

INSPECTION REPORT

SALESIAN SCHOOL

Chertsey

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 125312

Headteacher: Mr D Cleworth

Lead inspector: Dr Faysal Mikdadi

Dates of inspection: 22nd - 25th November 2004

Inspection number: 268902

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

© Crown copyright 2005

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of students:	11 - 18
Gender of students:	Mixed
Number on roll:	1,220
School address:	Guildford Road Chertsey Surrey
Postcode:	KT16 9LU
Telephone number:	(01932) 582 520
Fax number:	(01932) 582 521
Email address:	Headteacher@salesian.surrey.sch.uk
Website address:	www.salesian.surrey.sch.uk
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Gordon Littlecott
Date of previous inspection:	7 th September 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Salesian School is a large voluntary aided Catholic mixed comprehensive school in Chertsey in Surrey. It is situated on two sites which are a considerable distance from each other and require students to walk between 15 and 20 minutes at certain changeover times. There are 1,220 students on roll with about 100 more boys than girls. The sixth form has 165 students of whom at present one third are girls. The overwhelming majority of students are white British with just under five per cent from ethnic minority backgrounds and a few of Irish origin. A very small number of students is entitled to free school meals. Students' prior attainment on entry is above average. A small number receive English as an additional language support. The number of students with special educational needs is average. Two hundred and ten students, including those in the sixth form, have been reviewed for interventions through school action, school action plus and statements, as required by the Code of Practice. Twenty students have statements, which is below the national average. Students' needs are learning, social, emotional, behavioural, medical, physical and sensory.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2447	Dr Faysal Mikdadi	Lead inspector	Work-related learning
9563	Jeanette Reid	Lay inspector	
17478	Hugh Betterton	Team inspector	Sixth form media studies
30941	Keith Brammer	Team inspector	English
8104	Joan Child	Team inspector	Music
15163	Eric Deeson	Team inspector	Information and communication technology
30695	Geraldine Dinan	Team inspector	Art and design Sixth form art and design
30216	Adrian Elliott	Team inspector	History
15268	John English	Team inspector	Mathematics
22685	Natalie Moss	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
20832	Mohindar Galowalia	Team inspector	Science Sixth form biology
1517	David Griffith	Team inspector	Citizenship
1782	Andrew Lyons	Team inspector	Design and technology
20324	Professor Vera Morris	Team inspector	Geography
18125	Dr Vanessa Rowe	Team inspector	Sixth form psychology
15971	Michael Pye	Team inspector	Physical education
30216	Brian Skelton	Team inspector	Sixth form English
19454	Julia Whitburn	Team inspector	Sixth form mathematics

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal Education
1 - 4 Portland Square
Bristol
BS2 8RR

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet *'Complaining about Ofsted Inspections'*, which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637 833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 7
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS	8 - 13
Standards achieved in subjects and courses	
Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	14 - 21
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	21 - 23
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES	24 - 55
SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	56

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective school that provides a **good quality education** to all its students and good value for money. The main reasons for students achieving well and making good progress are the quality of teaching, very well motivated students, the strong warm Catholic ethos, strong sense of Salesian belonging and the quality of leadership in the school.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- National Curriculum test and GCSE examination results are well above the national average.
- Teaching, learning and assessment are good, which leads to students achieving well.
- Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection.
- Leadership is effective and gives a clear direction to the school.
- Accommodation has some shortcomings, especially relating to the split site.
- Students have very good attitudes to their school and to their learning.
- Relationships are very good.
- Provision is very good in English, mathematics, science, music and media studies.
- The legal requirements in citizenship, information and communication technology (ICT) and work-related learning are not fully met.
- Provision in some areas of personal, social and health education is weak, including advice on the next stage of education or career. This is caused by the timetabling constraints of the split site.
- The school makes very good use of data to monitor performance.
- Opportunities for enhancing students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development across subjects and within the enrichment programme are very good.
- There are insufficient support staff to help all those students who need extra support or to give technical support to subjects.

Improvements since the last inspection have been good, especially in teaching and learning. The school has also improved its management structure especially in monitoring and self-evaluation and provision in modern foreign languages and design and technology. The most significant improvement has been in the attainment of sixth form students. The split site still poses significant difficulties for the management and organisation of the school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A – well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average.
Similar schools are those whose students attained similarly at the end of Year 11.*

Students' achievement is good at all stages in the school. At the end of Year 9 in 2003 students' attainment in the national tests was well above the national average in

English, mathematics and science. In 2004, these results increased significantly in all three core subjects particularly for those students attaining the higher levels. Students' prior attainment on entry is above average. In 2003, the GCSE results were well above the national average for those attaining five or more grades A*-C or A*-G. Such results represent good achievement by the students. In 2004 the results were better reaching over 70 per cent attaining five or more GCSE grades A*-C for the first time. In 2003, GCSE examination results were well above the national average in English, mathematics, science, art and design, history, music, physical education and Spanish and above in design and technology and French. They were in line with the national average in geography. Overall, standards seen were good in each year group.

Students' personal qualities are good. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Their attitudes are very good. Relationships are very good. Behaviour is good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of the students' education is good. The quality of teaching is **good**. Almost eight out of every ten lessons seen were good or better. Students learn and achieve well because of the good teaching. The curriculum is satisfactory and is supplemented by a very good extra-curricular enrichment programme. Guidance and support are good. Links with parents are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher leads the school effectively. The leadership team is effective and works well together and has succeeded in delegating responsibilities to key persons in the school. Both governors and staff share the headteacher's vision for enhancing students' achievement. Governance is good. Governors have not ensured full compliance with legal requirements in citizenship, ICT and work-related learning. They are aware of this shortcoming, which is caused by the constraints put on timetabling and staffing by the split site. Overall leadership and management are good. Leadership is outstanding in music and very good in English, science and art and design and good in mathematics, design and technology, geography, history, ICT, modern foreign languages and physical education. The leadership of citizenship and work-related learning is unsatisfactory.

PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and students speak highly of the school. Parents are unanimous in expressing their appreciation of the education provided. Parents are highly supportive of the school's work. A significant minority feel that they do not receive enough information on their children's progress. Inspectors disagree with this view as the progress report and the annual reports are very good. These parents also feel that the school does not actively seek their views, and inspectors support those parental concerns. Students said that they felt that the school listened to their views and took an interest in what they had to say. Inspectors support this view.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- improve the accommodation;
- improve provision in personal, social and health education and ensure that students get better advice on their next step in further study;
- ensure that there are sufficient support staff, particularly in technical and special educational needs support;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- ensure that provision is made for all students to receive their full entitlement to citizenship in all years and to ICT and work-related learning in Years 10 and 11.

SIXTH FORM AT SALESIAN SCHOOL

This is a relatively smaller than average Catholic sixth form serving Chertsey and outlying areas. Six subjects were inspected in full with other subjects being sampled. Students are offered a wide range of AS and A2 subjects to choose from.

OVERALL EVALUATION

Sixth form provision is **good**. This is a huge improvement on the last inspection when the sixth form was judged to be poor. Students work within a caring and safe environment. They are encouraged to do their best and consequently achieve well. Students behave very well and they show very good attitudes to their learning. Overall, teaching is good with four out of five lessons being at least good and one in three very good. The sixth form is cost effective.

The main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Improvements since the last inspection have been very good.
- Examination results are above average, showing that students achieve well.
- Provision is very good in media studies and good in most other subjects.
- Students' concerns about the delays in processing their university applications are in some cases justified.
- Standards of work seen were mostly above and well above the national expectations.

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 sixth form subjects were inspected.

Curriculum area	Evaluation
English, languages and communication	Good provision in English. Teaching and learning are good with students achieving satisfactorily in language and well in literature. French (two lessons) and Spanish (one lesson) were sampled where teaching and achievement were very good.
Mathematics	Good provision in mathematics. Teaching and learning are good with students achieving well.
Science	Good provision in biology. Teaching and learning are good with students achieving well. Chemistry (one lesson) and physics (one lesson) were sampled where teaching and achievement were very good.
ICT	Not inspected in the sixth form.
Humanities	Satisfactory provision in psychology. Teaching and learning are satisfactory with students achieving satisfactorily.
Engineering, technology and manufacturing	Not inspected in the sixth form. Textiles (one lesson) were sampled and teaching and learning were very good with students achieving very well.
Visual and performing arts and media	Good provision in art. Teaching and learning are very good with students achieving very well. Very good provision in media studies. Teaching and learning are very good

with students achieving very well.

Drama (one lesson) and music (one lesson) were sampled where teaching and learning were very good with students achieving very well in both cases.

Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	Not inspected in the sixth form. Physical education (two lessons) was sampled where teaching and learning were good and students were achieving well.
Business	Not inspected in the sixth form. Business studies (one lesson) was sampled where teaching and learning were satisfactory and achievement was also satisfactory.
Health and social care	Not inspected in the sixth form.
General education	Not inspected in the sixth form.

The curriculum areas are broadly common across all post-16 education and training. They do not necessarily correspond with subjects and courses taught by the school. Inspectors make judgements in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. Excellent and very good are equivalent to the judgement 'outstanding' in further education and sixth form college reports; poor and very poor are equivalent to 'very weak'.

ADVICE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

Guidance and support in the sixth form are good. Students appreciate the support that they receive from their teachers. Marking and assessment help students improve their work. Inspectors agree with some students' concerns over the delays in processing university applications.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SIXTH FORM

Leadership and management of the sixth form are good. Staff know their students well and are able to monitor their progress effectively. Accommodation, being on one site, is better than the main school. Students have satisfactory facilities.

STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM

Students have very positive feelings towards their experience of the sixth form. They have high aspirations and most want to go on to university. They feel that, despite the demands of the split site, teachers are available to help and support them. They talked of having had effective induction into the sixth form.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

In 2003, the National Curriculum test results in English, mathematics and science were well above the national average. These results improved significantly in 2004. The teacher assessment results were above the national average in art and design, history and music. They were in line with the national average in design and technology, geography and modern foreign languages and below in physical education. Citizenship and ICT were not formally assessed. The GCSE results for those attaining five or more grades A*-C as well as for those attaining five or more grades A*-G were well above the national average. These results show good achievement by students. Figures went up in 2004 reaching over 70 per cent attaining five or more GCSE grades A*-C for the first time. Standards seen during the inspection in Years 7 to 9 were well above national expectations in English, mathematics and science, above the national expectations in art, history, music and physical education and in line in design and technology, geography and modern foreign languages. Standards seen in Years 10 and 11 were well above the national expectations in English, mathematics, science, art and design, history, music and physical education and above the national expectations in design technology, geography and modern foreign languages. Overall, standards of work seen were above the national expectations, showing students' achievement to be good and their targets met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- National Curriculum test and GCSE results were well above the national average in 2003.
- Students achieve well in all years.
- Standards of work seen during the inspection were consistently above average or better.
- In citizenship and ICT, as well as work-related learning in Years 10 and 11, standards and achievement cannot be gauged properly since provision is unsatisfactory.
- Students' standards are particularly good in Years 10 and 11.
- There have been significant improvements in sixth form students' attainment since the last inspection.

Commentary

1. By the end of Year 9, the students' results in the 2003 National Curriculum test results were well above the national average in all the three core subjects of English, mathematics and science. In 2004, there were significant improvements in the core subject results. The Teacher Assessment results were above the national average in art and design, history and music and in line with the national average in design and technology, geography and modern foreign languages. They were below in physical education. Current standards as seen at the inspection are similar except for physical education, where they are higher. Citizenship is taught across the curriculum with no clear strategies for assessment.

2. By the end of Year 11 in 2003, students' GCSE results were well above the national average for those attaining five or more GCSE grades A*-C and A*-G. GCSE results were well above the national average in English, mathematics, science, art and design, history, music, Spanish and physical education. They were above the national average in design and technology and French and in line with the national average in geography. The school does not offer external examinations in citizenship and ICT. The trend over the last five years has been marginally upwards with an increase of an average of one percentage point per year. In 2004, the school achieved its highest ever proportion of students attaining five or more A*-C.
3. During the inspection, the standards of work seen in Years 7 to 9 were well above the national expectations in English, mathematics and science. They were above the national expectations in art and design, history, music and physical education. Standards seen were in line with the national expectations in design and technology, geography and modern foreign languages. There was insufficient evidence for a clear judgement to be made on standards in citizenship and ICT.
4. Standards seen were even higher in Years 10 and 11. They were well above the national average in English, mathematics, science, art and design, history, music and physical education. They were above the national average in design and technology, geography and modern foreign languages. Standards could not be properly gauged in citizenship, ICT and work-related learning because of lack of sufficient evidence.
5. Literacy skills are very good across all years. In Years 7 to 9, students are good at expressing themselves well and confidently. They are particularly good at speaking and listening and slightly less so at writing. As a result of applying the National Literacy Strategy, much of the teaching relating to literacy skills is good. Students in Years 10 and 11 show well above average literacy skills and consequently do very well in most of their GCSE subjects. Literacy is well monitored by the heads of subjects. Subject-specific vocabulary is very well understood and used by students.
6. Students show good mathematical skills. They can use these skills to enhance their learning across subjects. English, science and technology give very good opportunities for using number, although there are some inconsistencies in applying mathematical skills across other subjects. Where students use their mathematical skills, they do well in solving problems and in showing an understanding of the processes involved in doing this.
7. Currently, it is difficult to gauge the extent of the students' skills in using ICT as provision is currently unsatisfactory and students do not have sufficient opportunities to use computers in lessons. Most students' skills in using computers are underdeveloped in all years. This is a priority area for development that the school is working on at the highest level.
8. Students with special educational needs make good progress by the end of Year 11. At the end of Year 9 two thirds of students with special educational needs made the expected one level gain in English, including two students gaining more than one level. This is below average for secondary schools nationally. In lessons seen in Years 7 to 9, achievement was very good in English and good in mathematics, science,

French, history, art and design, music, drama, ICT and physical education. In withdrawal classes for literacy in Year 7, achievement was very good.

