufficiently used to support pupils' learning.
72. The subject is lead and managed well. Panjabi is a part of the modern foreign languages' department and the subject teacher is fully supported by the head of department. The relationships in the department are very good, which have a positive effect on the quality of teaching and learning. There was no separate report on community languages in the last inspection report, but comments on Panjabi were made in the report of modern foreign languages. Since the last inspection good improvements have been made. Leadership and management have improved and the head of department now monitors teaching and planning. However, the time allocation for community languages is below that expected.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and often very good, promoting effective learning.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and they work hard.
- Pupils achieve very well in Years 10 to 11.
- The department is a strong team and they are very well led by the head of department.
- Some assessment does not sufficiently inform pupils of how they can improve.
- There is insufficient use of ICT.

Commentary

73. Pupils' attainment on entry in Year 7 is slightly below the national average. Results in tests at the end of Year 9 in 2003 were in line with the national average. When compared to similar schools, results were above average. The proportion of pupils reaching average levels rose in 2004 and were well above average compared to similar schools. The upward trend in results over the last five years has been well above the national improvement. Boys outperform girls and the gap is much greater than the national average. Achievement of all pupils in Years 7 to 9 is good, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language.
74. In GCSE examinations in 2003 the proportion of pupils gaining A*-C grades was above the national average and well above average compared to similar schools. The results for 2004 indicate that the proportion of students gaining A*-C grades has risen to a level well above average compared to all schools and similar schools. Achievement of all pupils in Years 10 to 11 is very good. Work seen during the inspection confirmed the high levels of progress made by pupils of all abilities and backgrounds. The achievement of pupils is directly attributable to the consistent good quality of teaching they receive.

75. The quality of teaching is good overall and in some cases very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. However, teachers do not utilise a wide enough variety of teaching and learning strategies. Teachers are very knowledgeable about their subject and have very high expectations of pupils. Lessons are well planned. Appropriately challenging objectives are shared with pupils, ensuring that they have specific goals to achieve throughout lessons. This results in a good pace of learning being maintained. Good levels of questioning are used to probe students' knowledge and understanding. Where extension work was provided it proved beneficial to the pupils concerned, but this occurred infrequently. Pupils' work is marked thoroughly, but frequently comments on work refer to effort and pupils are often not provided with supportive guidance on how to improve their standards. Pupils learn well because they generally have very positive attitudes to mathematics and exhibit interest and enjoyment in their lessons. Pupils are very attentive and very well behaved.
76. The department functions effectively and is very well led by the head of department. He has a clear vision about the future of mathematics in the school. A good departmental improvement plan has been drawn up with appropriate targets. There is a very strong team ethos within the department and morale is good. The curriculum is broad and supports all students, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. There are large ranges of enrichment activities that are interesting and relevant. The management of the department is good, but there is a need to develop further rigorous and systematic internal monitoring and evaluation systems.
77. Whilst most resources are used effectively, there is too little use of ICT. This is an issue that was identified in the last inspection and, although some progress has been made, has yet to be fully dealt with. All of the other issues from the previous inspection have been tackled well and standards have risen. Very good improvement since the last inspection is evident in the standards achieved.

Mathematics across the curriculum

78. By the end of Year 11, pupils have good numeracy skills. However, the development of numeracy across the curriculum is at an early stage. Several departments have systematically planned the development of numeracy into their schemes of work. This is a particular strength in design technology where the impact and implications of inaccuracy are emphasised. Teachers in science, geography and ICT have received training and an audit of coverage across all subjects is underway. The numeracy co-ordinator has produced good guidance documentation.
79. Pupils are effectively using their mathematical knowledge and skills in some other subjects across the curriculum. Accurate graph and confident calculator work were seen in science. Good analysis and interpretation of data were seen in several subjects.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards, in tests at the end of Year 9 and at GCSE, have been rising since the last inspection and are now at the national average.
- Pupils' achievement is good due to the good teaching and support given by teachers.
- Relationships are very good and pupils have very good attitudes to their learning.
- There is insufficient use of computers in lessons.
- The leadership and management of the department are good with the major aim of raising standards further.

Commentary

80. In 2004 the standards at the end of Year 9 were at the national average and well above those schools with pupils of similar prior attainment. The standards at GCSE are also at the national average. The results at the end of Year 9 and at GCSE have risen dramatically since the last inspection.
81. Findings from the inspection observations and review of the extensive departmental data show that standards have been maintained at the national average in Years 9 and 11. The pupils enter the school with below national average standards and these results represent good achievement in all years. This good achievement is due to the commitment of the teachers and the very good attitudes of pupils to their learning. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and are very well supported by a specialist science learning support assistant in some lessons. All teachers introduce science vocabulary with care, ensuring that pupils understand their meanings. This enables pupils with English as an additional language to make good progress and achieve well. The department review of the attainment for identified ethnic groups indicates that all groups of pupils achieve well, with the exception of a small group of lower attaining white pupils. The department has addressed this issue with the introduction of a successful supportive alternative science course for these pupils.
82. Teaching and learning are good. There are many examples of very good teaching and learning where the teachers use a wide range of activities within the lesson. These lessons have very good pace and engage the pupils who respond in a very positive manner. The relationships between teachers and pupils are very good, which leads to a very pleasant co-operative atmosphere in lessons. However, not all teachers use a sufficiently wide range of teaching styles and this does not engage all pupils so effectively. Where available, teachers use the newly introduced whiteboards by producing high-quality presentations. There is insufficient use of computers in lessons to enhance the pupils' learning. Most teachers mark books very well, giving praise and indicating what the pupil needs to do in order to improve. Teachers also give good support and guidance during lessons that contribute well to the pupils' achievement. The most able pupils are offered an impressive range of enrichment activities and all pupils can obtain further help and guidance from the many revision sessions held before and after school.
83. The leadership and management are good. There is, at present, no head of department. This has not had a negative impact as the department has reorganised the management structure in an effective manner with clear responsibilities allocated to the staff involved. This management team work in a very co-operative manner and share a common desire to raise standards further. The extensive information about pupils' progress is well monitored to identify achievement of individual pupils. There are plans to extend the use of this data to evaluate and review the teaching and learning. The department has given very good support to newly qualified teachers who, as a result, have been integrated effectively into science. There is now a strong team of specialist enthusiastic and caring teachers who are well supported by an effective team of technicians.
84. The improvement since the last inspection has been good as standards and achievement have improved and the teaching and learning are better. However, the use of computers is still an issue to be resolved.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY³

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The use made of computers by pupils in many subjects is unsatisfactory.
- Progress is good in discrete ICT lessons.
- Examination results in 2004 were below the national average but standards of work seen were slightly above average.
- The needs of the higher and lower attaining pupils are not always met in discrete ICT lessons.
- The ICT department is well organised and teachers work well collaboratively to produce a good range of resources.

