

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **THE KING'S SCHOOL, GRANTHAM**

Grantham, Lincolnshire

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120698

Headteacher: Mr. S. B. Howarth

Lead inspector: Mr D. Cox

Dates of inspection: 14<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> March 2005

Inspection number: 268974

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

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#### **Terms used in this report**

*Students in Years 7, 8 and 9 are at **Key Stage 3**, having transferred in most cases from their primary schools **after** Year 6. Students in Years 10 and 11 are at **Key Stage 4** of their education. Those students who remain at school after the compulsory period of education are in the **sixth form**, in Years 12 and 13. Students in Years 7 to 11 follow courses and Programmes of Study set out in the National Curriculum. A course of religious education is a requirement for students of all ages at school.*

*At the end of Year 9, students aged 14 take national tests in English, mathematics and science. In all subjects of the National Curriculum, teachers also make their own assessments of what the students know, understand and can do at age 14. At the end of Year 11, students aged 16 may take examinations in the General Certificate of Secondary Education (**GCSE**). Others may follow courses leading to the award of the General National Vocational Qualification (**GNVQ**) or the National Vocational Qualification (**NVQ**). Sixth form students may take further courses leading to these awards, including the Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (**AVCE**), or to those of the General Certificate of Education at Advanced level (**A-level**). Students may take examinations leading to the Advanced Subsidiary award (**AS**), equivalent to half the difficulty of the full A-level, which is gained by further study beyond AS standard. Some students may also take Advanced Extension Awards (**AEA**).*

*Inspectors judge the standards reached by students by comparing their attainments with national test and examination results, or by the levels of performance expected for students of the same age nationally. The students' achievements reflect whether they are doing well enough. These judgements take account of the educational value added over time. In this report, similar schools are defined as those having similar standards at the start of each stage of learning.*

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Grammar (selective)

School category: Foundation

Age range of students: 11 – 18

Gender of students: Male

Number on roll: 904

School address: Brook Street  
Grantham  
Lincolnshire

Postcode: NG31 6RP

Telephone number: 01476 563180

Fax number: 01476 590953

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of Mr. S. Cousins  
governors:

Date of previous 1<sup>st</sup> February 1999  
inspection:

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The King's Grammar School, Grantham is an average sized selective school for boys in the 11-18 age range. There are 904 students on roll of whom 230 are sixth form students. The students are drawn from over 60 primary schools covering a wide swathe of south-east Lincolnshire and part of Nottinghamshire. The school is very popular, with places in demand from the local community and beyond.

The school population reflects a wide socio-economic background but overall, socio-economic indicators are well above average. The vast majority of students are white although there are small groups of students from different ethnic backgrounds. There are no students in the early stages of learning English. The percentage of students identified as having special educational needs is well below average as is the number of students with statements of special educational need. Most **of these** students are on the register of special education needs for moderate learning difficulties, dyslexia and Aspergers.

The school is in partnership with a local secondary modern school as part of a specialist Business and Enterprise College. The school has achieved Artsmark, Sportsmark and Beacon status.

Overall attainment on entry to the main school is very high. Attainment on entry to the sixth form is well above average.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
10297	David Cox	Lead inspector	
13395	J. Illingworth	Lay inspector	
33139	M. Wilson	Team inspector	Mathematics
19596	B. Treacy	Team inspector	English
4145	C. Harrison	Team inspector	Science
15208	A. Briggs	Team inspector	Music
17868	E. Metcalfe	Team inspector	Art and design
11933	D. Driscoll	Team inspector	Design and technology Physics in the sixth form
17923	M. Shaw	Team inspector	Information and communication technology (ICT)
15462	C. Blakemore	Team inspector	Geography
19026	B. Downes	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages Special educational needs
22411	A. Axon	Team inspector	Mathematics in the sixth form
12985	S. Jeffray	Team inspector	Physical education
30427	F. Shuffle-Botham	Team inspector	Religious education
2597	C. Jackson	Team inspector	Business studies
15832	J. Vanstone	Team inspector	History
33158	G. Jagger	Team inspector	English in the sixth form
22590	R. Castle	Team inspector	Citizenship Work-related learning

The inspection contractor was:

Independent School Inspection Services (ISIS)

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very good school that provides a **very good** quality of education and **excellent** value for money. Teaching, learning and students' achievement are very good. The leadership of the school is very good. The sixth form is good and its cost effectiveness is very good.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards are very high, reflecting students' very good achievement as a result of very good teaching.
- Very good leadership is bringing about a rise in examination results from an already relatively high level.
- There is an ethos in the school that promotes hard work, very good attitudes and equality for all.
- Mathematics is an outstanding department.
- The range of extra-curricular activities is outstanding.
- Students underachieve in design and technology because of unsatisfactory teaching.
- Teachers do not always use the wealth of assessment information available to them when matching work to the needs of all students.

Progress since the last inspection has been **very good**. Standards are higher and achievement is better as a result of improved teaching. Most of the weaknesses identified in the previous report have been addressed successfully and many are now strengths of the school.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

Key: A\* - very high; A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average  
For Year 11, similar schools are those whose students attained similarly at the end of Year 9.

Students join the school in Year 7 with standards of attainment that are very high overall, although this varies from subject to subject. By the time students leave in Year 11 their standards are very high and their achievement is very good. The national value-added measure comparing the progress students make between entering the school in Year 7 and their GCSE results shows that students achieve very well. Students achieved satisfactorily when compared against 'capped average points score' given students' standards when they were in Year 9. Results at A-level are well above average.