9. In 2004, students with special educational needs gained between five and nine GCSE passes as a result of support. Most gained at least their predicted average scores. One in three made very good progress in English, with three gaining C grades. In lessons seen in Years 10 and 11, achievement was very good in English, drama and history, and good in mathematics, single science, art and design, music, modern foreign languages and physical education. In withdrawal classes for help with coursework and revision, achievement was good, supported by ICT. Students who have English as an additional language and gifted and talented achieve as well as their peers.
10. All students' achievement is very good in Years 7 to 9 in English, mathematics and science. It is good in art and design, history, ICT and physical education. Achievement is satisfactory in design and technology, geography, modern foreign languages and music.
11. In Years 10 and 11, achievement is very good in English, mathematics, art and design and history. It is good in science, design and technology, geography, modern foreign languages, music and physical education.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	35.6 (34.3)	33.4 (33.3)
mathematics	39.2 (37.7)	35.4 (34.7)
science	37.0 (37.0)	33.6 (33.3)

There were 203 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	65% (64%)	52% (50%)
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	97% (97%)	91% (91%)
Percentage of students gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	99% (97%)	96% (96%)
Average point score per student (best eight subjects)	40.8 (40.2)	34.7 (34.7)

There were 211 students in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Sixth form

12. In the six subjects inspected in detail, examination results in 2003 were well above the national average in the AS level in art and design, media studies, above the national average in biology and in line in English and psychology. For those students who re-sat in Year 13, AS level results were below the national average in mathematics. In the GCE A2, results in both art and design and media studies were

well above the national average for those students who re-sat the examination in Year 13. Mathematics and biology were above the national average and psychology was in line. English language results in 2003 were below the national average although English literature results were above. AS and GCE results for all subjects in 2003 were a significant improvement on the last inspection. At the time of the last inspection results were very low. They are now in line with the national average for those gaining pass grades and better for those gaining the higher grades. In terms of value added, this indicates a significant improvement on the last inspection.

13. Standards of work seen during the inspection were above the national average. They were well above in English literature, art and design and media studies with students achieving very well. Standards seen were in line with the national expectations in mathematics and biology. They were below in English language and psychology although in value added terms, achievement in English language was satisfactory. Overall, achievement in the sixth form is good.

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of entries gaining A-E grades	88.9 (93.4)	89.4 (92.6)
Percentage of entries gaining A-B grades	33.3 (47.4)	32.6 (35.3)
Average point score per student	262.2 (283.2)	258.2 (263.3)

There were 56 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The students' attitudes to learning and to the school are **very good**. Overall, their behaviour is **good** and is **very good** in the sixth form. Attendance is **satisfactory** in all year groups. The personal development of the students is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good attitudes of most students and their interest in school life promote good learning.
- Nearly all students conduct themselves well in lessons, and in the sixth form they conduct themselves very well.
- The development of students' self-esteem enables them to take part in a range of activities with confidence.
- Students develop their moral, social and cultural values very well, and relationships are very good within a strong Catholic ethos.
- There is low-level disruption in a few classes, often in the lower sets.

Commentary

14. The students' attitudes, values and personal qualities are very well developed within a strong and safe Catholic ethos. Students benefit from the school's successful implementation of the Salesian ideal of 'engagement' whereby staff are consistently available to students and where students have a strong sense of belonging. Most students are highly interested learners who work hard and remain focused throughout lessons. They work in a responsible manner when discussing issues with their peers.

For example, in a Year 7 history lesson, where students were comparing the United Kingdom political system with the Roman Republic, they had a mature discussion considering issues such as women's rights and democracy. Many students participate in all aspects of school life, such as the school productions and the wide range of extra-curricular activities. Discussions with students and their response to the questionnaire indicate that they consider their school is a good one to be at.

15. The students' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. They enter and leave the hall for assembly in a quiet and orderly manner. Members of staff have high expectations of student behaviour, and nearly all have a clear and consistent approach to behaviour management. However, there is low-level disruption in a few classes, often in the lower sets. Discussions with students and parents indicate that some bullying does occasionally occur, but when it does, it is dealt with quickly and effectively. Time and care is taken to resolve problems and to help students reflect on the consequences of their actions. Exclusions are at a lower rate than other similar schools. Some students do not take enough pride in their environment, as is shown by the amount of litter in parts of the school.
16. Students' relationships with adults and each other are very good, and have a positive impact on their learning. The school is successful in promoting racial harmony, and students from different ethnic groups are well integrated into the school's caring Catholic community. Students work well together in groups sharing ideas, as seen in a Year 10 mathematics lesson on statistics. Students in the lower years appreciate the merits they receive for good work and effort. However, the older students do not value the system, and think that many teachers make them virtually unattainable for most students.
17. Students with special educational needs have good attitudes to learning and respond positively to well planned and delivered lessons. They are positive about receiving support and guidance about what they need to concentrate on. They behave well in lessons, even where teaching relies on students being passive listeners with too little opportunity for them to contribute or take responsibility for their learning or improve basic skills.
18. The personal development of the students is very good. Students develop a clear set of values and beliefs that reflect the school's Catholic ethos and tradition. Assemblies help students to consider spiritual and moral issues and the chaplaincy gives good support. Each year group has a 'Think Day', where they visit a place of Christian significance to explore their values and beliefs. The school promotes a strong moral code. Students have a very good understanding of right and wrong. They benefit from the very good role models set by the staff. Many instances were seen during the inspection of teachers providing opportunities in their lessons for students to explore and debate moral and social issues. For example, in a Year 9 English lesson where students were studying 'Growing Up' poetry, bullying, name-calling and non-verbal communication were discussed. The very good emphasis on the students' personal development ensures that they develop the necessary social skills so that they become active members of the community. They act as prefects and take responsibilities in sporting events.

19. There is positive student involvement in the life of the school through the Year and School Councils. Some students go on a pilgrimage to Lourdes and work with a group of disabled people from the diocese. Students participate in many events, such as the National Mathematics Challenge, the Great Debate Final, and some are on the Runnymede Youth Action Team. Many students enrich their all-round personal development through participation in the wide range of extra-curricular activities. The art, music and English departments make a large contribution to the students' cultural development. Good use is made of the community as a resource for visits. Students' understanding of different cultures is very well promoted through charitable fundraising activities and the guest speakers associated with them. Displays around the school highlight a range of cultural traditions studied in the curriculum, and aspects such as Fair Trade.

Attendance

20. The attendance of students is satisfactory. The recent Truancy Call initiative has strengthened communication with parents, and attendance has improved this term. Punctuality is satisfactory, but there are occasional delays caused by the late arrival of buses, which collect students from a wide catchment area in a busy part of the southeast near the M25.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	7.4	School data:	0.5
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 for which national figures are available.

***Ethnic background of students
the last school year***

Exclusions in

Categories used in the Annual School Census	Number of students on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	999	108	2
White – Irish	20	0	0
White – any other White background	93	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	2	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	10	12	2
Mixed – any other mixed background	13	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	11	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	3	1
Black or Black British – any other background	12	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	2	1
Parent/student preferred not to say	4	0	0
Information not obtained	45	3	1

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

Sixth form

21. Students behave very well and have very good attitudes to work. Their personal development is very good. Attendance is satisfactory. Staff monitor the attendance of individual students well.
22. Students are very well motivated and sustain a keen interest in lessons. They are conscientious and they work hard. They interact well with teachers and other students, and are mutually supportive. In art and design, students' ability to work independently and to research their subject is good. However, some students showed little initiative in some of the other lessons seen.
23. The sixth form council provides good opportunities for social development through planning events such as the sixth form ball, fundraising activities and schemes to improve the life in the sixth form. It is not easy for students to become involved in the life of the whole school due to the split site. However, many act as mentors to the youngest students when they start school and also join them in their personal, social and health education lesson. They participate in other ways such as taking football coaching, helping with the Youth Club and the Duke of Edinburgh scheme, and running a dance class. They also organise a Rag Day in which Year 11 participate.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. The overwhelming majority of lessons seen were satisfactory or better and three in four were good or better. As a result of the good teaching, all students, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. Students are assessed well in almost all subjects and very well in art and design and music. Because of the good assessment, students usually know what they need to do next in order to improve their work further.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is **good**. Almost every lesson seen was at least satisfactory. Three out of four lessons seen were good and just over a third of all lessons seen were very good. The result is that students learn consistently well. The only weak teaching was seen in personal, social and health education delivered by tutors in tutorial time.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching, learning and assessment are good.
- The teaching of personal, social and health education is a weakness.
- Students respond very well to the good teaching and try their best.
- Students with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language needs as well as the gifted and talented are all well supported.
- There is a limited number of support personnel in some areas.

Commentary

24. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection when half of the lessons seen were good or better. The figure now is three in four lessons as being good. At the last inspection, teaching was seen as a relative weakness in English, mathematics, history and modern foreign languages. It is now very good in English and mathematics and good in the other two. Finally, at the last inspection, assessment was criticised for lacking clear targets and proper monitoring. Assessment is now good.
25. Teaching is good. Teachers have a very high command of their respective subject areas. They invariably plan their lessons very well. Teachers encourage their students in a variety of ways and this leads to the students responding well. Students are keen to learn and they have very good attitudes to their school. Teachers have high expectations, especially in Years 10 and 11, and this leads to the students' well above average performance in the GCSE examinations. Teachers handle the considerable difficulties imposed upon them by the split site well and they use the 70-minute periods very effectively. Another impact of the split site on teaching is the school's inability to afford sufficient teacher assistants in order to offer support to everyone who needs it. This shortage also extends to subject technical support staff. Assessment is consistently good.
26. Teachers do not always give students sufficient opportunities to work independently, which causes students to become occasionally too reliant on their teachers. Many teachers required to teach personal, social and health education lack sufficient

expertise in this area. The result is that students' experiences of personal, social and health education varies depending on the teacher. In some lessons seen, the students did not receive any meaningful learning opportunities and much of the time was used on administrative and pastoral matters such as registration and the checking of student diaries. Given that the personal, social and health education programme includes aspects of citizenship and, in Years 10 and 11, aspects of work-related learning, this is a shortcoming in provision. Little direct teaching was seen of citizenship in Years 7 to 9, or of citizenship, work-related learning and ICT in Years 10 and 11.

27. In Years 7 to 9 teaching is very good in English, mathematics and music. It is good in science, art and design, design and technology, geography, history, ICT, modern foreign languages and physical education. As a result the students' learning is consistently good or better in these subjects.
28. In Years 10 and 11, teaching is very good in English, mathematics, art and design and music. It is good in science, design and technology, geography, history, modern foreign languages and physical education. The good, and often very good, teaching in Years 10 and 11 makes a significant contribution to the students' well above average GCSE results. The overall quality of learning is good.
29. Teaching and learning for students with special educational needs are good because teachers know the needs of students, and in-class support by teaching assistants is effective, where it is available. The majority of special educational needs students are taught together in smaller teaching groups. There are not enough teaching assistants to support students in subjects where they are having difficulties. In Years 7 to 9, teaching and learning were good in mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology, drama, history, ICT, modern foreign languages and physical education, and very good in English and music. Where students are withdrawn, teaching and learning are very good, establishing positive relationships, providing appropriate work and challenge, and engaging students through active learning. Students with English as an additional language needs, as well as gifted and talented students, are equally well taught.
30. In Years 10 to 11, the teaching of, and learning by, students with special educational needs were good in mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology, history, modern foreign languages and physical education, and very good in English, drama and music. There is good withdrawal support for revision and coursework, with tailored work and the use of ICT improving independent learning.
31. In English, planning takes account of students' needs, and teaching uses questions and answers to give students regular opportunities to express their own ideas, while continuing to improve basic writing skills supported by writing frames. In mathematics, the small teaching groups are used well to give students work to raise attainment. In science, students benefit from being able to support each other in pairs. Successful teaching of students with special educational needs in all years in art and design uses clear demonstrations and visual methods. In drama, teaching promotes good skills of performance, distinguishing these from weaker skills in writing. In history, teaching takes account of students' needs but still checks and monitors student understanding and achievement. In ICT, students respond to the

challenge to work hard to meet subject aims which are shared with them. In music, work is matched to students' attainment, and open-ended activities allow them to take a full part. In physical education, appropriate equipment is provided, and staff help individual students to develop their skills and knowledge.

32. The assessment of students with special educational needs is satisfactory. Students are assessed well on entry using a wide range of tests. The systems for sharing information on students with special educational needs with staff are good, but are most useful for students with the greatest need. The present way of applying the Code of Practice does not make clear how all students with special educational needs have interventions which are different from and additional to provision for other students, since they do not all have individual education plans. Where students are withdrawn and have individual education plans, targets are insufficiently linked to National Curriculum and specialist requirements to demonstrate clearly the measurable outcomes any extra support will produce. There is not enough administrative support for maintaining satisfactory files.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 159 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
8 (5%)	49 (31%)	64 (40%)	34 (21%)	4 (3%)	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.

Sixth form

33. Teaching is **good**. The quality of teaching was at least satisfactory and mostly better in all the lessons seen. In one out of every three lessons seen, the quality of teaching was very good or better. In the sixth form subjects which were the main focus for the inspection, teaching seen was equally good. It was very good in art and design and media studies and good in English, mathematics and science. Teaching seen was satisfactory in psychology.
34. Assessment procedures are good. Students know the level of the work that they are doing and they have clear information, through effective marking, on how to improve further. Targets are set very well using the rich data available.

The curriculum

The school curriculum is **satisfactory**. Opportunities for extra-curricular enrichment are **very good**. Resources are **satisfactory**. Accommodation is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and areas of weakness

- The split site imposes significant barriers on the school's ability to be more creative in its timetabling and in using funds, which are currently tied up in the high cost of maintaining two large sites.
- The extra-curricular enrichment programme is very good.
- The school does not comply fully with the legal requirement to provide citizenship in all years and ICT and work-related learning in Years 10 and 11.
- Individual Education Plan targets are not clear about the measurable outcomes which the interventions are required to produce.
- Withdrawal arrangements and teaching groups limit the curriculum entitlement of some students with special educational needs.
- Provision for personal, social and health education, including advice on the next stage of education, is limited.