Commentary

85. Standards on entry in Year 7 are below the national average. At the end of Year 9, results in the 2004 teacher assessments were in line with the national average. The quality of work seen matches the teacher assessments and represents good achievement by pupils from Year 7 to 9. Examination results in 2004 were below expectations as not all pupils were entered for GCSE courses. All pupils now follow GCSE or equivalent courses where standards are slightly above national expectations. Achievement in Years 10 and 11 is good with all pupils, including those with special educational needs, making rapid progress.
86. Pupils achieve well because teaching and learning are good. Teachers are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about their subject and plan and structure their lessons well. The resources held on the computer network are varied and stimulate learning. For example, in a Year 7 lesson on designing a pamphlet, pupils responded very well to a broad range of resources, which enabled them to improve considerably their understanding. The marking of work helps pupils to improve and homework is used to extend the learning of the lesson. In some lessons the pace and tasks set do not meet the needs of the lower and higher attaining pupils.
87. Good leadership and management of the subject ensure pupils' progress is tracked carefully. The work is well planned and updated regularly by a united team of teachers that work well together to improve their teaching and the way they assess the pupils' work. Teachers give clear feedback so pupils know how they are doing and how to improve. Results from these assessments are not used sufficiently when planning future work. A knowledgeable team of technical staff supports both teachers and pupils.
88. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. The quality and quantity of computers have risen significantly, there are more specialist teachers so all pupils study ICT up to and including Year 11.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

89. The use of computers for teaching is well developed. The school has made a substantial recent investment to install up-to-date technology in many classrooms. Whiteboards, which improve the quality of teaching and learning, are widely and effectively used. The use of computers by pupils within most subjects is unsatisfactory. Good use by pupils was seen in design and technology, business studies and media studies. Access to computers is often difficult and there is not an equal provision for all subjects and for all pupils. A good plan is in place for improvement and the school has the capacity and commitment to make the necessary changes.

HUMANITIES

³ Provision in ICT consists of two separate elements. One is the discrete element taught by the ICT department and the other is the opportunity provided by teachers in other subjects.

History

Provision in history is **very good**, with many excellent features.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very strong leadership and management are raising standards.
- Teaching is well informed, meticulously planned and challenging.
- Excellent relationships create a positive learning environment.
- Assessment and target setting for pupils are very effective.
- There are too few opportunities for pupils to use computers.

Commentary

90. Pupils' attainment in history is below average when entering school in Year 7. Standards quickly improve and are above average by the end of Year 9 and pupils' achievement is very good. Standards in work seen in Years 10 and 11 are in line with the national average and results in the 2004 GCSE examination were also average. However, achievement is very good bearing in mind the low prior attainment of the increasingly wide range of pupils choosing the subject.
91. Achievement is very good across the school because of the very high standard of teaching, close departmental monitoring of pupil progress and a strong focus on improving literacy. Pupil opinions are valued and positive classroom relationships create a good working atmosphere. There are no significant differences in the achievement of boys and girls, those who speak English as an additional language, or those with special educational needs.
92. The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good and the best is excellent. Teachers' planning is extremely thorough, their subject knowledge is very good and they use a wide variety of teaching strategies to set challenging targets for the whole ability range. All pupils are valued and the work is carefully planned to match individual learning needs. The obvious bond of trust between teachers and pupils removes any barriers to learning. Pupils are encouraged to undertake their own research enquiries, to engage in collaborative tasks and to play an active role in their own learning. Marking and assessment are very good and pupils are fully aware of their targets and what they need to do to improve the quality of their work. Pupils' progress is very closely monitored and the systems in use are a model of good practice. The teaching is especially effective in developing pupils' skills in the analysis and evaluation of historical source materials. This success is linked to the strong emphasis placed on improving literacy standards. Teachers work very hard to give pupils the confidence and expertise to write extended pieces of work and analyse complex evidence sources.
93. Leadership and management are very good. There is a clear vision for improvement and a strong team spirit. Teachers are highly committed and generous with their time and help. Self-analysis, through close monitoring and evaluation of pupils' progress and classroom teaching, is a strength of the department. Resources are used effectively and the curriculum is enriched by a range of challenging extra-curricular activities. Restricted access to computer facilities limits opportunities for historical research. The recent acquisition of interactive whiteboards is helping to address this issue. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good. Standards have been extended and maintained and a very distinctive ethos created. The history department provides a good model to other departments and for further school improvement.

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-structured lessons ensure that pupils' learning is purposeful and focused.
- Pupils have mature attitudes to learning and respond well to the consistently good teaching they receive.
- The assessment of pupils work is inconsistent so they are not always sure how well they are doing or how to improve their work.
- There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their enquiry skills through fieldwork.
- There is insufficient use of ICT by pupils to support their learning.

Commentary

94. Pupils' attainment in geography when they start school in Year 7 is below average. The results of the 2004 teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 were average and this represent good achievement. GCSE results rose markedly in 2004 to reach national averages. These results represent good achievement for the pupils concerned when compared to their attainment when they entered the school.
95. In work seen, standards in geography are in line with expectations at the end of Year 9 and pupils' achievement is good. Many pupils have limited knowledge of the subject at the beginning of Year 7 but make good gains in their understanding and skills by Year 9. Pupils who chose to study geography beyond Year 9 reach standards that are in line with expectations by Year 11 and their achievement is good. Higher-attaining pupils use geographical terminology accurately to explain, for example, the causes and effects of tsunamis. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good because teachers and classroom assistants give them constructive individual help.
96. Teaching and learning are consistently good across all year groups, with examples of very good practice. Teachers plan and structure their lessons well so pupils are clear about what and how they are going to learn. Pupils respond well to the good teaching they receive and are productive and purposeful. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good and lessons are conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust. Teachers check their pupils' learning carefully to make sure that the lesson objectives are met. The use of interesting and varied resources helps to engage pupils' interest. Pupils develop their enquiry skills well through a good range of fieldwork opportunities. Pupils have insufficient access to ICT to use this fully to support learning. Pupils' work is not yet marked and assessed consistently so they are not always sure how well they are doing or how to improve their work further.
97. The leadership and management of the department are good. Following recent changes in the department, staff are now adjusting to their new roles and good new priorities for future development have been identified. These include reviewing the curriculum and introducing more frequent assessments for pupils in order to raise standards. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory because teaching and learning are consistently good and teaching methods are more varied. The department is both committed and enthusiastic and this strong team of geographers is now poised to improve further.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils are challenged to achieve very well and GCSE results are well above average.
- The subject is taught by very good subject specialists.
- Lessons are well planned and matched to pupils' needs.
- Vibrant, lively classrooms encourage pupil participation.
- There is limited use of ICT.