By the end of Year 9, standards are very high in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT) and history. Standards are well above average in design and technology, geography, modern foreign languages, music and religious education. Standards are above average in all other subjects. Students achieve very well in mathematics, ICT, history and music. They achieve well in all other subjects with the exception of design and technology where achievement is unsatisfactory.

By the end of Year 11, standards are very high in English, mathematics, science, ICT, history, modern foreign languages, music and business studies. Standards are well above average in art and design, geography, physical education and full-course religious education. Standards are above average in design and technology, citizenship and short-course religious education. Students achieve exceedingly well in modern foreign languages. They achieve very well in mathematics, art and design, ICT, history, music, business studies and full-course religious education. They achieve well in all other subjects. Achievement in short course religious education is satisfactory, but achievement in design and technology is unsatisfactory.

In mathematics, students' achievement from Year 7 through to Year 11 is excellent overall. Standards of literacy, mathematics and ICT across the school are very high. Students with special educational needs attain very high standards and achieve as well as other students overall. Students who are particularly talented achieve exceedingly well. Achievement in design and technology is unsatisfactory because of unsatisfactory teaching.

Students' attitudes, values and personal qualities are very good and are major strengths of the school. Students are very keen to learn, behave extremely well, and have very good attendance. The school makes good provision for their spiritual and social development. Its provision for their moral and cultural development is very good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The school provides a **very good** quality of education. The quality of teaching and learning is **very good overall**. The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. There is good provision for support, advice and guidance. Satisfactory attention is given to the care and welfare of students.

It is the consistency of good and very good teaching that students receive that enables them to achieve very well during their time at the school. Teachers possess very good subject knowledge and so are able to teach very bright and enthusiastic students at a high academic level. Students become stimulated and challenged and want to explore the subject more fully and enjoy using and developing their skills.

The curriculum is satisfactory. There is an excellent range of extra clubs and activities. Provision for special educational needs students is very good. The school has a very good match of staff to its needs with good resources. Accommodation is adequate overall but is unsatisfactory for the sixth form.

There are very good arrangements for consulting students and involving them in the work of the school. The school's partnership with parents is good. Its links with other schools and colleges are very good, and its links with the community are satisfactory.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are **very good** as is governance. The leadership of the school by the headmaster and other senior staff is very good. The headmaster has successfully married the long-standing traditions of The King's School with new educational initiatives. Governors have a very good knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

This is a school with a long tradition of producing the very finest young men and to this end the school remains very successful.

## **PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**



*Comments are based on those students and parents who responded to the questionnaires or attended the parents' meeting.* Parents are very happy with the education their children receive; students are very happy.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve the achievement of students in design and technology;
- Ensure all teachers use the wealth of assessment information available to them when matching work to the needs of all students.

And to meet statutory requirements:

- Provide a daily act of collective worship.

## THE SIXTH FORM AT THE KING'S SCHOOL, GRANTHAM

### OVERALL EVALUATION

The sixth form provides a **good** education and its cost-effectiveness is **very good**. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

#### The main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Students achieve well as a result of good teaching.
- Good leadership and management are ensuring standards remain well above average.
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory and restricts the sixth form from creating its own identity.
- In some lessons there are too few opportunities for students to take a more active role.

### QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES OF THE CURRICULUM

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

Curriculum area	Evaluation
English, languages and communication	Provision in English literature is <b>good</b> . Students achieve well because of the good teaching they receive. Standards are well above average. Provision in German is <b>satisfactory</b> . Students achieve satisfactorily because of the satisfactory teaching. Standards are above average.
Mathematics	Provision in mathematics is <b>good</b> . Teaching is good overall and consequently students are well motivated and work hard. Students studying mathematics did significantly better in mathematics than they did in their other subjects.
Science	Provision in physics is <b>good</b> . The working relationship between teachers and students is very good and leads to students achieving well.
Humanities	Provision in history is <b>very good</b> . Very good teaching produces challenging lessons that move at great pace and lead to students achieving very well.
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	Provision in physical education is <b>very good</b> . Very good teaching enables students to achieve far better than expected.
Visual and performing arts and media	Provision in art is <b>very good</b> . Teaching is very good in extending students' vision and capabilities. Students have excellent attitudes and show impressive initiative and imagination.
Information technology	Provision in ICT is <b>very good</b> . Work is presented to a very high standard and students achieve very well.
Business	Provision in business is <b>very good</b> . The range of teaching activities allows teachers to meet students' individual needs. Students achieve very well.

*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

Students receive good academic and personal support and guidance, and arrangements to promote their welfare and health and safety are satisfactory. The school values and takes very good account of students' views.

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SIXTH FORM

Leadership and management are good. The head of sixth form provides good support for students. There is a clear vision of how the sixth form can expand and develop. Management is good; courses are well organised and operate smoothly on a day-to-day basis. The sixth form has made good progress in recent years.

## **STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM**

Students in the sixth form are very happy at the school and have no real complaints about their own education. They are particularly appreciative of the time and effort provided by their teachers.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS**

#### **Standards achieved in subjects and courses**

Students join the school in Year 7 with standards of attainment that are very high overall, although this varies from subject to subject. By the time students leave in Year 11 their standards are very high and their overall achievement is very good. The national value-added measure comparing the progress students make between entering the school in Year 7 and their GCSE results shows that students achieve very well.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Students achieve very well in Years 10 and 11 because of the very good teaching they receive and their very positive attitudes.
- Talented students achieve exceedingly well in areas such as music, sport and art and design.
- Standards of literacy, mathematics and ICT across the school are very high.
- Achievement in mathematics is excellent because of excellent teaching overall.
- Examination results have been maintained at a very high level.
- In Years 7 to 11, achievement is unsatisfactory in design and technology because of unsatisfactory teaching.