Commentary

35. Overall, the curriculum offered caters well for the needs of individual students with a very good extra-curricular enrichment programme with high levels of student participation. However, there are some shortcomings. The statutory requirement to provide citizenship for all is not fully complied with. Currently, citizenship is offered across subjects. There is evidence that some aspects of the citizenship National Curriculum strands are delivered through some subjects. These opportunities are not identified to the students as citizenship, and neither are they assessed properly. In Years 10 and 11, ICT provision does not fully comply with legal requirements. The statutory requirement to provide work-related learning to students in Years 10 and 11

is not fully adhered to. The school has made a start in providing some work-related learning with work experience being provided for all Year 10 students in 2003 and with a very small number of lower-attaining students attending college vocational courses with a strong working component. The school has also put on a successful industry day for Year 10 students.

36. Another shortcoming is in the curriculum provision of personal, social and health education. Lessons are timetabled. However, many teachers lack appropriate subject expertise and much of the time is spent on administrative and pastoral tasks rather than on tutorial work. As a result the students lose out on many aspects of this area of their learning including, most significantly, advice on further steps in their education or career. This situation is exacerbated by the split site issue because many tutors need to be at the site where they teach a first lesson and therefore have to swap tutor groups to accommodate. This causes problems with continuity in the personal, social and health education programme. Arrangements for collective worship are very effective.
37. Students in Years 10 and 11 have a wide variety of choices of GCSE subjects. These courses suit the students' overwhelmingly academic inclinations. Access is open to all. Students also receive opportunities to attend booster classes aimed at enhancing their GCSE performances.
38. Students with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum. The policy of grouping low-attaining students for teaching is not monitored carefully enough against the differing social and motivational needs of students with special educational needs and their varying attainment between subjects. Arrangements for withdrawal in Year 7 are reviewed but current practice provides support for literacy and numeracy in subjects other than English and mathematics, limiting some students' curriculum breadth. The policy of long-term withdrawal from French for some students without disapplying them affects their entitlement to learn a modern foreign language and limits their cultural development, particularly since students who make better progress than expected cannot be reintegrated until Year 10. When literacy classes are not provided in Years 8 and 9 this adversely affects the attainment of a significant number of students in the National Curriculum English tests at the end of Year 9. In Years 10 and 11, lower-attaining teaching groups replace double science with single science in order to provide time for support for other subject areas.
39. Special educational needs resources are satisfactory and used well, with laptops for students to take to classrooms. ICT specialist software is a developing area, but at present is not sufficiently structured to enable independent learning. Accommodation is unsatisfactory. The specialist learning support base in the upper school is currently used as an office and a teaching base, with conflicting purposes. There are plans to improve this as the new technology block comes fully into use. The availability of the lower school specialist base is limited by the travelling of staff between sites. Disabled access has been given attention within the limits of the present buildings, and is publicised to new applicants, with the new building enabling effective disabled access.
40. In the last report, accommodation was judged to be adequate for the teaching of the curriculum. Since then, there has been deterioration in some areas and improvement in others. The school has encountered problems with providing appropriate accommodation because of budget constraints partly caused by heavy expenditure on the split site.

41. On the Highfield Road site, the temporary classrooms are in sound repair but the timber inserts and window frames on the brick-built buildings have deteriorated and become unsightly. There are ample grassed areas and walkways for recreational purposes. The sixth-form study area is adequate but their common room is regularly timetabled for tutorials. Music lessons suffer from some disruption from the adjacent railway line. The timetabling of large class groups in Years 7 to 9 leads to students working in cramped conditions in some subjects, including art and design, drama, ICT, modern foreign languages and music on both sites.
42. On the Guildford Road site, there is restricted student access to careers advice because the room is often locked. Some physical education classes face difficulties when using the dining hall because of wet floors. Noise from the kitchen limits opportunities for intimate group work as preparation for drama. The newly completed building for design and technology has been welcomed by the school. During the inspection, it was only partly in use and as such it was adequate but is expected to be very good when fully operational. Disabled access has been given attention by the school, within the limitations of the present buildings. It is publicised to new applicants and is well catered for in the new design and technology block.
43. The split site places severe barriers on the school's ability to be creative with the timetable and with the use of accommodation. It is also costly with the school needing to spend twice as much on maintaining the two sites than is allocated to it by the Local Education Authority. There is also extra expenditure incurred in having to double up on many resources for several subjects. The most costly aspect of the split site is the stress that it places teachers under. Many have to travel between sites which curtails their aspirations to be constantly available to students who need them and which militates against them taking proper breaks during the day. The students themselves find the journey between sites, when they have to make it, singularly irritating but they put up with it in good spirits. Teachers make the very best of the seventy minutes lessons imposed upon the school as one way of managing the split site issue. Managers have done a very good job managing the two sites and trying to minimise their impact on provision. They have ensured that students do not suffer by putting the main impact onto the adults and onto the school's finances. Another impact of the split site has been the difficulties in structuring the timetable to deliver citizenship, ICT and work-related learning as discrete areas. This also has an effect on some tutors being unable to deliver the tutorial programme, including personal, social and health education.

Sixth form

44. The sixth form curriculum is **good**. It is broad and balanced. Students have a choice from a wide variety of AS and A2 subjects. Teachers are well matched to the needs of the curriculum. The split site has less impact in the sixth form because the students are on one site although there are shortcomings as listed above. Students expressed the view that the strategies for processing their university applications are slow. Inspectors agree with this concern. Students spoke highly of the opportunities for enrichment. Inspectors agree that enrichment opportunities are very good.

Care, guidance and support

The care, welfare, and health and safety of students are satisfactory. Students are well provided with support, advice and guidance. The involvement of students through seeking and acting on their views is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students' personal and educational wellbeing is a priority for the pastoral team and teachers.
- The system of tracking each student's progress and of setting specific targets is well structured.
- There are very good arrangements to help new students settle in.
- The careers programme provides unsatisfactory information about transfer to subsequent stages of education and training or employment at all stages.
- The tutor periods are often unsatisfactory.

Commentary

45. The school's procedures for ensuring the safety and welfare of students are satisfactory. The school nurse carries out her duties diligently, offers a drop-in facility for students to discuss problems, and contributes significantly to the healthy lifestyle programme. First aid provision is good, and equipment is regularly checked. However, risk assessments are not carried out for general activities in and around the school, and they are overdue for departments. The school has effective child protection procedures. All staff are updated each year on the appropriate routines.
46. Transfer from primary schools is very well organised. Students settle in quickly in Year 7. The response of both parents and students about induction arrangements was extremely positive. A particularly good feature is the involvement of sixth form students who act as mentors to the new arrivals.
47. There is a very strong and committed pastoral team. Staff have a very good relationship with the students and know them well. They participate fully with the students in all the extra-curricular activities, and residential trips. Teachers assess students very well in all aspects of their work, behaviour and personal development, so they have a full picture of the students' strengths and weaknesses. Students and parents are involved in setting and reviewing personal targets. When students are slipping behind through organisational problems or unsatisfactory behaviour, they have individualised education plans with strategies to enable the student to resolve the issue. There is a strong emphasis on working with parents when students have a problem. The two assistant headteachers have been trained in 'Restorative Justice'. This is proving to be very helpful in sorting out problems of conflict and bullying. Year 10 students are currently being trained to act as mentors for younger students. The school seeks expert advice from outside the school and uses this well to support students who have significant difficulties. The quality of the tutor time is often unsatisfactory. There is a fragmentation of the teachers involved due to the split site. They also have too many objectives. These cover an act of collective worship, pastoral matters, checking diaries, registration, notices and administration matters, and personal, social and health education, as well as aspects of career planning.
48. The careers programme provides unsatisfactory information about transfer to subsequent stages of education and training or employment. Insufficient time is allocated for the delivery of careers education. It is taught in mainly tutor time, and is generally no more than working from sheets or books. There are few opportunities for outside speakers to visit. Careers information is not readily available or accessible. Only half of Year 11 had an individual interview with Connexions for the last two years. They felt that they had insufficient information to enable them to make the correct choice of subjects in the sixth form for the next stage in their careers. Each

student benefits from a personal interview with the headteacher whilst they are in Year 11.

49. The school is good at taking into account students' views. The Year and School Council are instrumental in providing the opportunity for students' views to be considered. As yet, they have not been consulted on specific topics by surveys or questionnaires. Most students think that the school is interested in their views.
50. The attention to detail in information on students reflects very good care of students with special educational needs. Students benefit from very positive and caring relationships with adults in the school. Good arrangements exist with outside agencies for the inclusion of students with a range of backgrounds and special educational needs.

Sixth form

51. There is good induction into the sixth form with a well-planned programme. Year 13 produced a 'Survival Guide' for the new Year 12 students, who found it very helpful. Teachers give good guidance and personal support to students as they progress through the sixth form on how to improve the standard of their work. Most teachers take a personal interest, not only in the academic growth of the students, but in their personal development as well. However, a significant number of Year 12 students thought that there was not an adult in the sixth form that knew them well. This is because the questionnaire that provided this response was filled in at the beginning of the school year. However, they do say that teachers are accessible and helpful, taking into consideration the problems of the split site.
52. Students have high aspirations and most continue their education at institutes of higher education. Students in discussions and who answered the questionnaire said that the advice they received on what to study in the sixth form was often unsatisfactory. The subjects they are studying sometimes do not suit their ability or do not allow them to get onto the degree course of their choice. The timing of advice in the sixth form is often too late. For example, some missed the Open Days at Universities in the summer holidays. The careers advice they do receive focuses on UCAS, although the processing of their university application forms takes inordinately long in some cases. There are weaknesses in the provision for those students not going on to further education.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents, other schools and with the community are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very supportive of the school and appreciate the education that it provides.
- The progress reports, annual reports to parents and parents' consultation evenings provide very good detailed information about their children's progress.
- The student diaries are used well to communicate between home and school.

- There are productive links with other schools and the community, which benefit and enrich the students' education.
- The school does not consult parents on important issues through surveys and questionnaires.

Commentary

53. The parents who returned the questionnaire, those who attended the meeting and those spoken to during the inspection were nearly unanimous in their appreciation of the school and its work. They thought that their children make good progress with good teaching, that their children are expected to work hard and are encouraged to become mature. A significant minority were concerned about a lack of information on their children's progress, and they thought that the school did not proactively seek their views. The inspection team judged the quality of the progress report and the annual report to parents to be very good, with much detail on each subject, including progress, areas for improvement and an indication of performance relative to the ability level of the class. Opportunities and arrangements for parents to meet with teachers are similar to those found in similar schools. The inspection team agree that the school does not always proactively consult parents on important issues through surveys and questionnaires. Discussions with students and parents indicate that bullying does occasionally occur, but when it does, it is dealt with quickly and effectively.
54. The quality of general information that the school provides is good. The prospectus and regular newsletter give a clear picture about the life of the school. The student diaries are used well to communicate between home and school. Parents are involved in setting targets with their child based on the information in the annual report. All parents are provided with a guide to Years 10 and 11 at the beginning of Year 10. Teachers communicate with parents and involve them, when there are concerns. The school nurse did arrange a very successful evening on 'Understanding Teenagers', which the parents appreciated. Attendance at consultation evenings, major productions and events is good. The school has no translation arrangements for parents whose English is not the first language.
55. The school has good links with about ten feeder schools. The English, mathematics and science departments also have curriculum links with seven deanery schools. Four girls in the sixth form help with literacy and numeracy at a local school. Another works as a classroom assistant one day a week, as her timetable allows this. The school maintains strong connections with the six other Salesian schools. They recently shared an in-service training day on spiritual, moral and social development across the curriculum. There are links with a local college for dealing with students with particular vocational needs.
56. Links with the community provide good enrichment of the curriculum, especially through religious connections and through sport. They support the students' personal and social development, as well as widening their experiences and giving them the opportunities to learn about the needs of others. There are links with multinational, national and local businesses, which make a valuable contribution to the students' education. The school is part of the Runnymede e-learning partnership.

57. The school communicates effectively with parents of students with special educational needs. The school has effective transfer links with feeder schools, which involve visits from the co-ordinator. Students and parents are fully involved in annual reviews and in agreeing their targets. The lack of individual education plans for all students with special educational needs limits opportunities for some parents to be involved in formal discussions about the school's provision and its effect on students' progress.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The school is **well** led by its headteacher, who is highly respected by his colleagues and by the parents. He has a clear vision for improvement to which staff subscribe wholeheartedly. Key staff give **good** leadership across the school. Governance is **good**. Management is also **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management are effective in running a good school, despite the severe difficulties created by the split site.
- The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and this is shared by staff, governors and the overwhelming majority of parents.
- Monitoring, self-evaluation, staff recruitment and retention, as well as their professional development, are very good.
- The governing body's annual report to parents does not fully meet legal requirements on the use of special educational needs funding. Governors do not fully comply with the legal requirements on the provision of citizenship, ICT and work-related learning.
- The special educational needs co-ordinator lacks sufficient time to monitor teaching and learning, with too limited administrative support to track and collate student progress.

Commentary

58. The school is well led by a popular and highly respected headteacher. His vision for enhancing students' achievement is shared by staff and by members of the governing body. There are five areas where leadership is particularly strong. The headteacher and his senior colleagues have been very effective in managing the enormous difficulties imposed upon them by the split site. They have also been very successful in supporting subject areas through the senior mentoring programme. Teacher recruitment and retention are strengths of the leadership team. Another significant strength of the senior team has been the very good improvement in sixth form provision since the last inspection. Performance management has been very effective in supporting staff and in enhancing the quality of teaching.
59. The shortcomings in leadership and governance are: the lack of full compliance with statutory requirements for the provision of citizenship for all and ICT and work-related learning for Years 10 and 11, the weakness in the teaching of personal, social and health education. Strategic planning is satisfactory. The school development plan lacks a clear long-term vision for the school's further development.
60. The headteacher and senior management team members monitor provision and performance very well, particularly in relation to enhancing students' achievement. This senior mentoring programme has been a signal success. Teachers feel very well

supported. They also feel that their professional development is very well looked after. The net result has been that teaching has improved since the last inspection with a higher number of lessons being good or very good.