Commentary

98. Pupils arrive at the school with standards in religious education that are broadly in line with the Hounslow Agreed Syllabus. They achieve well in Years 7 to 9 so that by the end of Year 9 their standards are typically above those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. In Years 10 and 11 all pupils now follow a full GCSE in religious education and citizenship. Recent examination results have been well above the national average with many pupils gaining the top grades. This is because they have been effectively challenged to do their best. Pupils achieve very well in Years 10 and 11. Pupil participation in lessons is very good. Wall displays and artefacts encourage pupils to show respect for each other and other cultures. Pupils are sensitive to moral and religious issues and enjoy engaging in exciting discussion work.
99. Overall, teaching and learning are very good throughout the school. Pupils are especially well motivated and enjoy their lessons. Teachers are very dynamic with excellent subject knowledge. Good use is made of people within the community, whose involvement in lessons enriches the curriculum and supports the diversity of local cultures. Lessons are well planned and paced to meet individual needs, which ensure very good progress is made. All pupils are challenged to fulfil their potential and good use is made of homework which gives opportunities for independent learning and research. Schemes of work are well developed and the marking policy is applied consistently. The recent implementation of a new assessment policy using agreed criteria is beginning to inform target setting and impact upon progress.
100. The head of department provides very good leadership. He has a vision for taking the department forward and has identified priorities which include increasing the competency and use of ICT within the department. Management is also very good. The department works co-operatively to ensure priorities are identified and is both innovative and responsive in its approach to whole school issues. Overall, very good improvement has been made since the last inspection. The provision for religious education benefits from stable staffing and the recruitment of very able subject specialists.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Years 10 and 11 standards in graphics and resistant materials are above average with good and very good achievement in all material areas because of well-planned lessons and good subject knowledge shared effectively with pupils.
- In Years 7 to 9 pupils' practical skills are good, but designing skills are underdeveloped because planning and assessment do not build on learning from one module to another.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and work well together to maximise their opportunities.
- Teachers give good support to pupils, but some lessons lack sufficient challenge to enable pupils to attain higher grades.
- Review and monitoring procedures are not rigorously applied to raise standards.

Commentary

101. Pupils enter the school with variable experiences in design and technology and their attainment is generally below average. Teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 in 2003 and 2004 indicate standards are well above average, but this is not confirmed in the quality of the current work. In Years 7 to 9 the curriculum provides good activities incorporating a variety of materials and a very good range of tools and equipment. This enables pupils to develop good practical skills and produce good quality products. Achievement and progress in practical skills are very good. However, design skills and the application and the design and make processes are underdeveloped because planning does not build effectively on the learning gained in previous modules. Additionally, assessment is not linked closely enough to the National Curriculum levels and school judgements about the standards of work are not secure. By the end of Year 9 standards overall are average with practical skills that are above average. Overall, pupils achieve well and make good progress in many aspects of the course.
102. Overall, standards at the end of Year 11 indicated by the provisional examination results for 2004 are above average. Standards have improved significantly since 2003. There are, however, variations between material areas with graphics and resistant materials gaining above average results. Standards in textiles have been adversely affected by staffing issues, but the situation has been resolved and standards are improving. In addition, the introduction of strategies to improve coursework has improved standards in food with the result that in these material areas standards are now close to national averages. In Years 10 and 11 achievement and progress overall are good. Pupils build effectively on practical skills and develop a good understanding of the designing processes, using them well in coursework and transferring them creatively to produce quality project work. The use of technical and extended language and the application of number are good. Pupils use a range of ICT skills competently in all years. There is no significant difference in standards between boys and girls or different ethnic groups.
103. Overall, teaching is good, but satisfactory in Years 7 to 9. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. Lessons are well planned and pupils understand the sequence of activities they need to complete, but the skills and knowledge they are required to develop are not shared effectively with pupils in all lessons. Pupils are well supported, but insufficient challenge in some lessons means that not all higher-attaining pupils achieve as well as they could. Teachers' enthusiasm and good subject knowledge make a valuable contribution to good achievement, particularly in Years 10 and 11. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 have a thorough understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Good relationships and positive pupil attitudes promote a productive working environment.
104. Leadership is good and management is satisfactory. The head of department has developed a hardworking team of teachers who are committed to raising standards, ensuring good improvement since the previous inspection. There is a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the department. However, strategies and monitoring procedures are not identified and implemented rigorously enough to ensure consistency across the department.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership and management have ensured significant improvement since the previous inspection.
- Teaching is consistently good in Years 10 and 11 and GCSE results are rising.
- Teachers do not make sufficient use of assessment information to challenge and guide pupils, particularly in Years 7 to 9.
- There is not enough progression of skills and knowledge in Years 7 to 9.
- Pupils have good attitudes to art and design and numbers opting for the subject are rising.
- The use of ICT to support teaching and learning is underdeveloped.

Commentary

105. Standards overall in art and design are below average by the end of Year 9 and by the end of Year 11. Standards in GCSE examinations have been improving steadily over the past three years. In 2004 the overall pass rate was in line with the national average, but the proportion of pupils attaining the higher A* to C grades was below average. Girls performed better than boys overall but both groups achieved satisfactorily.

106. Pupils enter the school in Year 7 with different and sometimes limited experiences of art and design. They make satisfactory progress over Years 7 to 9 developing a range of art skills and techniques predominantly through two-dimensional work. Staffing difficulties over recent years have had an adverse effect upon the quality of learning, particularly in Years 7 to 9. Although teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 in 2004 judged standards as above average, some assessment by non-specialists was over-optimistic. Work by these pupils who are now in Year 10 indicates standards are average. In work seen in Years 7 to 9 standards are below average overall. The schemes of work are not sufficiently rigorous to ensure good progression of knowledge and understanding alongside practical tasks. Whilst practical skills develop satisfactorily, those of analysis and discussion are weak and pupils have too few opportunities to work in three dimensions. Some make use of computers for research but in general ICT is underdeveloped. Overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9.

107. The standards in the practical aspects of work in Years 10 and 11 are average. Standards improve as a result of good teaching that supports independent and imaginative work with a clear focus on examination assessment and deadlines. This is especially so in Year 10. Knowledge and understanding of artistic styles and conventions and skills of critical analysis remain the weaker aspects of pupils' work. Many pupils make good use of computers for research, but not to develop their work. Achievement in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory overall.

108. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. They are good in Years 10 and 11. There are three specialist teachers in post, lessons are managed effectively and pupils have good attitudes to art. Numbers opting for art are increasing as a result. Teachers use their specialist knowledge well to give good individual support that helps all pupils to make progress in lessons. Assessment at the end of units of work is clear and involves pupils in some self-evaluation. However, during lessons assessment is underused, particularly in Years 7 to 9, to challenge pupils and guide them on how to improve their work.

109. Leadership and management are good and have been successful in raising standards and building a team of teachers who are well supported by a technician. Accommodation has improved and display is generally well used to celebrate pupils' work. Improvements have been made ensuring schemes of work are in place, improving resources for ICT and developing an assessment system. The department makes a valuable contribution through the alternative curriculum to the achievement of disaffected pupils. Whilst there is still more to be done, overall improvement since the previous inspection has been good.

Drama

Provision in drama is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Recent GCSE results have been below the national average.
- Good teaching and very good behaviour management have a positive impact on learning.
- Pupils enjoy drama and engage in tasks enthusiastically.
- Assessment strategies are not sufficiently developed in Years 10 and 11.
- Accommodation and technical equipment are unsatisfactory and impact on achievement.

Commentary

110. The standard of pupils work is below average when they start in Year 7. By the end of Year 9 pupils' attainment is close to the national average and their achievement in Years 7 to 9 is good. GCSE results in 2004 were below the national average. This was largely caused by unsatisfactory pupil attitudes and the poor quality of pupils' writing. There is a significant lack of writing about drama texts in Years 10 and 11 and this contributes to the below average standards in examinations. However, pupils' ability to apply practical drama skills in lessons is good evidence of satisfactory achievement in the current Years 10 and 11.