#### **Commentary**

1. By the end of Year 9, standards are very high in English, mathematics, science, ICT and history. Standards are well above average in design and technology, geography, modern foreign languages, music and religious education. Standards are above average in all other subjects. Students achieve very well in mathematics, ICT, history and music. They achieve well in all other subjects with the exception of design and technology where achievement is unsatisfactory.
2. By the end of Year 11, standards are very high in English, mathematics, science, ICT, history, modern foreign languages, music and business studies. Standards are well above average in art and design, geography, physical education and full-course religious education. Standards are above average in design and technology, citizenship and short-course religious education. Students achieve exceedingly well in modern foreign languages. They achieve very well in mathematics, art and design, ICT, history, music, business studies and full-course religious education. They achieve well in all other subjects. Achievement in short course religious education is satisfactory, but achievement in design and technology is unsatisfactory.
3. In mathematics, students' achievement from Year 7 through to Year 11 is excellent overall. The combined effect of the very good teaching over time, the students' excellent attitudes to learning and the support outside of lessons, results in excellent achievement overall.
4. Achievement in design and technology is unsatisfactory because teaching is unsatisfactory. Designing skills are only average as students get so few opportunities to design products. By the end of Year 11, skills in designing remain a relative weakness, as students have not spent enough time on developing the basics in earlier years.

5. Students achieve well in Years 7 to 9 because of the good teaching they receive. Students' very positive attitudes and the support they receive from their parents also make a major contribution to their achievement. Students achieve well because of the very positive ethos that permeates the school.
6. Students achieve very well in Years 10 and 11 because of the very strong work ethic that is evident. This work ethic is supported by students, staff and parents alike. Students come to school wanting to learn and to do their very best.
7. Standards of literacy, mathematics and ICT across the school are very high. Students are very articulate and participate very well in lessons. Their reading and writing skills are also well developed, so students are extremely well placed to meet the various demands of the National Curriculum. Subjects are taught in such a way that students are provided with sufficient challenge for them to be able to continue developing their capacity to communicate. The standard of students' mathematical ability across all subjects in the curriculum is very high. Additional support is given at lunchtimes to those students in Years 7 and 8 who have entered the school with relatively weaker numerical skills, in order that they may fully access the curriculum. At all ages, students demonstrate very high levels of competency when using ICT.
8. Students with special educational needs attain very high standards and achieve as well as other students overall. However, in Years 7 to 9, these students make very good progress because of the additional support they receive. Students quickly improve because teachers provide work which suits their individual needs. Students who are particularly talented achieve exceedingly well, for example in music, sport and art and design. In sport, teams are expertly led, with teams winning regional competitions.
9. There are no students in the early stages of learning English. The school's entry procedures have the effect that the small minority for whom English is an additional language do have a good command of English, at least, and so are able to have access to the National Curriculum.
10. The school sets demanding targets for improvement and usually meets these.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	40.4 (42.8)	N/A (33.4)
Mathematics	47.6 (46.6)	N/A (35.4)
Science	41.0 (41.2)	N/A (33.6)

*There were 157 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 2004***

	School results	National results
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	97 (94)	52 (52)
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	100 (98)	89 (88)

Percentage of students gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	100 (100)	96 (96)
Average point score per student (best eight subjects)	50.5 (49.4)	34.9 (34.7)

*There were 158 students in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

11. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2004 were very high and place the school in the top five per cent of all schools nationally. In comparison with schools with similar prior attainment, achievement was good. The trend in results is in line with the national trend.
12. Results in the 2004 GCSE examinations were very high and again place the school in the top five per cent of all schools nationally. The trend in results is above the national trend. Comparison with national benchmarks indicate that students achieved satisfactorily when compared against 'capped average points score' given students' standards when they were in Year 9. However, the national value-added measure indicates that students achieved well.

### **Sixth form**

Whilst students enter the sixth form with well above average levels of attainment overall, attainment on entry varies from subject to subject. Overall, by the end of Year 13, standards are well above average and students achieve well.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Students attain very high standards in physical education.
- Results are well above average and have been so for many years.
- Students achieve very well in extra-curricular activities. Standards of literacy, mathematics and ICT across the curriculum are very high.

### **Commentary**

13. In the subjects inspected in detail, students attain very high standards in physical education. Standards are average in German and well above average in all other subjects. Students achieve very well in art and design, ICT, history, business studies and physical education. They achieve well in all other subjects. In German achievement is satisfactory.
14. Students achieve well overall because of the good teaching they receive. Their very positive attitudes also contribute significantly to their achievement. It is not only in their subjects where students achieve well, they achieve very well in areas such as sport, the arts and many other extra-curricular activities.
15. Standards of literacy, mathematics and ICT across the curriculum are very high.
16. Results overall in the 2004 A-level examinations were well above average. Results have been well above average for some years. Students achieve well given their starting points when joining the sixth form in Year 12. Very few students fail to complete courses and retention is high. In physical education A-level, results were very high and place the school in the top five per cent of all schools nationally.

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of entries gaining A-E grades	98.2 (95.5)	92.4 (92.3)
Percentage of entries gaining A-B grades	48.6 (45.0)	36.2 (35.6)
Average point score per student	360.2 (347.7)	265.2 (258.2)

*There were 87 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

## **Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)**

### **Main school**

Students' attitudes, values and personal qualities are major strengths of the school. Students are very keen to learn, behave extremely well, and have very good attendance. The school makes very good overall provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.



## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Students enjoy coming to school, and their attendance is very good.
- Students' very positive attitudes to learning and enthusiastic participation in extra-curricular activities make a significant contribution to their very good achievement.
- The school is a very orderly community in which standards of behaviour are excellent.
- Students have extremely good relations with one another and with adults in the school.
- Provision for students' moral development is very good overall, and is very effective in promoting good behaviour.
- Insufficient attention is given to the recognition of non-western cultures although the school has links with China, or to celebrate the ethnic diversity of England.

## **Commentary**

17. Students take pride in their school and like attending school. They enjoy learning and are very well motivated. They are punctual for lessons and come to them expecting to work hard and to use the time productively. They show a very good level of interest in their work and are very eager to develop and express their own ideas. The majority of students try to learn and to make progress even when the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. This was the case in a design and technology lesson that was observed during the inspection. Although the teaching was poor, the class's attitudes and behaviour were excellent. Students are very good independent learners. They are conscientious about completing their homework and they make very good use of the library for independent study outside normal school hours. They are very appreciative of the range of extra-curricular activities that the school provides. Students are very keen to take part in extra classes, clubs and societies, and the take-up rate is very high. There are occasional lapses from these high standards. In science, some relatively lower attaining students are content to make only the minimum effort and do not aspire to achieve as much as they are capable of. These lapses are untypical. Attitudes to learning are very positive across the school and remarkably consistent, with little variation according to age or levels of attainment. Overall, students' high aspirations and willingness to work hard make a major contribution to their very good achievement
18. Standards of behaviour are excellent. Students are extremely orderly and self-disciplined, and cope very well with the limitations of the cramped site. They have excellent relationships with adults in the school and with one another. The incidence of disruption to lessons, or oppressive behaviour such as bullying, is negligible. These strengths create an environment that promotes very good learning and progress. The school is a harmonious community in which students are able to develop their knowledge, understanding and personal talents. It is extremely successful in promoting good relationships and behaviour. The school has very high expectations, which it helps students to attain through very good provision for their moral development combined with effective day-to-day routines. It has a positive approach to discipline that emphasises rewards and encourages students to behave responsibly, as when Year 11 are given the privilege of going off site during the lunch hour. Students respond very well to the school's ethos. Poor behaviour is uncommon, but effective procedures are in place to deal with it when it does occur. The school has very good systems for recording and monitoring students' behaviour, and taking appropriate action against breaches of discipline. Exclusion is used as a sanction of

last resort, but is very rarely needed. The school's exclusion rate is well below the national average.

19. Students have good opportunities for spiritual development through their religious education, where they are encouraged to consider the nature of religion, and to develop their own beliefs and personal values as individuals. The very limited time allocation in Years 10 and 11, however, limits the opportunity for this reflection and cuts short thoughtful discussion. In history, students in Year 9 displayed fascination when handling artefacts from World War 1 and the department's approach to history, and its impact, encourages sensitivity and reflection. Through their study of the expressionists in art, they are encouraged to consider the use of colour and style to convey emotion and their own responses to it. The school building itself encourages students to reflect on their heritage and to appreciate the continuity of the school tradition. In some areas of the curriculum, however, departments do not encourage students to appreciate the wonder of learning and the world around them.
20. Opportunities for moral development are very good. Students are very polite and generally self-assured, and the level of self-control about the school is high. They display excellent attitudes towards the beliefs and values of others. Despite the restricted space they respect each other and recognise the right of all to work and follow individual interests. Teachers are very good role models and the school has high expectations of good behaviour that the boys meet. They are aware of their responsibilities to others, and they lead the work of fund-raising. In certain subjects, for example geography, they consider the impact of man's actions on the environment and show concern.
21. Students have good opportunities for social development through the outstanding range of extra-curricular activities that encourage them to participate and to co-operate with one another. The various house challenges encourage boys to work together on a common project, and good-natured competition encourages a sense of being part of the house 'family'. The range of challenges ensures that boys with different talents participate. The Combined Cadet Force (CCF) and Duke of Edinburgh Award provide a very good opportunity to develop leadership skills. When they have the opportunity to take leadership roles they respond well. The production team of the school musical displayed responsibility and confidence, and this was commendable. Students are very sociable and co-operative. In physical education they achieve well because they are mutually supportive in team situations. In other areas of the curriculum, however, they choose to work as individuals, even when the task requires group work. As a result they are missing opportunities to develop skills of collaboration and negotiation.
22. The school provides very good opportunities for boys to develop an appreciation of their own culture. Through their music lessons and clubs and house activities they perform and listen to a wide variety of music styles. A significant proportion of boys play a musical instrument and opportunities to work with professional musicians are good. The annual school music and drama productions encourage many boys to be involved in dramatic performances, and opportunities to visit theatres and galleries are frequent. Through history the boys investigate their local culture and very good use is made of the local area to understand the past and to reflect on the present.
23. There are good opportunities to travel in Europe and to America, but there are few occasions when boys have first-hand experience of non-Western influences. The school makes a clear stand against racism and supports overseas aid, but does little

to recognise the contribution of non-Western cultures to our society or to celebrate the ethnic diversity of England.

24. Attendance is very good in all year groups, with very few students being absent for a significant number of school sessions. The incidence of unauthorised absence is very low. The school's rate of attendance is well above the national average and enhances students' attainment and progress.