61. The governing body knows the school well and is heavily involved in its life. Governance is good overall despite the shortcoming of not complying fully with the legal requirement to provide citizenship for all and ICT and work-related learning for students in Years 10 and 11. Governors visit the school regularly and they are able and willing to challenge senior managers within a context of very good relationships.
62. Leadership is outstanding in music and very good in English, science and art and design. It is good in mathematics, design and technology, geography, history, ICT, modern foreign languages and physical education. Leadership is unsatisfactory in citizenship and work-related learning. At this stage the school chooses to teach citizenship and work-related learning through subjects. Teachers do not generally identify citizenship and work-related learning when these occur in various subject areas of the curriculum.
63. Management is excellent in music and very good in English, science and art and design. It is good in mathematics, design and technology, geography, history, modern foreign languages and satisfactory in ICT and physical education. The management of citizenship and work-related learning has been unsatisfactory.
64. The leadership of special educational needs is satisfactory. There has been satisfactory progress since the previous inspection, with an increase in the number of students with special educational needs, particularly in teaching and learning. The leadership of the co-ordinator promotes an ethos of shared responsibility among all staff for awareness of the needs of students with special educational needs. This is not balanced sufficiently by the promotion of systems which ensure that needs are not only met but are also monitored and evaluated for effectiveness. The co-ordinator lacks non-teaching time to monitor students and their support to identify where deployment of more staff is needed.
65. The special educational needs co-ordinator has created an effective team who are keen to enhance their support through training. Management is satisfactory. The needs of the students are well documented. The specific purpose for providing extra support through staffing or withdrawal is not linked clearly to a detailed specialist strategy. The governor link is satisfactory and benefits from visits. The annual report of governors to parents does not meet legal requirements to report on the use of special educational needs funding. There is currently an underspend on special educational needs. The day-to-day management of the department is good, managing staff on two distant sites. The department has a handbook, outlining the procedures and current practice of the department, but not detailing effectively how current funding and expenditure in the school provides for special educational needs.
66. The school makes very good use of data to monitor performance. The deputy headteacher in charge of this area has produced a wealth of useful data which is well used by senior managers to mentor their respective heads of departments. The data is also produced in a way that is easy to use for teachers in determining the level of attainment of each of their students. The use of data is a strength of the school.

67. Staff recruitment and retention are strengths of the school. There is also a strong commitment to the professional development of staff. Support staff receive fewer development opportunities.
68. The school's finances are well managed. Despite the significant financial constraints of the split site, the school has maintained a healthy balance. Best value is effectively implemented. Value for money is good.

Sixth form

69. Sixth form leadership is good and has, along with the headteacher and the senior management team, made significant improvements in the sixth form since the last inspection. The focus has been on raising attainment, which the school has succeeded in doing. The head of sixth form leads the processing of university applications. As a result of doing this on his own, the process takes a little longer than it would otherwise do. Both parents and students felt that this causes delays in the submission of the forms to universities. Inspectors agree that this process is currently too slow and appears to cause students considerable worry, although no applications are submitted later than the deadline.
70. Subject leadership and management are good. Leadership is very good in art and design, biology and media studies and good in English and mathematics. Leadership is satisfactory in psychology. The quality of management is as good as that of leadership.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	4,217,108
Total expenditure	3,892,465
Expenditure per student	3,236

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	257,632
Balance carried forward to the next year	324,643

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average in the National Curriculum Tests and at GCSE.
- Achievement is very good because of students' positive attitudes and very good teaching.
- Teachers do not use assessment information well enough when marking in Years 7 to 9.
- Improvements since the previous inspection are very good.
- Very good leadership and management are driving up standards.
- Opportunities for students to use ICT to enrich their learning in Years 7 and 8 are limited.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Well above average	Well above average
Achievement	Very good	Very good
Teaching and learning	Very good	Very good

Leadership	Very good
Management	Very good
Progress since last inspection	Very good

Commentary

Examination results

71. At the end of Year 9 in 2003, students' National Curriculum test results were well above the national average. However, the percentage of students attaining the higher Level 6 and above was average when compared with schools taking students of similar ability. Unconfirmed results in 2004 are similar overall and the number of higher levels gained has improved. GCSE results in 2003 were also well above average in English and English literature with almost every student gaining passes in both subjects. In 2004, results in these subjects improved even further and standards were very high.

Standards and achievement

72. The standards of work seen are well above average, particularly in speaking and listening. Most students in all years talk confidently about a wide range of topical issues as well as the texts that they are studying. They clearly explain and justify their opinions, but are also prepared to modify them as a result of group or class discussions. Reading skills are also well developed. There are many opportunities for

students to practise their deductive and inferential skills in lessons. Year 11 students' books show a good awareness of the power of language to move and persuade. In Year 9, students study texts from our literary heritage, such as *To Kill a Mockingbird*, which are normally studied for GCSE at other schools. Much narrative writing is well above average; it is lively and often original and shows the flair and creativity of students who are able to use figurative language very effectively to enrich their descriptions. Lower-attaining students, especially in Years 7 to 9, have problems with the structuring of writing, especially that to inform and explain, and do not readily distinguish between standard and colloquial English.

73. Achievement by students of all ethnic backgrounds and abilities is very good. Standards are above average when students enter the school and well above average by the end of Year 9. This very good achievement is maintained through Years 10 and 11 and is aided by students' very positive attitudes and the motivation and encouragement provided by their teachers. Additionally, there is a good curriculum, which provides regular library and drama lessons in Years 7 to 9; however, although a good range of information and communication technology activities is planned for these students, access to computers is limited. Because all students study both language and literature at GCSE, all have the opportunity to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness, through the study of African and Asian poetry. Considerable enrichment is also provided by such activities as regular theatre trips, visiting writers, book fairs, and poetry, writing and debating competitions.

Teaching and learning

74. Teaching and learning are very good because of the teachers' strong subject knowledge; their high expectations of students' behaviour and work; very good planning for progression; and the wide range of teaching methods used. Teaching is lively and stimulating and encourages students to make their own decisions, to be inquisitive and independent. However, not all teachers make effective use of National Curriculum test levels or assessment information when marking work in Years 7 to 9. This means that students are not always shown exactly what they must do to gain a higher level. In Years 10 and 11, much better use is made of grade descriptors to help students.
75. Two drama lessons, one in Year 7 and one in Year 11, together with GCSE coursework, were sampled during the inspection. Teaching and learning were very good. Students are enthusiastic learners in Year 7 and standards are already average. There is a strong emphasis on drama skills in their lessons and students are already aware that the subject is a discipline and not a recreational subject: hence, they achieve well. Standards in the GCSE written and performance work are consistently above those found nationally and achievement is very good. Students working on a module about the Craig and Bentley murder in the 1950's showed an impressive ability to create, plan, develop, shape and evaluate their drama and to argue about the moral and ethical issues involved.
76. Leadership and management are very good and, in spite of generally unsatisfactory accommodation, many students choose drama in the Year 10 options. The head of department ensures that the subject makes a valuable contribution to all students' social development and that there are strong cross-curricular links. The planned production of *Annie*, for example, will involve close collaboration with the music, physical education and art departments.

Leadership and management

77. The leadership of this team of specialist English teachers is very good. There is commitment and dedication and a shared love of the subject throughout the department. Management is very good. Responsibilities are appropriately delegated; teaching is regularly monitored, new staff are well inducted and departmental needs and priorities are clearly identified. Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good. Standards in Year 9 National Curriculum tests have been maintained at above average and they have improved at GCSE in both subjects. Teaching and learning are now consistently very good and the department makes greater use of ICT to support and extend students' learning: however, opportunities for Years 7 and 8 in particular are limited.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

78. Standards of language and literacy across the curriculum are above average in Years 7 to 9 and well above average in Years 10 and 11. Speaking and listening are particularly strong throughout the school and writing is the weakest area. Literacy is well managed by a deputy headteacher and overall provision is good. Most heads of subjects monitor its teaching and planning, but there are some inconsistencies across departments, such as in the quality and usefulness of correcting and the range of writing tasks set. The school has adopted the National Literacy Strategy and, consequently, teaching is good, particularly the teaching of subject-specific vocabulary. The best practice is in art and design, drama, design and technology, history and physical education. However, the library on the Highfield Road site is too small, and its stocks inadequate, to promote literacy, including reading for pleasure, effectively in Years 7 and 8.

English as an additional language

79. The provision for students who do not have English as a first language is good. There are 35 students who do not have English as their first language and 71 living in homes where one or more parent prefers to use their own home tongue. Only three students are at stage 2, the very early stage of learning English.
80. The school receives an Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG) and uses this towards funding a part-time teacher/co-ordinator for two days. All teachers are provided with a high quality handbook to help them to devise teaching methods which will help students with English as an additional language needs to develop their literacy skills as well as their subject knowledge. Teachers are very well supported by the co-ordinator, who also assists them in setting students' learning targets and in assessing, tracking and reviewing their progress. Students are often helped in lessons by other students who are competent in English. The specialist in-class support and individual withdrawal sessions are first class, but such opportunities are restricted, owing to there being only one, part-time specialist.
81. Students show considerable commitment and enjoy very good relationships with their teacher, who works hard to ensure that they understand the content of subject syllabuses, and encourages them to use their first languages, when necessary, to explore difficult concepts and to develop their language skills. As a result, these

students achieve as well as other groups in the school. However, there are insufficient bilingual dictionaries and texts, especially for those who have moved beyond the very early stages of language acquisition. There are no translations of reports for parents who do not understand written English and the school does little to promote and value the cultures and languages of students with English as an additional language need. Furthermore, students are often allocated initially to lower English sets and, because of the very good quality of support they receive and their own determination, they make very good progress. However, except in Year 7, there is often a long wait before the more able are transferred into a more suitable set.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students attain above average results and achieve well in French and very well in Spanish and Italian by the time they leave the main school at 16.
- Revisions to the very good curriculum are helping to raise standards in French, Spanish and Italian.
- Teaching and learning are good because skills are taught with good balance and lessons are well planned.
- Leadership and management are good.
- Students' moral, social and cultural awareness is well developed.
- Assessment is not used sufficiently to help some individual students to progress well.
- There are too few learning assistants to support those students with special educational needs in the classroom.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Average	Above average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Good

Commentary

Examination results

French

- Standards of attainment in French, based on teacher assessment at the end of Year 9 in 2003, were average. At GCSE in 2003, the latest year for which valid comparisons with national data are available, attainment was above average. Work seen during the inspection agrees with these standards. Girls did better than boys, although there are signs that boys are beginning to achieve more highly. Results in 2004 are still under appeal. These outcomes represent good achievement when measured against students' standards on entry to the school.

Spanish

83. Standards in Spanish were above average at the end of Year 9 in 2003. At GCSE, they were well above average in the same year. Here, too, there is no validated national data for 2004 and results in Spanish are also under appeal for that year.

Italian

84. Results in Italian in GCSE in 2003 were also above average and achievement is good. It was only possible to observe one lesson, in Year 11. Teaching was very good and students were achieving very well.

Standards and achievement

85. By Year 9, students of most abilities achieve satisfactorily in French, reaching levels which are average for their age and sustaining these throughout Years 10 and 11. The exception to this level of achievement is for some students with special educational needs. This applies particularly to those in the lower set classes, who receive insufficient support in the classroom, because there are too few learning support assistants. Higher-attaining students are well challenged and extended.
86. Standards seen during the inspection were well above average in Spanish. The work of the current Year 9 shows that students are achieving well at this level and that in Year 11 shows very good achievement. Again, girls achieve better than boys and the achievement of students with special educational needs is hampered by an inadequate number of learning support assistants. Higher-attaining students are well challenged and stimulated, as are those for whom English is an additional language.

Teaching and learning

87. Teaching and learning are good; many very good lessons were seen. Teachers know the languages well and plan with a good understanding of the necessary skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing. They challenge students well, have high expectations of them and provide them with very good encouragement. Teaching methods are generally varied, interesting and reinforce previous and new work very well. Most teachers manage their classes very well, but there are a few occasions when the behaviour of a small minority of disruptive students is allowed to hinder the learning of others. In the majority of lessons, time is used well and lessons proceed at a good pace. Teachers ensure students learn about the culture of the different countries as well as the languages, and their social and moral perspectives are well developed by their understanding of different ways of life and behaviour. Listening, speaking, reading and writing develop well because tasks are well matched to students' capability, though written work is often marred by a lack of technical and grammatical literacy skills, which teachers work hard to improve. Marking, however, is too often congratulatory, but thin, and does not indicate how work could be improved. Assessment is improving rapidly, but its use does not yet focus sufficiently on providing suitably graded work for individual students in lessons.

Leadership and management

88. The school has very good curriculum provision for modern foreign languages. Almost all students study French or Spanish until the end of Year 9 and then French, Spanish or Italian for GCSE, subject to sufficient numbers choosing the language. This provides the better linguists with an opportunity to take two of the three languages for GCSE. New schemes of work have been formulated for all three languages and standards are rising in response to the high profile given by the school to languages, as well as the enthusiasm communicated by teachers to students. The curriculum is very well supplemented by trips abroad, visits and work experience.
89. Leadership of the department is good. The experienced leader has a mainly new teaching team since the last inspection and has welded them into a committed and often inspiring body, who have high expectations of their students. He provides a very good role model for other teachers in his knowledge and in his ability to excite students over the language being taught. Subject management is also good. Regular monitoring and opportunities for lesson observation help to develop teachers' skills. The issues raised at the last inspection have been addressed and improvement has been good.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The students make very good progress, and standards are well above average.
- The teaching is very good, but in some lessons there is insufficient emphasis on the problem solving aspect of mathematics.
- There are very good extra-curricular activities.
- Leadership is good and the teachers are well qualified and dedicated.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Well above average	Well above average
Achievement	Very good	Very good
Teaching and learning	Very good	Very good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since last inspection	Very good

Commentary

Examination results

90. Standards in mathematics on entry to the school are above average. Standards are well above average by the end of Years 9 and 11. In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9 in 2003, results were well above average. These results were well above the average for similar schools. In 2004, the results were similar. Over the last five years attainment in these examinations has steadily improved, at a rate faster than the national rate. Results in the GCSE examinations in 2003 were well above average and even better in 2004.