111. Teaching and learning are good overall and some very good teaching was observed. Teaching and learning are good in Years 7 to 9 and satisfactory in Years 10 and 11. Teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Good lessons are well planned, paced and structured to enable the pupils to learn successfully. Good behaviour management enables pupils to focus and concentrate on their tasks. Pupils are clearer about what they have achieved when the teacher gives them the opportunity to reflect on their learning. Where new assessment procedures are used pupils know what level they are at and what they need to improve, but the use of assessment is inconsistent.

112. Pupils participate enthusiastically and are able to use the practical skills that they have learned to develop their work. They generally work well in groups, especially when the groups are decided by the teacher to ensure all pupils participate. This is very effective with pupils for whom English is an additional language where their groups were selected to give them maximum support. They make a good contribution to the lesson. Pupils use improvisation well and in some lessons peer evaluation was thoughtful and constructive.

113. The teachers are new this academic year after two years of staff turbulence. The leadership of the department is good, rightly putting the emphasis on designing schemes of work and lesson plans. Management of the department is satisfactory as there is still a great deal of work to be done. Assessment strategies are still at an early stage, but are beginning to have a positive impact on pupils, particularly in Years 7 to 9. The department is well aware it needs to develop pupils' writing skills. Accommodation is unsatisfactory. The lack of appropriate spaces, ICT and lighting and sound equipment mean pupils cannot access some of the skills they need. The school and local education authority are aware of these issues and the school has plans to improve the situation. The department arranges theatre visits and theatre companies visit the school to support pupils' learning. Improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory because improving assessment and the poor accommodation raised at the last inspection remain issues still to be resolved.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well due to the emphasis on listening, appraising music and good teaching.

- The revised schemes of work are contributing effectively to pupils' progress.
- The good leadership of the subject has successfully raised the profile of the subject.
- At times, practical work in lessons lacks challenge and pupils lose concentration.

Commentary

114. Teachers' assessments at the end of Year 9 in 2004 showed that standards were significantly above average. The 2003 GCSE music examination showed that results were below the national average. Although the provisional results for the 2004 exam are still below the national average, standards are improving, showing an improvement on previous years with an overall upward trend.

115. Pupils join the school having had a varied previous musical experience, the majority having had limited opportunities to create and perform their music. The outcome of this is that pupils start in Year 7 with below average knowledge and understanding. However, with the benefit of good teaching and the emphasis on listening and appraising music, progress is good, pupils reaching the level expected in Year 9. As a consequence, pupils' achievement overtime is good. The emphasis on listening and appraising music has resulted in pupils having a good knowledge of a range of different styles of music. Although pupils are familiar with the notes on the keyboard and can play simple melodies, their overall skills are not so well developed as listening and appraising.

116. The achievement of pupils in Years 10 and 11 studying the GCSE examination is good and standards are at the expected level at this point in the academic year. Pupils have produced compositions that show an understanding of musical structure and creative development. This was particularly noticeable in their minimalist compositions. Here pupils have managed to capture the style, developing musical phrases into an ongoing performance with a good understanding of structure in music.

117. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have good practical expertise and use these skills effectively to demonstrate techniques to pupils, contributing to their learning. Teachers manage pupils well, allowing lessons to proceed without interruption. The starter sessions of lessons are a strength of the teaching. These sessions quickly engage pupils' attention, the content preparing them for the main activity of the lesson and positively supporting learning. A noticeable feature of the teaching and learning is the high quality of questioning. The majority of lessons conclude with summary sessions to assess pupils' understanding. However, these do not always include the practical elements of the lesson that are often the main focus and objective. Learning is less effective when pupils are too long on a task before assessing progress and when the practical element of the lesson lacks challenge, resulting in pupils not on task and losing interest. Assessment procedures are established but at times the assessment of pupils' work is over-generous.

118. The leadership and management of the subject are good. The head of department has a clear vision about the future developments of the subject and the need to maintain and raise standards further. During her leadership the profile of the subject has been raised. Pupils enjoy the subject and the good range of extra-curricular activities on offer. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. Schemes of work have been revised and now offer a varied curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The leadership and management of the department are good.

- Good-quality teaching and learning results in good progress for all pupils in the core programme that is followed by all pupils.
- The good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils result in a positive atmosphere in lessons.
- The indoor accommodation for the subject is unsatisfactory.

Commentary

119. Pupils arrive at the school with a wide range of physical education skills and experiences, with many below that expected. However, with the appointment of one of the department's staff as co-ordinator for primary school physical education there is evidence that the overall standard of entrants to the school is improving. The attainment of pupils at the end of Year 9 is in line with the national average and this represents good achievement.

120. Results in the 2003 GCSE physical education were just below the national average. However, in the 2004 examination there was a significant drop in the number of pupils gaining the higher A*-C grades with the overall number being well below the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that the current groups of pupils in Years 10 and 11 who are taking this examination are producing work that is in line with that produced nationally. In Year 11 a large number of pupils successfully completed the Junior Sports Leaders' Award. This award is a starting point for young people who wish to develop their sports leadership skills.

121. The overall attainment of pupils at the end of Year 11 is also in line with that achieved nationally, with some pupils, particularly those in the current examination groups, achieving even higher standards. Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily in Years 10 and 11. Pupils understand the effects of exercise on the body and prepare themselves properly for their activities. In September 2004 the department began offering pupils the opportunity to take a GCSE in dance. This offer has been taken up by a very enthusiastic and hardworking group of pupils. The attainment of these pupils is at least in line with that expected nationally, with some demonstrating an ability to compose and perform at an even higher level. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated, given much sensitive and skilful support and achieve as well as other pupils.

122. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good with some lessons judged to be very good. Well-structured tasks encourage pupils to plan, perform and analyse performance. The variety of teaching strategies used to teach mixed gender and mixed ability groups is a strength of the department. All teachers plan well, have high expectations and effective class management. The proportion of satisfactory or good teaching is an improvement on that reported in the last inspection. Pupils respond positively to this good quality teaching. They work hard, behave well and their enjoyment of the subject is evident.

123. Leadership and management of the department are good. There is a high level of commitment and co-operation throughout the department. The poor accommodation for physical education adversely affects both the pupils' enjoyment of the subject and their level of attainment. The imminent opening of a brand new sports hall should do much to make up for the lack of indoor facilities for the subject. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. The curriculum is now meeting the statutory requirements and the overall standard of teaching is much improved.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

Business studies

Provision in business studies is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is very good leadership and management of the subject.
- There is a very good range of curricular opportunities.
- Very good relationships exist between teachers and their pupils.
- Procedures for assessment are very effective.
- Pupils achieve well because teaching and learning are good.
- The provision for gifted and talented pupils is not sufficiently raising standards.

Commentary

124. GCSE results in 2003 were well above national averages and represented very good achievement in terms of the students' prior attainment. There was no significant difference between the success gained by boys and girls. In 2004, GCSE results were average, although girls' attainment was above expectations. This represented very good achievement by girls but some underachievement by the boys. Overall, pupils' achievement has been good. In the current Years 10 and 11 groups standards of work seen in lessons and in pupils' folders are above national expectations.