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of students on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	852	8	1
White – Irish	1		
White – any other White background	8		
Mixed – White and Asian	1		
Mixed – any other mixed background	5		
Asian or Asian British – Indian	9		
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	1		
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2		
Black or Black British - Caribbean	2		
Black or Black British - African	3		
Chinese	16		
Any other ethnic group	3		
Parent/student preferred not to say	1		

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of students excluded. The number of students on roll is for the current year*

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.1	School data	0.1
National data	6.9	National data	1.1

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

**Sixth form**

Students' attitudes to learning are very good and their behaviour is excellent. The school makes very good overall provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Students have very positive and mature attitudes to their learning.
- They are extremely polite and co-operative and have excellent social skills.
- Students play a leading and very positive role in the life of the school.

**Commentary**

25. Students' very good attitudes to school and to their work enable them to make the most of the opportunities for learning that the sixth form offers. Their attendance is very good and very few of them drop out of courses. They maintain high levels of concentration in lessons, participate well in discussions and put in a good deal of intellectual effort. This was the case in a Year 12 art lesson that took place during the inspection. The students explained their ideas with vigour

and in considerable detail, and showed excellent attitudes to learning. Students respond well to the less regulated environment of the sixth form by adopting a constructive and mature approach to their learning. They take increasing responsibility for carrying out their own research and for organising to best effect their use of private study time. A number of sixth formers are new to the school. These students share the very positive attitudes of their peers.

26. The quality of relationships is excellent. Students like being treated as young adults by members of staff, and their relations with them are characterised by mutual respect and trust. They also get on very well with one another and with boys in the main school. Students are confident, articulate and courteous. Their behaviour is excellent and provides a very good example for younger students to follow.
27. Students have good opportunities for spiritual development through a sense of achievement derived from service and artistic performance. Assemblies provide good opportunities for reflection and in areas of the curriculum students are provided with the time to wonder at the world about them. In geography, for example, the fieldtrip to Iceland provides a significant opportunity for reflection. In other areas, however, the boys feel that the pressure to focus on their work results in missed opportunities to reflect on their discoveries.
28. Students in the sixth form have very good opportunities to play a significant role in the life of the school. They display pride in responsibility and concern for the well-being of younger students, for example as peer mentors, subject supporters and sports coaches. Through the Millennium Volunteer Programme they are encouraged to take responsibility outside the school, working in a wide range of activities, from conservation projects to accompanying physically impaired children on holiday. This enables them to develop their confidence and self-esteem and to develop their skills in coping in a wide range of situations.
29. Opportunities to study and take part in school productions with girls from their partner school are supporting the development of students' excellent social skills. Their leadership qualities are developed as prefects, through house activities and the school council. Opportunities to order their sixth form life are more restricted as they have no combined Year 12 and 13 common room or council to enable them to form a sixth form identity or to arrange their own events.
30. Students continue their cultural development in the sixth form through membership of clubs, music groups and school productions. They are encouraged to maintain this interest through the house competitions and school performances. The school itself encourages an appreciation of the past and the traditions that it upholds, and students have a strong sense of the past. Opportunities to travel are good in the sixth form and the field trips, for example the geography trip to Iceland, enable them to widen their horizons. The visit by students from China is a very good opportunity to explore another culture. As in the main school, however, activities are dominated by Western influences and students have few opportunities to explore the diversity of cultures that contribute to their work.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The school provides a very good quality of education. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. The quality of the curriculum is satisfactory. There is good provision for support, advice and guidance. Satisfactory attention is given to the care and welfare of students.

## **Teaching and learning**

Overall, teaching and learning are very good in Years 10 and 11 and good in Years 7 to 9 and in the sixth form. The quality of assessment is good.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is very good in Years 10 and 11 and leads to students achieving very well.
- Teachers possess very good subject knowledge and so are able to teach very able and enthusiastic students at a high academic level.
- The teaching and learning of students with special educational needs are very good.
- Teaching is unsatisfactory in design and technology, leading to underachievement by students.
- Teachers do not always use assessment data when planning their lessons.
- Marking is inconsistent.

## **Commentary**

31. In Years 7 to 9, teaching and learning are very good in mathematics, ICT, music and history. They are satisfactory in modern foreign languages and good in all other subjects with the exception of design and technology where they are unsatisfactory. In Years 10 and 11, teaching and learning are very good in mathematics, art and design, modern foreign languages, music, history and business studies. They are good in all other subjects with the exception of design and technology where they are unsatisfactory.
32. It is the consistency of good and very good teaching that students receive that enables them to achieve very well during their time at the school. The real strengths in the teaching are best illustrated by the differences in quality between the good teaching in Years 7 to 9 and the very good teaching in Years 10 and 11. Teaching in Years 10 and 11 is most effective when teachers possess very good subject knowledge and so are able to teach very bright and enthusiastic students at a high academic level. Students become stimulated and challenged and want to explore the subject more fully and enjoy using and developing their skills. Teachers know their students well and therefore can set work that meets the needs of their students well. Teachers plan activities that improve students' examination techniques and guide them in their coursework to make sure they gain the most marks. As a result, students learn far more than is usually the case and achieve well. The quality of questioning is good, so that students are probed and so think more deeply. In the more successful lessons, students are provided with the 'space' to assimilate new ideas and to share them with other students, so increasing their understanding. In Years 10 and 11, students produce very high quality coursework assignments and produce them by the deadlines because teachers emphasise the importance of this to the gaining of very high GCSE grades. The scrutiny of students' work indicates that the substantial amount of homework that is set supports and extends learning. Teachers and support staff are always available to help students.
33. In the very good lessons, there are excellent relationships between teacher and students, with clear evidence of teachers and students enjoying themselves. The activities in these lessons are imaginative and ensure that students learn very efficiently. Teachers are good at demonstrating ideas and in explaining what needs to be done.
34. In contrast, in Years 7 to 9, where teaching is good, rather than very good, there are weaknesses. For example, there is sometimes a slightly slower pace for students who are capable of learning very quickly. In some lessons, activities are too mechanical, for example routine copying of notes and diagrams, and do not involve enough thinking.