Standards and achievement

91. The achievement of the students from their entry into the school up to Year 11 is very good. This is because of the quality of the very good teaching, and a very good attitude to learning on the part of most of the students. They take a considerable pride in their work, and most exercise books are well presented, with clear accurate processes, and good quality statistical and geometrical representations. They work well in lessons, listen attentively and ask questions if they have difficulty understanding anything. The students with special educational needs achieve as well as their peers, due to their inclusion in smaller sets, and additional personal support from their teachers and learning support assistants. There are some small groups of students who do not always achieve as well as this. This includes a few lower-attaining students who have a poor attitude to work, and some students, particularly in middle-attaining sets, who make mistakes which are not quickly enough corrected, and this inhibits their progress.

Teaching and learning

92. The quality of the teaching and learning are very good. As a result the students make very good progress in many lessons. All the teachers are good mathematicians and they explain processes and model how to solve problems clearly and accurately. Relationships with the students are very good so in most lessons the ethos is conducive to effective learning. In the best lessons, the students are challenged to think about underlying concepts and to solve problems. In lessons with weaknesses, there is a lack of context or continuity in the way that mathematics is presented and, as a result, the students perform well in the lesson, but soon forget how to solve the problems involved. In these lessons, mathematics appears as a set of standard processes to be learned rather than as an activity involving problems which present an interesting or even exciting challenge.

Leadership and management

93. The leadership and management of the department are good. Assessment of the progress of individual students over time to identify and reverse underachievement is good, but is not yet based clearly enough on grade criteria to enable the development of more independent learning. In general, the department is very well organised. A very good range of extra-curricular activities stimulates a real interest in mathematics in more able students, and supports the achievement of higher standards in others.

94. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good. Standards have risen. The students' achievement, that is their progress in the long term, has improved. The quality of the teaching has improved.

Mathematics across the curriculum

95. Standards of numeracy are good, and in all subjects the students are able to use their mathematical knowledge and numeracy skills to enhance their learning across the curriculum. In some subjects, notably English, science and design and technology, there is a conscious effort to use issues with a numerical or mathematical element to enhance both the subject and the students' numeracy skills, but this good practice is not widespread. Some useful applications of numeracy were seen in geography, history and ICT, but in these cases there was insufficient awareness on the part of the teachers of the need to check that the students possessed the requisite skills to understand that particular part of the lesson. In mathematics lessons, insufficient is done to develop the numeracy skills of lower-attaining students.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management are very good.
- Standards are well above average.
- Students achieve well in Years 10 and 11 and very well in Years 7 to 9.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Student's attitude, behaviour and commitment are very good.
- The use of targets is not effective enough.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Well above average	Well above average
Achievement	Very good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Very good
Management	Very good
Progress since previous inspection	Very good

Commentary

Examination results

96. Results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9 in 2003 were well above the national average. These were good in comparison with the results in similar schools. Girls and boys have done equally well in relation to their respective national performance. These results improved further in 2004. Results in the 2003 GCSE examinations were well above average in the A*-C grades as well as in the higher A* and A grades for both boys and girls. GCSE results of 2004 were slightly better than the results of 2003. The school has continued to maintain well above average standards both in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 9 and in GCSE examinations during the recent years.

Standards and achievement

97. By the end of Year 9, the students have well above average knowledge and understanding of the subject. This represents very good achievement. This is also confirmed by their attainments at higher levels of the National Curriculum. They explain formula equations in their work in chemistry. They employ their secure knowledge of mathematics to use formula in physics and demonstrate very good interpretation of distance-time graphs. Lower-attaining students demonstrate average knowledge of biology, for example, when identifying animals. Students' knowledge and understanding of science continue to improve very significantly as they move up in school. Additional after-school lessons are used very effectively to extend students' knowledge and understanding of science. As a result, several students choose to sit examinations in three separate sciences with very successful results. Others score very well in their double science examinations.
98. Students' very good attitudes, behaviour and commitment also make a significant contribution to their rapid success. For example, many students quickly move from word equations to balanced formula equations and calculate relative formula masses. Students' use of ICT, for example, of data loggers is satisfactory. By the end of Year 11, the success of students with special educational needs represents good progress. Students who are learning English as an additional language make good progress as a result of teachers' close watch and checking of understanding, for example, of keywords.

Teaching and learning

99. Teaching and learning are good across the department. Strong features of most lessons are teachers' specialist knowledge and its effective use in lessons for explanations and questioning to guide discussions. Lessons are well planned and have productive structure. Pace of teaching and learning in most lessons is brisk. In one highly successful lesson, use of text for scanning for information such as functions of the bile developed students' literacy skills very effectively. Students are also given good opportunities to develop mathematical ability, for example, application of formulae for calculations and graphs for interpretation. Practical work is used as effectively to deepen students' understanding. One of the common weaknesses in several lessons is the lack of use of new technology for teaching. In its absence, the teachers have to use the overhead projector. The quality of some of the overhead transparencies is uninspiring. It also makes understanding of some processes less accessible, especially for lower-attaining students. In a few lessons, there is a tendency to over-direct students. This restricts development of independent learning skills. Weaker management of students and less productive use of time occasionally lead to less effective teaching and learning.

Leadership and management

100. Leadership and management of the department are very effective. There is a shared understanding of what factors contribute to high standards. High level of commitment and team working are reflected in additional teaching regularly in Years 10 and 11 and as the need arises in Year 9. Students' performance data are very well managed, though the use of targets is not as effective as it could be. Hard working teachers have ensured well above average standards and at least good achievement in most years. Very effective team working and technician support ensures smooth teaching despite the constraints of the split site. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good, including substantial improvement in standards.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students make good progress in skills, knowledge and understanding in Years 7 to 9.
- The school is well provided with computers, but they are not generally heavily used and many students make little use of such facilities.
- There has not been sufficient progress since the previous inspection in the development of computer-based work in the different subject areas.
- The school does not provide students in Years 10 and 11 with their full National Curriculum entitlements.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence
Achievement	Good	Insufficient evidence
Teaching and learning	Good	Insufficient evidence

Leadership	Good
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since last inspection	Satisfactory

Commentary

Examination results

101. The National Curriculum teacher assessment results for 2003 were well above the national average at the end of Year 9. Year 11 students do not work towards any external qualification in this subject area.

Standards and achievement

102. Most students start from a low base in ICT skills when they join the school. In Year 7, as a result of receiving two lessons a week specifically in ICT, students make good progress in improving their skills and achieve well, and occasionally very well. The two lessons offered per week in Year 7 double the number of lessons in Year 7 since the last inspection. After Year 7, students have two lessons per week in one term in Year 8 or 9 as part of a circus of subjects. Overall the uses of ICT, its language and its potential as a means of communication are below expectations. The school is aware of such deficiencies and is working productively to address them with support from the Local Education Authority.

103. By the end of Year 9, students reach the National Curriculum Level 5 in many areas of ICT including word-processing, use of spreadsheets, PowerPoint, computer-aided

design, data logging, and data-handling. Students can also access the Internet and use it competently. They are able to carry out desktop publishing work in line with national expectations.

104. The school is working to resolve similar shortcomings in Years 10 and 11 where there is no specialist teaching in the subject at all. The school has started to help the other subject departments to make more appropriate use of computers. At this time, however, the students in Years 10 and 11 do not receive their full National Curriculum entitlements.

Teaching and learning

105. Although students have little contact with ICT as a taught subject after Year 7, they enjoy that limited experience, want to learn, behave well and work hard. In such lessons, most learn well but there are students who have more advanced skills than others and could be stretched further. Students with special educational needs are well supported by the subject teachers but it is a challenge for teachers to meet their needs as well as those of the rest of the class at all times. Teaching and learning could benefit from more in-class support for students with special educational needs.
106. ICT teaching in Year 7 is good and sometimes very good. Teachers know the subject well, including those who are specialists in other areas, and they work hard to plan and resource their lessons, which move on at a high pace and with plenty of variety. Teachers find it hard to fit in everything required in the time allocated, despite their intention to cover everything required in lessons, backed up by the setting of challenging homework to extend students' learning. Teachers assess the students' work frequently and very thoroughly and with care. They do not have the contact time to ensure the students understand how well they are doing against national norms and how they can learn even more quickly.
107. Despite being well resourced, insufficient use is made of a plentiful supply of computers, not only in lessons but also out of lesson time. The situation is not helped by technical problems which the network manager and head of department have tried hard to address, as there is no other technical support. This inevitably detracts from their other work.
108. Another factor which detracts from learning is the cramped accommodation at the Highfield site. The specialist room is often extremely hot and the layout of the room makes it difficult to communicate effectively with students and for them to communicate with one another. There is no emergency exit. In that room, in particular, there are therefore health and safety worries and undue barriers against effective teaching and learning.

Leadership and management

109. The quite large team of non-specialist ICT teachers is well led, including in lesson planning and assessment. The head of department has also worked hard to develop provision across the school as a whole. What the staff cover in those few formal ICT lessons is changing fast, and this process of curriculum development is well managed, as is the subject's teaching.
110. The students have insufficient contact with computers in formal lessons and in lessons in their other subjects, and most use outside of class time is not well focused. This makes it very hard for the school to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum - and the school fails to do so in Years 10 and 11. Progress since the previous

inspection has been satisfactory, although the use of computers across the curriculum remains an area that the school has set for one of its priorities.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

111. Auditing, focusing, resourcing and co-ordinating the use of computers and communications as tools for most effective teaching and learning throughout any school demand great expertise, much time and effort, and significant power. More computers are becoming available to students across the school.
112. However, there is still no clear knowledge of what is being done by the other departments in meeting National Curriculum requirements with the use of ICT and helping the students' skills develop. The integrated use of computers and communications as tools for effectively raising the quality of teaching and learning is not yet strong in any area - despite the good level of resources - with the exception of business studies. A few lessons based on the use of computers were observed, two being in technology (whose available resource levels had just become very good). There is also some good practice in a number of areas, notably science, art and design and music.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Management of the department is effective.
- Standards of attainment are rising.
- Teacher subject knowledge is good.
- ICT is not well integrated into lessons, and teaching aids such as use of overhead projector or PowerPoint presentations are not well used.
- In some lessons, there is over-reliance on worksheet based learning, and too few opportunities for teacher-led learning and student engagement in discussions.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Average	Above average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since last inspection	Good

Commentary

Examination results

113. At the end of Year 9 in 2003, the teacher assessment results were in line with the national average and current standards are similar. The GCSE examination results in

2003 were marginally below the national average. All students entered gained an A to G grade. The results for 2004, as yet unvalidated, show a significant improvement. Once again, all students entering the examination gained A to G grades.

Standards and achievement

114. The standards of work seen in Year 11 are good and students achieve well. There is a particular strength in human geography, but some improvement is required in map work skills. There are examples of high standards in physical geography, but the quality of work is more uneven across year groups. The standards of written work are good, well exemplified through the field study course work on the New Forest. This course work reflects a tendency to focus on the human and more descriptive aspects of geography, while the physical and analytic techniques are represented less strongly. Higher-attaining students achieve very well, are conscientious, and set by ability throughout the school, and there is some evidence that in geography students with good subject skills in the middle or lower groups do not always achieve well. Standards of work in the first three years are always at least satisfactory with some examples of very good work in a Year 8 lower ability group.

Teaching and learning

115. Teaching and learning are good. The best lessons build student knowledge by very good questioning, clear and interesting explanations, and a variety of carefully selected activities of progressive difficulty which develop, challenge and enrich understanding. In these lessons, teaching generates a real sense of momentum. Students enjoy the challenges and welcome opportunities to use and apply their geographic skills to new problems. They are actively engaged in contributing their ideas, demonstrate understanding, engage in discussion and ask thought provoking questions themselves. In this creative learning environment, students work very hard, and achieve high standards. It is important that this best practice is shared and disseminated to those classes where teaching is less good. Too often in these lessons the use of time is less effective, a significant proportion of which is devoted to worksheet-based learning, and too little to teacher explanations, questioning and discussion. Although these students are also very conscientious and work hard, they have to learn in a less stimulating environment that lacks a good range of learning opportunities.

116. All students are very good independent learners and this assists them to achieve well. Learning is supported very effectively by homework. Teacher marking is detailed and useful, although it often lacks advice on what the students need to do to improve their work. Spelling is rarely corrected. There is little evidence from lessons that English as an additional language, special educational needs or gifted and talented students receive learning opportunities that match their differing capabilities. Teachers make little use of ICT, overhead projectors or PowerPoint. Students' skills in numeracy are not fully exploited by geographic analysis or survey work. Other resources such as video clips are well deployed in lessons.

Leadership and management

117. The department is effectively led and managed by a very experienced teacher. The curriculum is well planned and incorporates opportunities for fieldwork. Citizenship is not yet fully integrated into the curriculum. Student assessment is efficient so progress can be tracked, although students do not always have a clear idea of how to improve their grades. Resources are sufficient. Professional development is successfully encouraged for all staff.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE results are well above average as a result of well-organised teaching.
- Students write well about historical issues.
- Good teaching is supported by a wide range of effective resources.
- Students in some classes have insufficient opportunity to develop oral skills.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Above average	Well above average
Achievement	Good	Very good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since last inspection	Good

Commentary

Examination results

118. The end Year 9 teacher assessment results in 2003 were above the national average and similar to current standards. GCSE results in 2003 were well above average with almost three-quarters of students achieving grades A*-C. The percentage of A*s was more than twice the national average. Boys achieved better than girls. The results at the end of Year 9 and GCSE results for 2004 are equally good.