125. Teaching and learning are consistently good with examples of very good practice. All lessons observed were very well planned and teachers have very good, secure subject knowledge. This has a positive effect on pupils' learning and achievement over time. Lessons are conducted at a good pace and provide realistic challenges for all pupils. Overall, the subject is inclusive and offers equality of opportunity for the pupils. However, the provision of extension work for gifted and talented pupils is not as well structured as that for other pupils and opportunities to challenge pupils are missed. The relationships between teachers and their pupils are very positive and ensure an effective working environment. As a result, pupils are well motivated and achieve well. There is very good access to ICT and computers are used very effectively by pupils when doing their coursework. The programme for using ICT for other work is not as well planned. There are very good assessment procedures in place and these inform the pupils well. Pupils have a clear understanding of their standard and what they need to do in order to improve. All teachers give very positive encouragement and support to their pupils and as a result pupils enjoy the subject and work effectively.

126. There is very good, committed and enthusiastic leadership of the subject. The head of department has a strong sense of purpose and clear vision for the subject's development. The other teachers, who operate as an effective team and respond positively to the good opportunities provided for professional development, give very good support. The head of department is a very good role model and evaluates the work of the department in detail and to good effect. The subject is very well managed and offers a very good range of curricular opportunities both within and outside the classroom. The links with the business world are extensive and the teachers give willingly of their time in order that the pupils benefit from the wide range of opportunities available. Since the last inspection there have been very good improvements, especially in assessment procedures, ICT provision, links with business and the numbers choosing business studies as a GCSE subject.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Lessons in personal, social and health education were not observed during the inspection. Evidence from talking to teachers and pupils and analysing school documentation indicates that the programme is well planned and covers relevant topics. Pupils spoke positively about the lessons and the quality of the programme's content. Personal, social and health education makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development.

Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are taught effectively by a team of subject specialists.
- Pupils are well motivated and enthusiastic about the subject.
- Schemes of work cover statutory requirements and planning is good.
- Assessment procedures are not sufficiently developed to ensure progress and achievement can be accurately measured.

Commentary

127. Citizenship is well established within the school and is taught effectively in all years. During the inspection a number of lessons were observed and a scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that standards are above expectations and achievement is good.

128. In Years 7 to 9, citizenship is taught well within discrete personal, social and health education lessons as well as through an extended weekly tutor period. In Years 10 and 11 most elements of the citizenship programme are taught through the GCSE religious education and citizenship full course for which all pupils are entered. Further elements are taught in tutorial sessions.

129. Teaching and learning overall are good, benefiting from the expertise of a team of specialists and well supported by all form tutors who are committed to raising standards in this area of the curriculum. Assessment is not yet fully embedded within schemes of work. End of year reports include citizenship but do not fully report on pupils' progress or achievement.

130. The department has produced a good scheme of work with well-planned and resourced lessons. The citizenship programme includes work experience and careers education and is enhanced further by considerable use of outside speakers from the community and school visits as well as a varied enrichment programme such as fund raising and the school council. The school offers good examples of citizenship activity through strong partnerships and business links that reinforce learning and motivate pupils to achieve well.

131. The head of department and teacher responsible for citizenship provides good leadership and effective management. They have worked hard to raise the profile of the subject and develop schemes of work. Overall, there has been good progress made in developing citizenship.

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM

In the inspection, 11 subjects were inspected and are reported in detail. Work in other subjects 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 **2004**.

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
Business studies	15	75	75.3	0	15.4	19	25.7
Chemistry	21	76	70.3	24	13.2	27	23.0
Critical thinking	12	100	n/a	58	n/a	47	n/a
English	56	96	85.3	16	16.1	34	29.0
Mathematics	34	59	59.9	30	14.1	24	20.5
Media studies	41	93	n/a	41	n/a	38	n/a
Religious education	5	100	82.2	0	26.1	36	31.2
Sports studies	12	75	72.2	17	11.8	28	22.8
Art	14	66	78.3	0	21.6	11	28.5
AVCE Business	8	63	n/a	0	n/a	17.5	n/a
ICT	13	62	66.6	0	8.8	16	20.6
Sociology	52	65	72.1	21	19.6	25	25.9
Biology	31	65	63.5	19	10.4	23	19.8
Design and technology	10	100	72.6	0	13.9	33	24.3
Economics	22	95	71.6	43	18.6	40	25.8
History	24	88	82.2	21	20.8	34	29.2
AVCE ICT	15	33	n/a	0	n/a	8	n/a
Panjabi	5	100	n/a	80	n/a	54	n/a
Drama	13	100	86.6	38	19.8	41	30.9
French	5	100	79.8	25	19.4	34	28.2
Geography	14	86	75.5	29	20.4	34	27.0

Level 3 GCE A level and VCE courses

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Art	6	100	98.3	0	50.2	57	87.1
Business studies	7	86	98.9	0	39.4	49	81.8
Biology	11	100	96.6	18	40.0	67	79.3
Chemistry	4	100	97.7	25	50.0	60	85.7
Design and technology	2	100	97.8	0	35.0	60	77.9
D/T Textiles	2	100	n/a	0	n/a	70	n/a
Drama and theatre studies	8	100	n/a	38	n/a	88	n/a
Economics	10	100	98.8	50	54.3	92	89.8
English Literature	33	100	99.4	39	44.9	85	85.5
French	1	100	99.0	100	53.1	100	88.9
Geography	5	80	98.8	20	46.4	72	85.2
German	2	100	98.6	50	49.6	90	86.3
Government & politics	12	100	n/a	25	n/a	75	n/a
History	23	100	99.0	48	45.6	88	85.1
ICT	7	71	96.3	0	25.7	40	71.1
Mathematics	14	100	96.8	77	56.6	96.8	89.5
Media studies	20	100	n/a	55	n/a	92	n/a
Panjabi	3	100	n/a	66	n/a	60	n/a
Physical education	4	100	97.8	25	30.9	80	75.4
Physics	4	100	96.7	50	45.3	85	82.6
Religious education	5	100	99.1	0	49.5	68	87.4
Sociology	16	100	98.5	56	45.3	86	84.6
AVCE Business studies	6	66	91.6	33	24.1	53	67.9

Level 2 vocational qualifications

Qualification	No in final year	% gaining qualification		% gaining merit		% gaining distinction	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Business	18	72	n/a	22	n/a	0	n/a
ICT	14	64	n/a	14	n/a	0	n/a

ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

English

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve very well and examination results are improving.
- The very good quality of teaching is helping to raise standards.
- Teachers' enthusiasm is increasing the number of students taking A-level courses.
- Teachers establish very good relationships with students, who are very positive about their work.

Commentary

132. Students start the AS level course with standards that are below average. In the most recent examinations the results were above average and many students gained high grades. This represents very good achievement by the students. During recent years the results have been improving. There is no significant difference between the achievement of male or female students.

133. Teaching and learning in Years 12 and 13 are very good. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and are innovative in the activities they organise. They provide opportunities for students to discuss; make decisions under time constraints; bring their knowledge of texts to the debate; see two sides of the argument and collaborate to come to agreement. Good information about authors and their historical or cultural background is provided to help students understand texts better and good links are made with other areas of the curriculum. Teachers ask probing questions about challenging extracts, which prepare students for examination requirements. Students know how to organize their information well to support their writing. They are prepared well for the course with wider reading beforehand and they practise university level skills like compiling bibliographies. Teachers mark work thoroughly, even in the preparatory stages. Relationships between teachers and students are very good and lessons make the most of the time available. Extension work and research are set for homework.