35. In design and technology, positive features such as good knowledge of the subject and control of students are offset by more important weaknesses. Lessons are often slow and dull, with students carrying out repetitive tasks that are too easy for them, such as copying out work from computer screens or worksheets. Insufficient attention is given to health and safety in workshops: students are left unattended when working with tools, and bags are piled in front of exits.
36. One weakness with the teaching is the inconsistent approach to marking, both across the school and within departments. On one hand, very good informative comments help students to improve, whilst on the other, the same work given to a different group of students receives few comments.
37. Teaching and learning for students with special educational needs are very good. Teachers know the students well and set work at an appropriate level for their individual needs. Teachers have had good training to implement the 2001 Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs and are kept well informed about developments. This is a strong factor in the overall very good provision for special educational needs. Individual education plans for students with special educational needs are good and contain suitably specific targets to inform teachers and ensure that students make progress. There are very good assessment procedures for students with special educational needs which enable staff to review their individual targets and to adjust them if necessary.
38. The quality of teaching was judged to be good at the time of the previous inspection; it is now very good overall. Much of the school's in-service training in recent years has been about improving teaching and learning and the effects of this are now being seen in the classroom.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 160 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
6 (4%)	45 (28%)	67 (42%)	36 (22%)	4 (2%)	2 (1%)	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.*

39. The procedures for assessing students' attainment, academic progress and personal development are good. An extensive range of information on students' academic achievement is collected and analysed. The information includes the results of tests taken by students on entry to the school, various diagnostic tests, National Curriculum tests and their progress as they move through the school. This is given to each subject area to help them support students' progress and assess their individual needs. The school analyses its GCSE results fully and provides detailed information about how well subjects and individual students achieve. Older students in Years 10 and 11 are aware of the grades and percentages they obtain in tests and what they should achieve in future examinations.
40. The use of assessment information to guide curricular planning and lesson preparation is satisfactory across subjects. There are particular strengths in subjects such as mathematics and music where there is very effective use of assessment information to identify the needs of individual students. This enables teachers to match their work closely to the needs of all students and results in all students achieving very



well. The use of the data is inconsistent and some departments are not using it well. For example, there is unsatisfactory use made of the data provided in design and technology.

## **Sixth form**

Teaching in the sixth form is good and brings about good learning. Procedures for, and use of, assessment are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers' very good knowledge of their subjects ensures students achieve well in lessons.
- In some lessons there are too few opportunities for students to take a more active role.

### **Commentary**

41. All students benefit from very knowledgeable and enthusiastic teaching. Teachers' enthusiasm for their subjects is very obvious, and motivates the students to learn, and this is reflected in the good achievement of the students. Teachers have extremely high expectations of students, which promote a very positive work ethic. Teachers make it very clear to students what is expected of them. The students are aware of this and this motivates them to work hard, and results in excellent classroom behaviour, which results in good learning.
42. Teachers plan their lessons very well, including in them a range of individual and interactive activities that challenge and stimulate their students. As a result, students both learn and achieve well. Teachers are well versed in the requirements of examinations and their assessment of written assignments is accurate and the marking is detailed and thorough.
43. When teaching is less effective, there are often too few opportunities for students to take a more active role in the lesson other than just answering questions. Students sit passively and rely too much on teacher input. They do not contribute their own ideas enough.
44. The school's procedures for assessing students' attainment and progress are good. A wealth of data on students' attainment is collected and recorded when they enter the sixth form. This information is then made available to heads of department and to sixth form tutors. Most teachers use this data effectively.

## **The curriculum**

### **Main school**

The curriculum is satisfactory overall, with an excellent range of extra clubs and activities. The school has a very good match of staff to its needs, with good resources and satisfactory accommodation.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is excellent provision for extra-curricular activities.
- There is an extensive programme for gifted and talented students, which has a significant impact on the achievement of students, particularly for those students identified as being talented.

- The school currently provides a limited range of vocational courses.
- The school does not provide a daily act of collective worship for every student.
- The design and technology curriculum is very narrow and adversely affects achievement.
- Form time each day is used inconsistently.

### **Commentary**

45. The curriculum is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9. Students study the subjects of the National Curriculum plus religious education. All students are provided with the opportunity to study two languages from Year 7 onwards. There is an additional literacy lesson each week. However, in design and technology, the curriculum has become much narrower; much of the work is based on graphics and electronics, with no opportunity to study food or compliant materials.
46. The curriculum is satisfactory in Years 10 and 11. All students follow a common core of subjects to GCSE. Students can opt for separate sciences and must continue with a modern foreign language. Currently, there are limited opportunities to study vocational subjects although a number of these are planned for introduction in September 2005. In religious education, the time allocation for the short-course GCSE is not enough to allow students to investigate independently, or to follow lines of enquiry.
47. The school has used its specialist status well by making links with other schools and sharing good practice. There is an extensive programme for gifted and talented students, which has a significant impact on the achievement of students, particularly for those students identified as being talented. For example, there are 'accelerated' classes in Year 9 for very able students which really extend and challenge these students.
48. Form time each day is used inconsistently; most teachers use the time productively to discuss topical or moral issues, while a few do little other than record attendance. Occasionally, there is not a daily act of collective worship within form time. There is a good programme for teaching personal, social and health education. The school has chosen to teach the citizenship programme through the Personal Development Curriculum (PDC); this programme is taught well. Careers education is satisfactory.
49. The programme of work in literacy and numeracy provides very effective support in enabling students to improve their basic skills. Additionally, students are generally provided with a good range of other opportunities to develop their skills, though there is inconsistency across the departments. Students with special educational needs have access to the same curriculum as other students and to all areas of the school's activities.
50. The opportunities for students to participate in clubs and other activities during and beyond the school day are outstanding. The school provides many more clubs and activities than are usually seen. Participation in music and sports is high with many opportunities available for students to engage in competitive sports. The annual school play encourages many boys to be involved in dramatic performances, and opportunities to visit theatres and galleries are frequent. Many students benefit from residential visits to Europe and America. The CCF provides students with the opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities that help to build self-esteem and leadership qualities.