Standards and achievement

119. Standards of work seen during the inspection, particularly in the work scrutiny, were above average in Years 7 to 9 and well above average in Years 10 and 11. Students understand historical causation, change and continuity and grasp the fundamentals of historical debate and controversy. Achievement is good overall and very good in Years 10 and 11. Standards in history on entry are average or a little above and are clearly above average by the end of Year 9 so students progress well from Years 7 to 9. Achievement in Year 10s and 11 is very good because of the high standards achieved in public examinations. Students at this stage are conscientious and produce accurate, well-organised written work.

Teaching and learning

120. Students achieve well because of good teaching which is always satisfactory and often good or very good. It is characterised by effective organisation and planning, shrewd questioning and the use of interesting and challenging resources, including excellent work books produced within school. In a few lessons, where classroom management is less effective, students' chatter can hold back the pace of learning. However, behaviour is good overall, as are relationships between staff and students. The standard of written work is high with students writing fluently in a variety of styles, including creative. Insufficient thought is given to improving students' oral skills. Students with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and those from ethnic minority background achieve well as a result of teachers' careful planning and attention to their needs. Assessment is good, particularly with regard to the setting of clear targets for students at the end of Years 9 and 11. Marking is variable: there is much useful guidance on how students can improve but some marking is too cursory. Whilst students are helped in their use of computers in history outside the classroom, the use of ICT in history lessons is far too limited due to lack of access to hardware.

Leadership and management

121. Good leadership and management support teaching. There is an effective scheme of work, accompanied by useful standardised tests, which help assess National Curriculum levels at the end of Year 9 and set target grades for GCSE students.

122. Detailed references to cross-curricular aspects such as literacy, numeracy and citizenship are not given in the scheme of work. The department works well as a team, particularly on the sharing of resources, although there is scope for further development of the existing dissemination of good practice. Successful educational visits include Chepstow Castle and the Science Museum.

123. Progress since the last inspection has been good. Teaching and GCSE results have improved significantly.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students' attitudes to their work are very good and, with the high quality of relationships, they are able to explore their ideas with their teachers.
- Good teaching enables good learning, which culminates in very good standards at GCSE.
- Students are mature and behave very well so that lessons are relaxed and effective.
- Although students work in a good range of materials in the first three years, there are areas of the National Curriculum which are insufficiently covered.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Average	Above average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Good

Teaching and learning	Good	Good
-----------------------	------	------

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since last inspection	Good

Commentary

Examination results

124. The 2003 end of Year 9 teacher assessments show attainment to be in line with the national average and similar to current standards. In 2003, the performance at GCSE was above the national average with a very high number of A and B grades. However, the number of students entered for the examination is well below the national average.
125. In 2004, just over half the students at the school were entered for a GCSE examination. About two-thirds of these gained a grade at C or above and only one candidate was not awarded a grade A-E. The textiles results were notably good.

Standards and achievement

126. Attainment on entry is at the national expectation. At the end of Year 9, standards are at the national expectation. Some areas of experience are above the national expectations. Standards are affected by the fact that some aspects of the subject are not fully covered. Boys and girls achieve similarly, and because of the way the whole class works together, lower attainers and students with special educational needs, as well as students with English as additional language, all achieve equally. What is missing is the increased challenge for the highest attainers.
127. In the GCSE examination groups, students enjoy the challenge of working on their individual project work, where they achieve well. Students can explore, design and make products in a good range of materials. They can make good use of measurements and are effective in using numeracy. Though access is limited, students make good use of ICT. They also have good independent working skills.

Teaching and learning

128. Teaching and learning are good and, on occasions, very good. With the new facilities just opening and students arriving for the first time in their new rooms, and with the uncertainty of knowing where things were now kept, teachers did very well to maintain their high standards in lessons. It was the very good relationships, the good and very good behaviour and attitudes of the students, that allowed lessons to proceed with pace and vigour.
129. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are well prepared. This is evident in the GCSE lessons where the maturity of students enables them to start taking responsibility for their own work. Students get regular feedback both on their written work and practical work in lessons, and this enables good progress. There are some areas of the National Curriculum in Years 7 to 9 missing, like pneumatic control systems; using ICT to design sub-systems; testing and calculation of loads and their effects; and modern and smart materials.

Leadership and management

130. Leadership of the subject at departmental and at whole-school level is good, as is shown by the striking new facilities. When they are fully up and running, it should offer students provision of quality. There are shortages of equipment, particularly for health and safety and hygiene, which should be addressed. Day-to-day management is satisfactory. The technician time is too little but the school is improving provision in this area. Now the department is under one roof it has begun to review more rigorously the curriculum and the mode of working. The improvement since the last inspection is good.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching enables students to achieve well in Years 7 to 9; very well in Years 10 and 11.
- Teachers set firm rules for acceptable behaviour and students' attitudes to work are very good.
- Students benefit from a good range of extra-curricular activities.
- Very good assessment practices ensure students in Years 10 and 11 know how to improve.
- Very good leadership fosters effective teamwork and harmonious relationships.
- There is insufficient computer access in the department and there is no technician so teachers have to spend too much time preparing materials.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Above average	Well above average
Achievement	Good	Very good
Teaching and learning	Good	Very good

Leadership	Very good
Management	Very good
Progress since last inspection	Good

Commentary

Examination results

131. In 2003, end of Year 9 teacher assessment results were above the national average and similar to present standards. In the same year the proportion who gained the higher grades A*-C in the GCSE examination was significantly higher than the national average. Results dipped in 2004. Effective strategies for improvement are now in place. Early indications show that students are well placed to meet the coursework requirements for 2005.

Standards and achievement

132. Standards seen in Year 9 are above national expectations. Given that many students enter Year 7 with a wide range of experience in practical and theoretical work, this shows good achievement.
133. Students make effective use of a wide range of image-making techniques and media, including graded pencils, pigments and printmaking, as well as modelling and construction materials. They use good levels of specialist technical vocabulary, when comparing their own work with that of established artists. Students develop very good cultural understanding when analysing works by Picasso, Braque and Van Gogh. Most students can identify the important movements associated with these artists such as Cubism and Impressionism. In addition to European art, students appreciate and use work by Aboriginal and African artists, as starting points in their own creative work. Imaginative, figurative, 3-dimensional sculptural work, using twisted wire techniques, is very well developed in Year 9, based on the work of Giacometti. This three-dimensional work is on a small scale because large classes work in cramped conditions, which restricts a wider curriculum. Students with special educational needs enjoy the subject and make similar good progress to their peers. The restricted provision of specialist support for literacy or other special needs is a constraint. ICT in Years 7 to 9 is underdeveloped through lack of access to computers. Some subject accommodation is in a poor state of repair. Resources are thinly spread over the two sites.
134. Achievement in Years 10 and 11 is very good. Standards in Year 11 are now well above average and have improved over those of the previous year group. Students make intelligent and creative use of sketchbooks for homework and in lessons. Some are exemplary, clearly showing outstanding development in ideas, skills and techniques. Students organise ideas well and work with increasing independence. They build successfully on earlier skills and are able to overlay complicated layers of line, colour, shape and pattern, to achieve rich and exciting imagery. Some demonstrate increasing maturity when exploring contemporary issues surrounding morality and social responsibility, such as the inequalities suffered by victims of famine, compared with those in the developed world. A high-attaining student in Year 11, challenged those viewing her work to consider the acceptability of using child soldiers in armed conflict, the rise in numbers of people living in poverty, global pollution as a result of exploitation and other contemporary conscience-provoking issues, all in a complex painting using vibrant imagery annotated with thoughtfully chosen texts. This shows very good personal as well as artistic development and makes a very good contribution to the spiritual and moral ethos of the school. Students use digital photography well as a starting point for work on landscapes or portraits. They also use computers well, out of lessons, for homework, to research artists and other cultures.

Teaching and learning

135. The quality of teaching is good in Years 7 to 9 and very good in Years 10 and 11 where the two lessons seen were excellent. Well-qualified, specialist teachers plan exciting activities, which engage students' interest. They set firm ground rules for acceptable behaviour, which ensures students' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Teachers are very good role models. They have very good subject knowledge and practical skills, which students recognise, respect and admire. Skills are taught on a step-by-step basis through demonstration. This particularly supports lower-attaining students and develops confidence in those with special educational needs. Teachers give very good levels of verbal and written feedback, so that students know what they

need to do to improve. Too much time is spent preparing materials because teachers have no technical support. Lively displays and a welcoming ethos help students to feel supported and valued. Extra-curricular clubs and visits to galleries make a good contribution to learning.

Leadership and management

136. Subject leadership is very good. It is a positive motivating force within the department. Teachers work very effectively as a team. Relationships are very good, resulting in harmonious and industrious working practices. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. This is reflected in the policies, schemes of work and procedures for gathering assessment data, which are more detailed and better used by teachers to inform planning.

Music

Provision in music is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management of the department are excellent.
- The quality of teaching is a strength of the department.
- There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities, which provides students with the opportunity to develop their musical skills.
- Resources and accommodation are unsatisfactory in terms of quality and range.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Above average	Well above average
Achievement	Good	Very good
Teaching and learning	Very good	Very good

Leadership	Outstanding
Management	Outstanding
Progress since last inspection	Good

Examination results

137. In 2003, the end of Year 9 teacher assessment results were above the national average and similar to present standards. GCSE results are well above national averages, with all students gaining A to C grades in 2003. These successes were maintained in 2004. The number of students taking GCSE music is increasing steadily and standards in Years 10 and 11 continue to be well above average.

Standards and achievement

138. In Years 7 to 9, students demonstrate average skills in performing and composing but their knowledge and understanding of musical processes are above average when listening and appraising. Achievement is good in Years 7 to 9 and very good in Years 10 and 11, particularly in composing.

Teaching and learning

139. Teaching and learning are good throughout the school, with very good teaching for the GCSE course. Planning is very good and is differentiated to cater for students with special educational needs and for the musically gifted and talented. Sometimes there is a need to adjust lesson plans further when lower-ability students are having difficulties. Students respond very well in lessons and behaviour is generally very good.

Leadership and management

140. Leadership and management are both excellent. Assessment procedures and the schemes of work are very thorough. Schemes have been revised to incorporate a broad range of musical styles and traditions. A large number and range of activities are managed effectively on both school sites, enabling all students to have access to a full range of activities.

141. Extra-curricular activities attract a significant number of students and range from the junior and senior choirs to the jazz band and standards are very good. Sixty-five students take instrumental lessons in school and there are others who are self-taught or have lessons outside school.

142. ICT provision consists of keyboards on both sites and 12 ageing computers - just sufficient for present needs. Other resources are unsatisfactory as there are very few classroom percussion instruments, either tuned or untuned. This narrows the range of experience for Year 7 to 9 students and restricts curricular planning. The level of capitation also restricts the work of the department, as resources have to be provided for both school sites.

143. Accommodation is unsatisfactory, consisting of two huts, one of which is parallel to a railway line which results in considerable sound interference, affecting all areas of the music curriculum, but particularly listening and appraising activities. In spite of the practical problems, the department has made good progress since the last inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good and contribute to good levels of achievement.
- Very good curriculum arrangements in Years 10 and 11 allow all students to access GCSE in which they consistently attain well above average results at the end of Year 11.
- Students know their levels of work but have no knowledge of National Curriculum descriptors to help them to identify how to achieve the next level.
- The subject is increasingly popular and students' attitudes are positive.
- An effective team of teachers provides an extensive and valuable extra-curricular programme.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Above average	Well above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since last inspection	Good

Commentary

Examination results

144. National Curriculum teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 for 2003 were below national expectations, but have increased significantly in 2004. Current standards, too, reflect that improving trend. The subject has adopted a very good curriculum in Years 10 and 11 where all students do the GCSE short course while others can opt for the full course. By the end of Year 11, the GCSE full course examination results were well above the national average in 2003, and this is maintained in 2004. The short course results for 2003 were in line with the national average, but have improved considerably in 2004. This indicates good achievement for students, given their average standards on entry to the school.

Standards and achievement

145. Students make consistently good gains in their skill levels in Years 7 to 9. This represents good achievement for all students, including those with special educational needs and those from ethnic minority backgrounds. By Year 9, students can pass the ball well in rugby and can apply the skills of rucking and mauling in a competitive game. They recognise the need for an effective warm-up and are beginning to adapt exercises to the nature of the activity. The majority are able to identify the main muscle groups as well as their use. Weaker skills include students' ability to consistently apply their knowledge to evaluating their own and others' performance. Despite that, the good, and often very good, skill levels overall are maintained during the GCSE courses. Although Year 11 girls work hard to improve their fitness and show a good understanding of circuit training methods, they have not made sufficient progress in the ability to evaluate their own performance. They do not consistently evaluate performance. Good achievement levels are apparent when, in theory, the students' knowledge and understanding is very well progressed. In coursework, students produce detailed and neat folders that demonstrate a very good understanding of how to develop an appropriate fitness plan.

146. Students' achievement is well supported by an extensive extra-curricular programme, which includes fixtures and regular clubs. There are a number of students that play sports at district, county and national levels.

Teaching and learning

147. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good, with examples of very good teaching being seen. Students benefit from the good coaching by teachers with good subject knowledge. Relationships are very positive and students want to work hard to improve. Teachers plan and organise their lessons very well, little time is wasted and students are on task for prolonged periods. In the best lessons, increasingly challenging tasks are regularly introduced and learning is reinforced in good focused consolidation periods. There are inconsistencies in the degree to which teachers provide opportunities for students to evaluate their own and others' work.