134. Leadership and management are very good. Students benefit from a good induction programme and enter the course fully informed of what to expect. The course is well staffed with groups being shared between two teachers to facilitate monitoring and to enable students to have a balanced experience. Results are analysed carefully to inform planning and to review students' performance. Good central records are kept to enable teachers to keep track of students' progress. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good. Student numbers have increased considerably and results have improved, with more students achieving higher grades. A new course is already planned, to provide language as well as literature.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

135. Standards of literacy are above average in Years 12 and 13. Literacy is included in the content of many subjects in the sixth form. Students are encouraged to do presentations, which enable them to discuss well and be confident and articulate. They also research independently and in some subjects like modern foreign languages and English, study the technicalities of grammar. There is no facility for students to do communication skills as an examination, but these are taught in many different subjects.

Modern Languages

The main focus of the inspection was on French, but work in Panjabi was also sampled. The provision for Panjabi in the sixth form is very good. Two lessons were observed and the quality of

teaching was found to be very good in both lessons. The teacher is a native speaker, very competent and provides an excellent model of the spoken language. Students achieve very well because of excellent relationships, encouragement and very good guidance given by the teacher. Students are fluent in their speech and can argue their case giving good reasons. For example, in one lesson they gave several reasons why teachers should be stricter in the UK. Standards in the sixth form are above the national average. AS and A-level examination results have been very good for the last two years. Students make good use of dictionaries and other materials to find the relevant information. Achievement is very good. Leadership and management of Panjabi are very good.

French

Provision in French is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers are fluent French speakers and know their subject well.
- Up-to-date resources give very good support for reading and writing skills.
- Lessons are carefully planned to extend students' knowledge of vocabulary.
- In some lessons there are insufficient opportunities for students to develop their spoken French.

Commentary

136. Overall, standards in the sixth form are close to national averages. Too few students have sat examinations in French in recent years to make meaningful comparisons with national figures. Most of those who took the examination obtained a pass grade. In Years 12 and 13 students continue to achieve very well in relation to their levels of attainment on joining the sixth form. Most students complete their course, enjoy the subject as a result of their teachers' enthusiasm and learn very well.

137. Teaching and learning are very good overall in Years 12 and 13. Students' reading and writing develop very well as a result of a carefully prepared range of contemporary resources. Detailed planning, well-managed lessons and enjoyable activities in groups and pairs help students acquire a good range of more abstract vocabulary.

138. Teachers have high levels of expertise. They speak accurate and fluent French throughout lessons. This focuses students' careful listening and provides them with excellent models of pronunciation. Students are given opportunities to take part in work experience in France and most do. They find this very motivating. There are some missed opportunities to increase students' spoken French by extending classroom discussions and debate. A few are hesitant in oral work.

139. The subject is very well led and managed by the new head of department. There is a strong focus on raising standards. This shows itself in students' interest in learning French and the support they are given in organising and improving their work. There has been good progress since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve very well at A-level as a result of a combination of very good teaching and very good student attitudes to learning.
- The very good level of teachers' subject knowledge leads to clear explanations of important concepts.
- Teachers have high expectations and provide a very high level of challenge.
- Students are not involved enough in class discussion about mathematics methodology.

- There is insufficient use of ICT.

Commentary

140. In 2003 the results at A-level were above average. The boys performed significantly better than the girls. Results for 2004 indicate that A-level results have improved further and the performance of girls matched that of boys. Students' achievement is very positive. The performance of students in mathematics compares favourably to most other subjects. Achievement on the re-sit GCSE course has improved significantly since the last inspection. Overall, students are achieving very well. They steadily acquire new knowledge and skills. Students demonstrate a very good understanding of mathematics and make effective use of past work when introduced to a new topic.

141. The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good. Teachers have a very good knowledge of mathematics, coupled with very high expectations. They give clear explanations and provide good support when students ask for clarification and this allows students to improve their understanding. Teachers structure lessons well and provide high levels of challenge. The learning of A-level mathematics mainly involves listening to instruction at the board followed by individual practice and there are occasions when there are missed opportunities to involve students more actively in lessons. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace and are planned well to consolidate each stage of new learning before progressing to the next stage. Homework is set regularly and is used effectively to consolidate and extend the work introduced in lessons. ICT, other than use of graphic calculators, is not used enough to stimulate enthusiasm and to develop and extend students' learning.

142. The quality of leadership is very good and management of the subject is good. There is a clear commitment by the whole team to improving standards by raising achievement for all students. There is a comprehensive scheme of work, but it lacks guidance on appropriate teaching methods and use of resources that would enhance teaching further. There are good procedures for assessing the students' performance and marking contains helpful guidance on where they have made mistakes and what they need to do to improve. Very good progress has been made since the previous inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

143. Mathematics is used well to support learning in other subjects. There is extensive use of graphs in post-16 sciences where students use calculators confidently and can transpose formulae competently. Students also use their mathematical skills with confidence in ICT and humanities subjects where good use is made of statistical skills. Specific mathematics teaching takes place in science subjects for students not studying it at A-level to bring their skills up to the required level. In chemistry a good 'mathematics for chemists' workbook has been produced.

SCIENCE

The focus of the inspection was on biology, chemistry and physics.

Biology

Provision in biology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are very good relationships between teachers and students.
- The students have very good attitudes to the subject.
- There is insufficient use of computers to enhance the learning of students.
- The achievement of students is good regardless of their prior attainment.

Commentary

144. In 2004 the results at GCE A-level for a small cohort of students were below the national average, but results were better in 2003. The department has individual student data from 2003 and 2004 that clearly demonstrates that the majority of students reach their predicted grades and in many cases exceed them. Students who previously attained lower GCSE grades achieve as well as those students with higher prior attainment. Attainment at AS level is below the national level in 2004.

145. The standard of work seen is below the expected national average in Year 12. The standards seen in Year 13 were at the national level. The students are motivated and have a very good attitude to learning. Students enter the sixth form well below the national average and achieve well over the two years as they build up their knowledge and understanding of the subject. Students in Year 13 were able to identify and explain in detail the components of plant leaves in a confident manner.

146. Teaching and learning are consistently good. The lessons are well planned using a variety of teaching and learning styles that engage the students. In discussions, the students appreciate the teaching and guidance they receive and feel very well supported. Teachers use the newly introduced whiteboards to good effect, being able to produce high quality presentations. However, there is insufficient use of computers in lessons to enhance the learning of the students. The relationships are very positive and students work together in a very co-operative manner. Students' attitudes to their learning are very good and they act in a very mature manner while taking responsibility for their own learning. Teachers are able to manage group discussions well, ensuring all students are involved. The department accepts a wide range of students, including some with relatively low GCSE grades. The support given to students is very effective and ensures that all students achieve well.

147. The leadership and management of the department are good. The recently appointed head of subject has a clear understanding of the issues for improvement in biology. The emerging course organisation covers the syllabus requirements well and the need for the additional use of computers has been recognised. The progress of individual students is well monitored and students are fully aware of their potential grades and their current attainment. The extensive data is used in a constructive manner to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching and learning, but needs to be extended to determine ways in which the course could be improved to raise standards even further. The team of well-qualified and enthusiastic teachers are well supported by a specialist technician.