51. The curriculum is of a better standard than that identified in the previous report. Most of the concerns about the time allocated to subjects have been overcome.
52. Resources are good. New ICT facilities are enabling students to use ICT across the school and enhance coursework. The library is good and contains up-to-date facilities that students make full use of when developing their research skills. Teaching staff are highly qualified and are very well matched to the needs of the students.
53. Whilst accommodation is generally satisfactory there are a number of problems. In music many students are prevented from learning instruments because of a lack of appropriate rooms and large groups struggle to perform in the cramped conditions. In physical education, poor indoor accommodation constrains the curriculum, and restricts students' opportunities to achieve high standards in some activities.

### **Sixth form**

The curriculum is good with the same excellent range of extra clubs and activities as for the main school. The sixth form has a very good match of teachers to meet its needs; resources are good but accommodation is unsatisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are a large number of advanced level courses available.
- There is an excellent enrichment programme available for students.
- Accommodation is unsatisfactory and restricts the sixth form creating its own identity.

### **Commentary**

54. The school is very successful in encouraging students to stay on into the sixth form, including recruitment of students from other schools because of the high number of courses available. The opportunities to study vocational courses, however, are limited but the school is currently looking to develop its vocational provision in order to better meet the wide range of interests and aspirations of students. The school has a partnership with a local school over a linked sixth form curriculum. This enables the school to offer students wider opportunities for learning. The extensive range and number of extra clubs and sports enable students to develop skills and broaden their experience. Opportunities are provided for students to become Millennium Volunteers or serve their local community through their participation in the Duke of Edinburgh Award. These links make a very positive contribution to students' learning and personal development. Students are well prepared for their next stage of learning through careers guidance and the sound links with universities and colleges. The same good resources are available for members of the sixth form to use. However, there is no central sixth form teaching or social accommodation. Opportunities for students to order their sixth form life is more restricted as they have no combined Year 12 and 13 common room or council to enable them to form a sixth form identity or to arrange their own events.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Main school**

The quality of care, guidance and support for students is good. Provision for their welfare and health and safety is satisfactory. There are very good arrangements for consulting students and involving them in the work of the school.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are good arrangements for the induction of new students into the school.
- Students' excellent relationships with members of staff ensure they have very good access to support and guidance.
- The school earns the goodwill and co-operation of students through its very good provision for seeking out and acting on their views.
- The quality of academic support and guidance is good; students are very appreciative of the help that they get via extra classes.
- A minority of students are unsure of their level of achievement or of how to improve their work.
- Health and safety practices are inadequate in some design and technology lessons.

## **Commentary**

55. Students are very satisfied with the quality of help and guidance that they receive. Good attention to their welfare starts with the school's arrangements to support them during their induction into secondary education. Boys get the chance to meet each other and members of staff before joining the school during visits and taster days. The induction programme makes good provision for primary and secondary teachers to exchange information and to discuss the new intake. The use of peer mentors significantly enhances the quality of pastoral care for new students. Members of the sixth form are specially trained to guide and help Year 7. They carry out their role well, and the students that they mentor are very appreciative of their services.
56. Students of all ages have trusting and constructive relationships with members of staff, and feel comfortable about approaching them over problems. Students feel that teachers treat their views and concerns seriously and do their best to address them. This applies to both academic staff and pastoral staff. Students are happy with the advice that subject teachers give them when they encounter difficulties with their work. They also say that there is always an adult that they can turn to for help with personal problems. The school's pastoral structure of heads of school, heads of year and form tutors provides students with a good choice of sources of advice. Although form tutors have limited time in morning registrations for their support and guidance role, they know members of their form well as individuals and are accessible to them at breaks and lunch hours. Students can also go for advice to non-teaching staff and members of specialist services, such as the careers service, Connexions. The school's careers advisers are well regarded by students who see them as a helpful source of guidance.
57. The school is very successful in making its students feel valued and respected. The house system plays an important part in this area. Boys from different age groups gain a sense of common purpose and mutual support through belonging to their house 'family'. Students are recognised as stakeholders in the school. There are very good arrangements for consulting them and acting on their views. There is an active school council that enables them to express their opinions collectively and share in decisions about the running of the school. For example, the council has brought about improvements to toilet facilities and the choice of food in the school canteen. Students are also consulted extensively as individuals. In the past year they have had the opportunity to complete questionnaires on whole-school issues and on specific aspects of school life, such as use of the library.