Leadership and management

148. The recently appointed head of department has already in a short period of time introduced some good improvements. The head and his team are good role models. Good leadership skills are reflected in the development of an effective team. Teachers are committed, for example, to the maintaining of a valuable and extensive extra-curricular programme. There has been good improvement since the last inspection with high standards generally being maintained in teaching, learning and attainment by students. Effective monitoring of the subject has contributed to these standards. Standards in the sixth form examinations have been consolidated and achievement is good. No current development plan exists but the subject has identified areas for further improvement. Programmes of work, together with the subject handbook, require updating so as to provide better guidance for staff. The subject is now considering how best to establish a baseline assessment of students in Year 7, and then track the progress of students for all strands of the National Curriculum in Years 7 to 9. The use of modern technology in lessons is now aided by the use of digital cameras for analysis, although the use of computers in lessons is hindered by the lack of a dedicated theory classroom. Students know their levels of work but are very reliant on teachers for guidance on how to improve. There is currently no provision for recreational physical education in the sixth form.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

149. Business studies was sampled at the GCSE level. At the end of Year 11, standards are above the national average and students achieve well because of the good teaching and their positive attitudes. One lesson was seen in Year 10 where the quality of teaching was very good, the content was interesting and stimulating and based on very good subject knowledge: it was very well structured with a good use of resources and, as a result, students learnt well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Topics of citizenship are provided in personal, social and health education schemes of work.
- There is no co-ordinated strategy or planned time for subjects to teach citizenship.
- Students' work is not collected, assessed and reported on.
- Opportunities for participation in citizenship activities are not exploited.
- Legal requirements are not fully met for Years 7 to 11.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence
Achievement	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence
Teaching and learning	Insufficient evidence	Insufficient evidence

Leadership	Unsatisfactory
------------	----------------

Management	Unsatisfactory
Progress since last inspection	Not applicable

Commentary

Standards and achievement

150. No judgements could be made on standards and achievement because of the limited evidence available.

Teaching and learning

151. No judgements could be made on teaching and learning because of the limited evidence available. An analysis of all the lessons seen by inspectors shows that there are cases where aspects of citizenship were being taught. However, when these aspects did come up they were not pointed out to the students as being citizenship and students are unaware of any progress being made in the subject. In the small number of lessons where aspects of citizenship arose teaching was good, as seen, for example, in a lesson in English where race issues were handled sensitively and effectively.
152. There is no planned provision across all subjects of the curriculum for the teaching of citizenship. The inclusion of citizenship within the personal, social and health education programme, with limited time and inconsistent form teacher delivery, is insufficient to provide students with their full entitlement. Students generally are not aware of citizenship as part of the curriculum. Students' work is not collected and assessed against statutory requirements.
153. Opportunities for participation in citizenship activities are not fully exploited. There is, however, a School Council which gives students in all years the opportunity to vote and all students take part in charity work.

Leadership and management

154. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has provided schemes of work, but the school has not fully recognised its responsibility for developing this area as an explicit part of the curriculum. Legal requirements are not fully met in Years 7 to 11 for students to acquire the three required elements of citizenship.

WORK-RELATED LEARNING

Provision in work-related learning is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Documentation supporting the provision of work-related learning is good.
- Beyond the production of plans, little has happened to provide work-related opportunities.
- Legal requirements are not fully met for Years 10 and 11.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards seen	Not applicable	Insufficient evidence
Achievement	Not applicable	Insufficient evidence
Teaching and learning	Not applicable	Insufficient evidence

Leadership	Unsatisfactory
Management	Unsatisfactory
Progress since last inspection	Not applicable

Commentary

Standards and achievement

155. No judgements could be made on standards and achievement because of the limited evidence available.

Teaching and learning

156. No judgements could be made on teaching and learning because of the limited evidence available.

157. There is little planned provision for work-related learning. Last year, work experience was provided for Year 10 students. This was successful. Students responded positively to the experience. Currently, the school is planning to offer the same opportunities to Year 10 students. The school holds a very successful Year 10 industry day. A very small number of students are at present following a vocational course in the local college, which includes work-related components.

Leadership and management

158. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. Although the co-ordinator has provided the necessary documentation and advice, the school has not fully recognised its responsibility for developing this area as an explicit part of the curriculum for Years 10 and 11 students. The school does not meet the statutory requirements to provide work-related learning.

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM

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

The school has an inclusive entry policy requiring a minimum of five GCSE grades A*-C. This reflects good achievement overall.

The table below shows entry and performance information for courses completed in 2003, which is the latest year for which national comparisons are available.

Level 3 GCE AS level courses

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Art and design	7	100.0	n/a	85.7	n/a	52.9	n/a
Biology	16	81.3	65.2	6.3	11.1	27.5	20.6
Business studies	7	100.0	76.4	42.9	16.3	40.0	26.2
Chemistry	15	93.3	72.7	13.3	13.9	6.7	31.2
Media studies	30	100.0	87.4	73.3	32.0	25.0	48.3
English/ English language	26	100.0	82.9	41.7	17.5	45.8	28.7

English literature	12	100.0	85.9	11.5	19.1	30.0	30.2
French	9	75.0	78.2	12.5	18.9	27.5	27.6
Design and technology	8	87.5	74.9	12.5	15.1	26.7	25.3
Geography	8	100.0	74.3	25.0	19.8	38.8	26.5
History	6	80.0	80.7	20.0	40.0	30.0	30.0
Mathematics	17	76.9	61.9	7.7	17.1	24.6	22.1
Music	3	100.0	n/a	0.0	n/a	40.0	n/a
Spanish	3	33.3	86.2	0.0	42.9	10.0	36.2
Psychology	15	93.3	69.7	13.3	24.1	33.3	24.1
Physics	12	88.9	68.6	22.2	14.4	33.3	22.7
Sociology	11	81.8	71.8	9.1	18.4	29.1	25.4
Sports/ PE studies	13	100.0	73.2	46.2	11.4	43.1	23.1
Theatre studies	11	100.0		36.4		46.4	

Level 3 GCE A level and VCE courses

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Art and design	7	100.0	98.6	57.1	50.2	94.3	87.5
Biology	11	100.0	96.4	36.4	39.2	78.2	78.6
Business studies	10	100.0	98.7	70.0	36.8	100.0	80.1
Chemistry	8	100.0	97.6	50.0	49.0	92.5	84.9
Media studies	21	100.0	99.4	85.7	37.8	100.0	82.1
Drama	8	100.0	99.5	50.0	40.1	87.5	83.6
English/ English language	22	95.5	99.4	22.7	36.3	69.1	80.9
English literature	10	100.0	99.5	70.0	46.5	92.0	86.5
French	4	100.0	98.8	0.0	51.5	70.0	87.6
Design and technology	6	100.0	97.8	16.7	35.0	73.3	77.9
Geography	9	100.0	98.7	22.2	44.5	75.6	84.0
History	8	100.0	99.0	50.0	44.6	85.0	84.6
Mathematics	12	100.0	96.7	66.7	55.6	103.3	88.8
Music	1	100.0	98.8	0.0	38.9	80.0	81.1
Spanish	4	100.0	96.9	25.0	64.5	85.0	93.8
Psychology	11	90.9	97.4	9.1	42.7	67.3	81.8
Physics	10	90.0	96.7	30.0	44.6	72.0	81.7
Sociology	5	80.0	98.2	0.0	44.3	60.0	83.6
Sports/ PE studies	5	100.0	98.0	0.0	30.9	68.0	75.2

ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

Modern foreign languages in the sixth form were not a focus for this inspection and so were only sampled. Two lessons were seen in French, one in Year 12 and one in Year 13, and one lesson in Spanish in Year 13.

In all the lessons observed, teaching was very good and, as a result, students' achievement was also very good. Teachers' knowledge of their languages was most impressive, as were their enthusiasm, hard work and stimulation of students' interest. Students responded by showing a thirst for knowledge, a desire to achieve and a good degree of skill in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Occasionally, students were a little passive in expressing their ideas freely. Teaching at this level strengthened students' perception of the culture, politics and ways of life of other countries very well.

English

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good overall.
- Students achieve well in English literature.
- The teaching of English language does not develop students' critical skills sufficiently.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.
- Numbers taking English courses are increasing.

Standards seen	English language: Below average English literature: Well above average
Achievement	English language: Satisfactory English literature: Good
Teaching and learning	English language: Good English literature: Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since last inspection	Good

Commentary

Examination results

159. Overall, AS results were in line with national average in English literature in 2003. They were above the national average in English language. A2 results were below. Examination results attained in English literature are significantly higher than those in English Language. At A2 in English Literature, all students passed in 2003 and seven out of ten gained the higher grades A or B. Results at A2 in English Language in 2003 were not as high as in English Literature. All students passed and nearly a third of the girls attained the higher grades A or B, but none of the boys attained those higher grades. Girls generally attain better than boys in English Language courses. Few boys took English Literature in 2002 and 2003 but in both years they all attained the higher grades A or B. Results in 2004 remained the same in both subjects.

Standards and achievement

160. Students of English literature have prior attainment that is in line with national average. They make good progress and achieve well to reach well above average standards. Students taking English language have lower prior attainment and make satisfactory progress. This is evident in the work scrutinised and is reflected in their examination performance. Students gain considerably in maturity as well as in skills and knowledge in the two years. Achievement is good overall from students with a wide range of prior attainment.

Teaching and learning

161. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers of English literature have a good command of their subject and some have very good subject knowledge. They use a variety of teaching strategies in lessons that are brisk and stimulating. Synoptic approaches to the literature of the First World War are well taught. Some of the students found the poetry, for example, the poems of Carol Ann Duffy, very challenging but with good teaching they achieved well. The teaching of English language is good but more limited. Materials are well prepared and students respond positively, but too much of the language work describes grammar and function. Students spend insufficient time evaluating writers' use and abuse of the language that they are studying. Marking and assessment are accurate and students have clear indications of what they need to do to improve. Relationships with students are good and encourage positive responses in lessons.

162. Leadership of the subject is good. There is a shared vision and a commitment to raising standards. Management of the subject is good. There is effective monitoring of teaching and learning. The choice of two courses means that the curriculum is good and extra-curricular provision is very good. Accommodation is satisfactory. Teachers make good use of rooms which are in different parts of the Highfield Road site. Resources are satisfactory.

163. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. High attainment in English literature has been maintained. Student numbers are increasing rapidly. Materials and skills for the teaching of English language are being developed.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

164. Many students have good abilities in oracy and literacy which develop well in the sixth form. Examples of good practice were observed in many subjects. Specialised vocabulary is introduced well and teachers check that students use technical terms accurately in context. Students discuss ideas well in pairs and small groups and present cogent reports of their findings. Year 12 students gave good presentations in an English language lesson. Students answer questions readily and offer evidence to support their views. They are not afraid to disagree with one another, nor with the teacher. In drama and in English, students show wit and originality in their oral work. Some very creative artwork makes excellent use of words overlaid across images to send disturbing mixed messages. Students read prose and drama texts confidently with adequate awareness of character and inference. Poetry reading is less secure and a wide range of abilities was heard during the inspection. Students' reading and research skills develop well and they make good use of the library resource centre. Some students use colloquial expressions and informal structures in discussion but the

majority are aware of the need for more formal language in academic writing. Essay skills develop well. The correction of errors by teachers is inconsistent across the school.

Information and communication technology throughout the sixth form curriculum

165. There are no formal courses in this subject. There is no attempt to audit what is and is not happening; and the informal "key skills" course tried recently was not a success. The students in some subject areas - particularly the vocational ones - make some good use of ICT as a tool for improving the quality of their learning, but this does not often go past the simple use of word processing software and, sometimes, spreadsheets. There is a small suite of computers in the sixth form block primarily for use by GNVQ students, while sixth formers have priority on those in the library/study centre.

Mathematics

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well-qualified and stable staff teach well.
- 100 per cent pass rate has been achieved in A2 examinations, and results in AS examinations have improved, during the last three years.
- Relationships are good, which helps students to develop positive attitudes to studying.
- The number of students taking A2 examinations is low, given the high proportion of students gaining grades A* and A at GCSE.
- The proportions of students gaining A or B grades in the AS and A level examinations are variable and below the national average for the last three years.
- There is an insufficient emphasis on independent learning - either through students' evaluation of their progress or the development of logical thought.

Standards seen	Above average
Achievement	Good
Teaching and learning	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since last inspection	Good

Commentary

Examination results

166. All students taking A2 examinations during the last three years have been successful in achieving a pass grade which is above the national average, and the percentage of students achieving a pass in AS examinations improved in 2004. The proportions of students achieving A or B grades in these examinations, however, are variable. The mathematics department has identified weaker students and provided them with

additional support sessions. There is no difference between the performance of boys and girls.

167. Lessons are provided for students in Year 12 wishing to improve their GCSE grades in mathematics. Lesson provision is good but results are disappointing with only one student in 2004 achieving a 'C' grade, and three students who had earlier achieved a 'D' grade failing to improve their grades.

Standards and achievement

168. Standards of students' current work are above average in both Years 12 and 13. In particular, students demonstrate good understanding of discrete random variables and confidence intervals. The achievement of students is good. Schemes of work ensure that progression in mathematical topics is good, with new modules building on work previously covered. Students apply themselves thoughtfully to lessons and their concentration is good.

Teaching and learning

169. The quality of teaching and learning are good, reflecting teachers' sound subject knowledge and understanding of mathematics. Teachers present their lessons well, demonstrating a thorough and rigorous command of the subject and deal confidently with students' questions. Teaching is mainly traditional; in lessons, teaching reflects careful planning and an appreciation of the importance of a step-by-step approach in developing mathematical understanding. The provision of a week-by-week revision workbook for Year 12 students illustrates the level of care and support for students. Good relationships with students provide a positive atmosphere for learning and students apply themselves well.
170. There is an expectation that students work hard but there is insufficient evidence that students are expected to take control of their own learning and carefully evaluate their own progress. Given the nature of mathematical learning, students demonstrate inadequate knowledge of previous learning which, on occasions, impedes their progress. Discussion of progress is limited and there are not sufficient opportunities for class debate. Students' misconceptions and difficulties with new concepts are not always quickly noticed by teachers, leading to some loss of self-confidence by students.

Leadership and management

171. Leadership and management are good. The match of teachers to the curriculum is good; the organisation of the courses is clear to students and well-qualified teachers have a good knowledge of the examination boards. Procedures to improve monitoring and evaluation have recently been put in place. The analysis of examination and test results needs to be more rigorous and to be used sufficiently to inform planning. Further analysis will assist teachers in planning to meet the demands of different groups of students. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory, with improved pass rates in both AS and A2 examinations.