148. There was little mention of post-16 biology in the previous report. Standards are now higher, achievement has improved and the number of students choosing biology has increased. The improvement since the last inspection is good.

Chemistry

Provision in chemistry is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Examination results have been below average.
- Teachers provide good support for students in many aspects of their learning.
- Assessment is not sufficiently rigorous to identify underachievement.
- Relationships are good and students have very positive attitudes.
- ICT is not used sufficiently for practical work.

Commentary

149. All students entered for A-level in the three years 2002-2004 achieved pass grades, but results have been below average and below expectations based on students' prior attainment. Only a small number took A-level in 2004, but there are more students currently in Year 13. Students enter Year 12 with a wide range of GCSE results, a high proportion having lower than average

grades. Six students achieved A or B grades at AS level in 2004, an improvement on 2003 results, but overall results have been below expectations. Retention within each year is good, but the proportion continuing into Year 13 has been low. Boys and girls do equally well. Standards of work have improved so they are currently average and students are achieving satisfactorily.

150. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but with some good aspects. Teachers have good subject knowledge and provide well-planned activities that lead to good learning and good progress in lessons. Teachers encourage independent learning and have high expectations of students' abilities. They provide good individual support, but do not monitor the progress of all students sufficiently rigorously. They set appropriate questions for homework and encourage students to assess their own work, which they discuss in lessons. This leads to overestimates of current standards because students perform better in discussions than in written examinations and there are insufficient assessments of written work by teachers. Teachers make good use of interactive whiteboards in lessons, but there is insufficient use of ICT for practical work.

151. Learning is satisfactory. Students have positive attitudes to the subject and feel very well supported by their teachers. Most respond well to the teaching and have well organised notes with useful summaries and additional material, but some lower-ability students' work is incomplete and unchecked. Students work well together in lessons. Good learning occurs when students are encouraged to discuss and rehearse answers to questions before they present these to the whole class. Students in Year 12 are confident using apparatus and have developed satisfactory practical skills.

152. Leadership is satisfactory. There is a commitment to improvement by the very recently appointed subject leader. The teachers work effectively as a team and management is satisfactory. There are good course outlines but schemes of work have not yet been developed. Examination results are analysed effectively to inform planning. Individual targets are set and a subject progress review for students is being introduced this term. There has been good development of new staff. Students gain useful experience of spectroscopy at a university and there are links with other local schools that could be developed further. Laboratory provision is satisfactory, but in need of refurbishment. There are adequate resources for practical work. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

Physics

Provision in physics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers are very experienced and explain the subject well so students' understanding is good.
- Relationships are good and there is effective individual support for students.
- Students' skills for independent learning are not sufficiently well developed.
- ICT is not used sufficiently in lessons.

Commentary

153. Results at A-level have been below average but in 2004 improved and were in line with expectations. In the last three years all students entered have achieved pass grades, but numbers have been small. More students take the subject in Year 12 but results at AS-level have been below expectations and less than half have continued to A-level. Few girls have taken the subject, but they do as well as the boys and there are more in the current Year 12. Current standards of work are average and this represents satisfactory achievement by the students. In the lessons seen during the inspection, students made good progress.

154. Teaching is satisfactory with many good features that are beginning to impact on standards. Teachers are very experienced and have good knowledge of the subject. They sometimes overestimate students' abilities, but provide very good support for learning and additional help

when needed. They explain the subject content very well and use skilful questioning in discussions so that students' understanding is good. There is a good emphasis on practical work, but insufficient use of ICT in lessons. Assessment is good. Students' work is marked thoroughly with helpful comments for improvement. Introduction of an assessment grid is a positive step, but it has not been used consistently and targets are too optimistic.

155. Learning is satisfactory. Students have positive attitudes and appreciate the good support provided by their teachers. They work well in lessons, but their independent learning skills are insufficiently developed. They achieve well in discussions, but cope less well when writing answers under examination conditions. They use ICT well for research and in presenting their work.

156. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Although both teachers have other major responsibilities, they are committed to student success in physics. A new course was introduced in 2003 to match better the abilities of students. There are good course outlines provided for students and the teachers make good use of a published scheme of work. There are insufficient activities organised for enrichment. Laboratory provision is satisfactory, but in need of refurbishment. Resources are adequate, but some equipment is outdated. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

No subjects were inspected in this curriculum area.

HUMANITIES

History

Provision in history is **very good** with some outstanding features.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Strong leadership and management ensure clear educational direction.
- The quality of teaching is very good and often outstanding.
- Students develop their independent learning and research skills very well.
- Very good assessment and use of target setting are helping to raise standards.
- Students fully appreciate the advice and support they are given.

Commentary

157. In recent years, results in both AS and A-level examinations have been above national averages. This represents very good achievement since the ability level of most students starting the course is below average. In the 2004 A-level examination over four-fifths of the students gained passes in the higher grade A-C range, with almost half achieving the two highest grades. The standards in work observed are also above the national average and achievement very high. Numbers studying history are rising and there are no significant differences in achievement between the performance of male and female students.

158. Students in Year 12 are achieving very well. They benefit from the teachers' close attention to course planning and study techniques, which enables them to meet the challenges presented by the different work patterns needed for sixth form study. Students have a very good knowledge and understanding of historical concepts, are able to interpret and evaluate a range of source evidence and are developing their capacity for critical thinking. Students in Year 13 present lucid arguments in essay form in which they analyse particular events in the context of general principles, for example when they considered the inevitability of the Korean War. Over the two-year course, students have made clear gains in analytical ability, presentational skills and advances in creating and evidencing hypotheses.

159. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and sometimes outstanding. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and are very well prepared for lessons, in terms of both their own approach to the topics covered and the activities that they plan for students. Their clear enthusiasm for their subject has a considerable impact on the students' response. Students' attitudes are very positive. They readily contribute to their own learning by making substantial contributions to discussions and by asking thoughtful questions. Highly constructive teacher marking provides detailed critical feedback on the quality of students' written work and specific guidance on how to improve. Teachers encourage them to undertake their own enquiries and this prepares them for further study after they leave school. Students spoke very positively about the provision of history in the school. They enjoy the topics and spoke enthusiastically of the quality of the teaching, valuing the stimulus given by the different styles they encountered in the department.

160. Since the last inspection, there has been very good improvement. Very good leadership and management are a major factor in promoting high standards. The performance of all students is monitored rigorously and teachers advise on how to achieve the highest grades. Day-to-day management is highly organised and longer-term development is directed very effectively towards improving the achievement of all students.

Sociology

Provision in sociology is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results in A-level examinations were well above average in 2004 and this represents very good achievement for the students concerned.
- Teachers have very high expectations and lessons challenge students to think for themselves.
- Relationships between teachers and students are very good and students are given the confidence to reach their full potential.
- The use of ICT is underdeveloped.

Commentary

161. Results for 2004 show that almost half of students gained the highest A-level grades. School data indicates that these results were well above average and represent very good achievement for the students concerned compared to their attainment at GCSE. In work seen during the inspection standards are average and students are achieving very well. Students can discuss complex conceptual issues confidently and have a very good understanding of specialist terminology.