Mathematics across the curriculum

172. An excellent example of use of knowledge of 'Shape and Space' added much to a lesson on textiles within the design and technology curriculum.

SCIENCE

The focus of the inspection was biology. Chemistry and physics were sampled. AS results in physics in 2003 were average; those at A2 were below average. The results of A2 physics in 2004 are closer to the national average for 2003. The number of students taking AS chemistry examination in 2003, like 2002, was too small for any significant comparison to be made with results nationally. The results at A2 chemistry in 2003 were well above the national average following below average results in 2002. These were well below the national average in 2002. The results of 2004 A2 chemistry are below the national average for 2003. Part of the reasons for these fluctuations is variability in prior attainment amongst the relatively small number of students who study this subject. Sampling of teaching chemistry shows several strengths. The lessons are prepared thoughtfully. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and teach at very good pace. There is slight tendency to over instruct at the cost of developing independence. Teaching in physics also has several strengths. It is challenging, for example, in one lesson, it required students to improve their measurement skills and accuracy when using a vernier. Knowledge and understanding are also strong, as are explanations, demonstrations and use of questioning.

BIOLOGY

The provision for biology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The students achieve well.
- The standards are above average.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- The use of new technology for teaching is a weakness.

Standards seen	Above average
Achievement	Good
Teaching and learning	Good

Leadership	Very good
Management	Very good
Progress since last inspection	Good

Commentary

Examination results

173. The number of students taking AS in Year 13 in the recent past has been too small to register any statistical significance. Results in the 2004 AS are similar to those for 2003. Results in the 2003 A2 biology examination were above average. These were well above the national average in 2002. The results of 2004 are similar to those for 2003. These fluctuations are partly due to variability in prior attainment of the relatively smaller numbers of students.

Standards and achievement

174. Year 13 students' knowledge of biology is above average. This represents good achievement. Higher-attaining students continue to make good progress in gaining new knowledge, for example, of aerobic and anaerobic respiration with formula equations for energy production. Average students have a good understanding of the subject, for example, various stages of cell division. Students' use of ICT is satisfactory, for example, for researching symptoms and effects of kidney disease and for population study of woodlice. Students have good literacy skills for independent study. Their high motivation and very positive attitudes and behaviour make an effective contribution to their learning.

Teaching and learning

175. Teaching and learning are good and lead to good achievement. Particular strengths of teaching are teachers' strong command of the subject and assessment of learning. Other strengths of some lessons are careful planning, use of questioning and efficient use of time. Investigations are used effectively to deepen students' knowledge and understanding, for example, of the water potential of potatoes. Literacy is used effectively to help students make good gains in knowledge and understanding, for example, of structure, function and working of a nephron. Although used extensively for teaching, the quality of overhead transparencies does not stimulate learning, as would the use of new technology, which is lacking. Occasionally, the balance between direct teaching and independent learning in lessons is not as productive as it could be.

Leadership and management

176. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. Improvement since the previous inspection is good. Students' performance data is very well maintained and used, for example, for target setting. Students are encouraged to analyse their own progress to develop awareness of where they could do better. File checks provide effective guidance on what the students need to improve. The biologists operate very well as a committed team of teachers. The curriculum is good. It is well supported by visits and discussion on issues such as loss of biodiversity, gene therapy and cloning.

HUMANITIES

The inspection focus was on psychology.

PSYCHOLOGY

Provision in psychology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The head of department has very good subject knowledge and is highly committed both to students and to psychology.
- The numbers taking psychology are increasing yearly.
- Teaching plans do not provide ways to promote active, independent learning and do not take into account different learning styles and the students' different abilities.
- There is insufficient use of ICT to support learning.

Standards seen	Below average
Achievement	Satisfactory
Teaching and learning	Satisfactory
Leadership	Satisfactory
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since last inspection	Satisfactory

Commentary

Examination results

177. In 2003, results are average compared with all schools. However, attainment at the higher grades is well below average. 2004 results are slightly down on 2003. Results in the research paper were particularly good. Standards in the classroom are average in Year 13 and below average in Year 12.

Standards and achievement

178. Achievement is satisfactory overall. There are some students who achieve below their predicted grade. Too few achieve the higher grades. In Year 13, students have knowledge and understanding of genetic theories of mental disorders and intelligence and show the beginning of a critical awareness of the methodological and ethical issues of research. Students can devise and carry out their own investigations and select and use statistical tools appropriately. In Year 12, students know about theories of attachment and the possible effects of deprivation but deeper understanding and critical reflection on the issues is not sufficiently developed.

179. Reading skills are well developed but listening, speaking, evaluation skills and learning from one another are underdeveloped, which limits student engagement in more active learning and critical thinking.

Teaching and learning

180. Teaching is based on very good subject knowledge and is rooted in a research perspective and critique. Teaching is enriched by the ability to draw on a wide range of ideas from across the curriculum.

181. Learning is satisfactory in the smaller groups where easy relaxed relationships promote challenging discussion of psychological theory, its application to each student's experience and encouragement to critique theories and ideas. The small group allows for personalised support and monitoring of coursework and learning, and for creative and original work to be done. Listening and discussion skills are well developed in this group.

182. The larger classes in Year 12 and the lack of access to ICT limit the use of innovative and more interactive teaching methods. The predominance of teacher-led, whole class discussions does not promote individualised learning and responsibility for students' own learning. In these classes, there is insufficient challenge and the engagement by the students is sometimes poor. At times, there are insufficiently high expectations of behaviour and manners. Learning objectives and the general 'big picture' of the lesson are not always made clear to students and, in both years, there is an over reliance on text books and hand-outs with low level demands. Students need more opportunity to develop and articulate, both verbally and in writing, their critique of knowledge and ideas in order for them to achieve at

the higher levels. Marking procedures do not give sufficient information for students to know how to improve.

183. Psychology has no base for students, teaching, displays or storage, which limits more innovative teaching methods and limits the forming of a cohesive group, which learns from one another. There are good resources, which support and promote deep learning and a critical approach to theory and research, although better access to online resources by staff and students would help raise achievement.

Leadership and management

184. The short-term planning of the subject is not sufficiently detailed and does not provide a clearer structure for the students in order to stretch and challenge, to take into account different learning styles and to provide more opportunities for students to develop taking responsibility for their own learning. There is insufficient careful screening of students on transfer into the sixth form to ensure the suitability of some students in choosing psychology and to address the large drop out rate at the end of Year 12. The size of the teaching group in Year 12 is too large to support the sort of individualised and critical learning that needs to take place if standards are to improve. Similarly, the lack of base and easy access to ICT limit teaching and learning.

ENGINEERING, TECHNOLOGY AND MANUFACTURING

Design and technology (textiles) was sampled, by the observation of a lesson, discussions with students and a review of their work. The course was new last year, and the class seen contained Year 12 students studying for their AS examination as well as one student who was carrying on from last year and studying for the A2 examination. Coursework is of a good standard and students are able to design and develop interesting concepts for a uniform of a specified airline. Careful attention had been paid by all students to the conflicting design criteria of style versus practicality to allow the necessary range of tasks to be carried out comfortably by the wearer. The teacher has extensive commercial experience which she is able to bring to bear in prompting students on their final designs of the production of a toile. In consequence there was a significant input into work-related learning. Teaching and learning were very good with some excellent features.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA

The focus of the inspection was on art and media studies. Sixth form music was sampled and one lesson was observed. Standards are good in both teaching and learning. A Year 13 drama lesson was sampled. The teaching and learning were very good and students were achieving very well. Good teaching skills produced excellent responses from the students, who were learning sophisticated drama theory through their own very focused practical work. The curriculum and extra-curricular provision are good in drama, which makes a valuable contribution of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students. Accommodation for drama in the main school hall is limited.

Art and design

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching results in very high examination grades.
- Students receive individual tutorials, which help them to achieve very well.
- Very good leadership promotes an enjoyable, industrious ethos and very good relationships.
- Teachers have to spend too much time outside of lessons preparing materials.
- The dedicated accommodation is in need of some repair.

Standards seen	Well above average
Achievement	Very good
Teaching and learning	Very good

Leadership	Very good
Management	Very good
Progress since last inspection	Good

Commentary

Examination results

185. In 2003, all students gained a pass grade in their AS examination with the majority gaining the higher grades. Just over half of students entered for the A2 examination gained the higher A-B grades and all students passed. In 2004, 100 per cent gained A-B. This excellent score is high and marks very good achievement.

Standards and achievement

186. Students in Year 12 build effectively on prior attainment and settle quickly to sixth form work. In Year 13, students strive for originality, take a very responsible attitude to their work and develop very good research skills to inform their own written and practical work. Standards seen are very good. Sketchbooks are very well used for homework and to develop imaginative and creative ideas in lessons. Most are exemplary, showing closely observed and meticulously drawn images from first-hand sources, such as portraits, landscapes and still-life compositions. Many students visit galleries independently to research ideas, in addition to organised school visits. They are keen to extend learning and many buy additional art books out of personal interest. Students enjoy evaluating their own work. They make purposeful comparisons with established artists and offer tips and constructive criticism to each other as a regular part of their assessment practices. Students develop very good technical vocabulary, which helps them to discuss intentions and evaluate outcomes. Students often choose contentious contemporary issues to investigate. This helps them to develop personal ideas expressively in visual form and makes a very good contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. There are good extra-curricular evening class links with Spellthorne College.

Teaching and learning

187. Teaching is consistently very good. Teachers know students very well. Individual tutorials are built into every lesson. Teachers share their very high expectations and are very good role models. They provide very high quality teaching materials and exemplars. Teachers are generous with their time and provide many opportunities for students to work in study modules and after school. Teachers have to spend too much time preparing materials, outside of lessons, because there is no subject technician.

Leadership and management

188. Leadership is very good. Very good organisational and management skills are evident in the positive relationships. The generous sharing of expertise amongst teachers benefits students, who gain from a variety of approaches. Improvement since the previous report has been good. The dedicated A2 art room is in need of some repair.

MEDIA STUDIES

Provision in media studies is **very good**, with outstanding features.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are high with results in AS and A2 well above national averages.
- Achievement is very good with students demonstrating high levels of understanding of main concepts in media studies and producing practical work of high quality.
- Teaching is very good.
- Students learn very well; they collaborate well with each other.
- Leadership and management are very good.

Standards seen	Well above average
Achievement	Very good
Teaching and learning	Very good

Leadership	Very good
Management	Very good
Progress since last inspection	Good

Commentary

Examination results

189. In 2003, results for both AS and A2 were well above the national average. This high attainment was repeated in 2004, reflecting the general levels of improvement in the standards students gain.

Standards and achievement

190. Standards achieved by current students in Year 13 are high. They have a thorough practical and theoretical knowledge of the stages of production. Most read critical theory widely and identify those theories suited to inform and evaluate their practical work. No significant variations in standards of male and female students are evident. Written coursework is generally of a high quality and is usually well presented. Students show good ICT skills and have good standards of literacy. Research work is well based on extensive and clearly referenced reading. Students produce practical work of outstanding quality with some displaying professional standards. For example, Year 13 students' work on producing trailers for films often displayed good technical skills, polished and sophisticated final products based on careful planning and

underpinned by high quality evaluations. These show insight, discussing the rationale for the decisions taken very well. In particular, the detailed and perceptive evaluations of, for example, *Genesis* was of the highest quality. Standards of work from students in Year 12 are above average. In particular, their practical and theoretical knowledge of media techniques is well above expectations.

Teaching and learning

191. Very good teaching promotes high levels of achievement and high standards. Lessons are conducted at a crisp pace. Expectation of students is high and amply realised. Some of the very good achievement seen was based on consistent and high-quality support for collaborative learning. Teaching is intellectually stimulating, using good critical scrutiny linked to a secure knowledge of appropriate terms that students are expected to use in their own work. Learning improves as students progress through to Year 13. In discussions and writing, Year 13 students demonstrate a very good understanding of the main concepts of the subject, such as representation, audience, ideology and genre. Most can define and use specialist terms confidently, exemplifying them in written work well, drawing on a wide range of media. High levels of interest and motivation from students are evident in many cases. The structuring of students' research, a significant strength, gives them all the skills needed for effective independent learning in Year 13. The good extra-curricular activities available augment the quality of the curriculum.

Leadership and management

192. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. This provides a model for others in its highly effective teamwork and an absolute determination to achieve the best possible outcomes for every student. A very well structured scheme of work leads to a broad range of teaching approaches, ensuring that students experience a stimulating curriculum enhanced by a well-balanced range of resources. The department is aware that individual target setting for students will further improve the quality of provision.

HOSPITALITY, SPORTS, LEISURE AND TRAVEL

Physical education was sampled. Two sixth form lessons were seen. Teaching and learning were consistently good. Students are enthusiastic learners. They react well to the different active teaching strategies used to meet their different learning styles. More consistent opportunities to research and present their findings to others could aid learning. Students benefit from good feedback. Students learn well both independently and in small groups. They are quickly on task, and concentrate for prolonged periods. They have generally good attitudes to the subject, reflected, for example, by the standard of their kit. At A2, there is a consistent pattern of the majority of students gaining passes. However, small numbers taking the examinations make national comparisons unreliable. In 2003, the results at the higher level grades were well above at AS and in line with the average for A2 exams. Students achieve well, given their starting point. Their coursework is good and often very good. It is detailed, accurate and reflects a good understanding of the links between exercise programmes, individual needs and particular sporting activities. Subject-specific vocabulary is well developed and in written and oral work students justify their views.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

Business studies was sampled at the A2 level. At the end of Year 13 standards are average, although the proportion of the top A-B grades achieved in the most recent 2004 examinations are below the national average. The number of A2 students is relatively small. One lesson was seen in Year 13 where the teaching and learning were of satisfactory standard and students achieved in line with teacher expectations.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND GENERAL PROGRAMMES

This was not a focus of the inspection. The personal, social and health education lessons sampled were good. They offered very good opportunities for enhancing the development of the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students felt positively about their experiences in these lessons.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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