162. Teaching and learning are very good because teachers are knowledgeable, they explain their subject very clearly and lessons are conducted at a fast pace. Students have very mature attitudes to learning and respond very well to the challenging teaching they receive. Very good relationships between teachers and students help to establish positive and enthusiastic group dynamics so that students have the confidence to reach their full potential. Students are encouraged to think for themselves and work very well both independently and in groups. The use of ICT to support learning is presently underdeveloped.

163. The department is very well led and managed. Very good priorities have been identified for development. These include the production of new resources directed towards meeting the needs of lower attaining students. The department has not been inspected previously but examination results and the numbers of students studying the subject both show a rising trend in recent years. The department has both the capacity and commitment to improve further.

ENGINEERING, TECHNOLOGY AND MANUFACTURING

No subjects were inspected in this curriculum area

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA

Drama A-level results have improved, particularly in 2004 when achievement was excellent.

Media studies

Provision in media studies is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students' achievement was outstanding at A-level in 2004.
- Very good teaching enables high quality learning.
- Students have very good practical media skills.
- Very good leadership and management have a positive impact on students' learning.

Commentary

164. A-level results in 2003 were in line with the national average. In 2004, the results were above average with students substantially exceeding their target grades. These reflect the outstanding GCSE results in 2003 and 2004. Students achieve very well, showing extensive knowledge and understanding of media concepts and skills as a result of very good teaching. They are able to apply these and develop them in their practical work and analysis of media texts. Practical work is of a high quality.

165. Teaching and learning are very good, consistently challenging and enthusiastic. Excellent lessons were observed when, for example, the creative use of the interactive whiteboard enabled a high level of student participation and discussion. The very high quality of teachers' planning and organisation of lessons and their expert practical knowledge of their subject engage students' interest and commitment – 'I love media, man!' was a student comment. Sharp questioning extends and consolidates students' learning. Assessment of work is clear, encouraging, diagnostic and evaluative.

166. Relationships between teachers and students are excellent and encourage genuine debate. All students work very well together. They are focused and engaged with their work, which they share with great enthusiasm. Their considerable practical skills allow them to engage in sophisticated technical discussions about their work. Written assignments about the media projects are constructive and self-aware. Students successfully research comparative media texts, for example films and product design. They make pertinent references to media theorists to support their work. Their media files are thorough and comprehensive. All students make very good use of ICT.

167. Media studies is part of the English faculty and is very popular and very well led and managed by the teacher in charge. Staff have created extensive documentation and schemes of work which successfully structure the learning. Teacher turbulence over the last two years is being addressed with new appointments. There are constructive links with a TV network and other broadcasters who contribute to the courses. Accommodation is very good, but teaching spaces are now a little small for the larger groups. Technical and ICT resources are very good. Gifted and talented students are offered a successful film making course out of school hours. Last year four students won a media competition which enabled them to go to Pakistan and meet the President. At the last inspection, media studies was considered a strength of the school and it remains so.

HOSPITALITY, SPORTS, LEISURE AND TRAVEL

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve well because the quality of teaching is consistently good.
- Very good relationships between students and their teachers lead to high expectations and good attitudes for learning.
- Some students rely too heavily on their teachers and do not take sufficient responsibility for their learning.

Commentary

168. In 2000 the school began offering sixth form students the opportunity to take A-level examinations in physical education. For the first three years a small number of students took up the offer and gained pass grades that were in line with that achieved nationally. In September 2003 a larger group of students began the AS course and in the 2004 examinations all these students gained pass grades that were better than that achieved nationally. Also in 2004 a small group of students completed the A-level course and gained pass grades that were above average. Students' achievement in Years 12 and 13 is good.

169. Inspection evidence indicates that the standards reached by the group of current Year 13 students is better than that seen nationally and reflects their AS level results. Students share a real rapport with their teachers and relationships when working in groups are good. However, many students rely too heavily on their teachers who work hard for them. Some do not take sufficient responsibility for their own learning. In discussions most display good debating skills, although teachers sometimes have to work hard to get them actively involved in the discussions. Most students have a good command of the technical language of the subject and can use it accurately and effectively. Students readily use the internet to broaden their knowledge and to research individual topics.

170. The quality of the teaching and learning is good. Lessons are well planned with clear objectives that are shared with the students. Teachers know their subject well, demonstrating an awareness of students' learning needs and setting challenging assignment work. The vast majority of students have progressed from taking GCSE in physical education in the school to taking their A-level courses; consequently, teachers know them well, are aware of their strengths and weaknesses and are skilled at asking the right questions in order to help them learn. Students respond very positively to the good quality teaching.

171. Leadership and management of the A-level course are good. Teachers involved in the examinations work well together, sharing views on successful ways of teaching, and show a very strong commitment to their students. At the time of the previous inspection the school did not offer A-level courses in physical education.

BUSINESS

The main focus of the inspection was on economics, but work in business studies was also sampled. A good range of vocational and advanced level courses are offered to the students. Standards in 2003 at A-level were below national averages, but still represent satisfactory achievement in terms of the students' prior attainment. Standards of work completed by students currently studying vocational courses are in line with national expectations. Teaching and learning in two observed lessons were good and the students had a good attitude towards their studies.

Economics

Provision in economics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching, learning and students' achievement are very good.
- There is very good leadership and management of the subject.
- There are very good relationships between the teacher and students.
- Students have very positive attitudes towards their learning.
- There is insufficient use of ICT on a regular basis.

Commentary

172.A-level results in 2003 were in line with the national average. This represents very good achievement based on the students' prior attainment at GCSE. Students did equally well in 2004 and standards in lessons were above national expectations. There were no significant differences between the levels of attainment and achievement of male and female students.

173.This very good achievement is the result of very good teaching and learning. Students have very positive attitudes towards their work. The teacher has high expectations and students are enthusiastic and work well together. Lessons are very well planned, challenging and conducted at a good pace. This has a positive impact on student achievement. Relationships between the students and their teacher are very good and this results in effective learning. The teacher has very good subject knowledge and successfully captures the interest of the students when discussing complex concepts and issues. There is very good provision for all students, including those who are gifted and talented. The students work well, independently and collaboratively, with activities matched to the students' needs. There is good access to ICT, although there is insufficient use of this resource on a regular basis.

174.There are good, well-established assessment procedures that help the students understand what they need to do in order to improve their performance. The teacher has a clear understanding of students' knowledge, skills and understanding. As a result, students are set challenging targets.

175.The teacher with subject responsibility provides very good leadership and management of the subject. He has a clear sense of purpose and is a very good role model for his students. There is a commitment to raise standards for all students and very good monitoring and analysis of the students' performance. The teacher ensures that he is well informed of current issues and developments in the subject. He is self-critical and regularly evaluates the effectiveness of the provision.

176.Since the last inspection there have been very good improvements in the overall provision, especially with regard to ICT resources, student involvement in lessons and opportunities for independent learning. Economics is a popular subject with many of the students proceeding to related courses in higher education.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

No subjects were inspected in this curriculum area.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND GENERAL PROGRAMMES

No subjects were inspected in this curriculum area.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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