58. Students receive good support and guidance on their academic progress. Subject departments assess their work regularly and give them good feedback on their performance through test results, marking, and discussions in class. However, in some subjects, a minority of students are uncertain about their level of attainment. Students are aware of their individual academic targets, but tend to think of them in terms of target levels or examination grades. They are less clear about what they need to do in order to raise their attainment. There is very good support for academic progress through the provision of extra classes, clubs and access to facilities for learning. Students are very grateful for the time that members of staff devote to this. They see it as one of the strengths of the school.
59. The quality of personal, social and health education is good. There are programmes of study for each year group that provide students with sound guidance on their personal development, and on life outside school and the next stage of education. Many of the arrangements are relatively new and are still being developed and improved. There are already some strengths. For example, Year 9 students receive good advice about GCSE courses and are therefore able to make well-informed decisions about their GCSE options.
60. Provision for students' welfare, health and safety is satisfactory overall. The majority of departments are health and safety conscious and have adopted sound procedures. However, this is not always the case in design and technology. During the inspection teachers were sometimes absent from the workshops when students were working, and unsafe practices therefore went unnoticed and uncorrected. At whole-school level, very high standards of discipline enhance students' welfare. Students are safe and secure because they are in an orderly environment where rough or aggressive behaviour is very rare.

## **Sixth form**

The quality of care is similar to that in the main school. Students receive good academic and personal support and guidance, and arrangements to promote their welfare and health and safety are satisfactory. The school values and takes very good account of students' views.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Students receive good guidance on the demands and content of sixth form courses.
- There are good procedures for supporting and improving students' academic performance.
- There are limited social facilities for sixth form students.

## **Commentary**

61. Care, support and guidance for students start before they enter the sixth form. While they are in Year 11 they are thoroughly briefed on sixth form courses, and this stands them in good stead when they are in Year 12. They have a good understanding of the amount and standard of work that will be required of them. Because they are so well prepared, very few students switch courses or drop out altogether

62. Students get good guidance on their academic work. Teachers encourage them to be independent learners, but are always ready to help anyone who needs advice. There are good formal procedures for assessing students' performance as they move through the sixth form. Results are thoroughly analysed and the information is used well to ensure that support and guidance promote progress and meet individual needs. As in the main school, members of staff provide extra help during the lunch hour.
63. Sixth form students are satisfied with the quality of personal support provided by the school. They are very happy with the quality of enrichment activities in the sixth form, and they feel that they have good access to guidance on courses in higher education and on careers. Those who are in Year 13 say they get good practical help with filling in their UCAS applications forms. Inspectors agree with students' views. Extra-curricular activities promote students' learning and personal development very well. Provision for careers guidance is satisfactory overall. It is appropriate to these students because they are prepared to take the initiative and use the school's resources to find information for themselves.
64. Arrangements for consulting students are the same as those in the main school. There is no separate council through which they can raise issues that are specific to the sixth form. Currently, their accommodation does not enhance their welfare and personal development. There is no proper sixth form common room where students can socialise and relax. Members of Year 13 have the use of a small room, but there is nothing for Year 12, who either have to share the facilities of the main school or go off site during the lunch hour.

## **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

### **Main school**

The school's partnership with parents is good. Its links with other schools and colleges are very good, and its links with the community are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents have very high opinions of the school.
- Parents give very good support to their sons' learning, and this helps students to achieve higher standards.
- The school has very good arrangements for consulting parents and taking their views into account.
- There are very good links with other schools and colleges, and they have been enhanced by the King's School's status as a specialist college.
- Reports on students' progress are sometimes confusing and unhelpful to parents who wish to support their sons' progress.

### **Commentary**

65. There is a very high level of satisfaction among parents. A survey carried out in the last year shows that they are very happy with almost all aspects of the school's work. The only exceptions are extra-curricular activities and information on students' progress, where significant minorities of parents say that the school's provision is not as good as they would like. In the judgement of inspectors there is no justification for negative views on provision for extra-curricular activities. On the contrary, the evidence shows that students have access to a wealth of clubs, extra classes and trips. As a result of the questionnaire the school has taken action to give extra-

curricular activities wider publicity. With regard to information on progress, there are some valid reasons for the dissatisfaction felt by a minority of parents. Although written reports are satisfactory overall, the quality of them varies considerably between subjects. They are good in religious education for example, where teachers give detailed comments and make good reference to targets and levels. However, reports in other subjects often lack targets for improvement and adequate analyses of strengths and weaknesses, and there are instances when the summary of the student's overall progress does not accord with subject teachers' assessments of his efforts and achievements.

66. In other respects arrangements for informing parents about the school and their children's learning are good. There is good provision for parents' evenings, which cover curricular matters as well as discussion of individual students' progress. There are also very good informal contacts between home and school. Members of staff quickly get in touch with parents if there are problems with their son's work or behaviour. Parents for their part find teachers approachable and willing to listen to their concerns. The quality of written information on the curriculum and school functions and routines is good. There are regular newsletters and a very good school magazine. The well-presented and informative school prospectus is available in hard copy and on the school website.
67. Parents make a very valuable contribution to students' learning and the life of the school. They are very keen that their sons should make the most of the opportunities that the school provides. Parents make every effort to promote good attendance and they give very good support to extra-curricular activities and educational trips. They also encourage their sons to do their homework and to complete their coursework on time. The school is conscious of the importance of involving parents in its work. It has very good arrangements for seeking out their views and consulting them on issues. It has given them the opportunity to complete a general questionnaire on its work, and has also consulted them on its homework policy and provision for students with special educational needs. Parents are very satisfied with these arrangements. Those who attended the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector said that they were fully consulted over changes to the school. They also said that members of staff were very approachable and easy to contact.
68. Links with other schools and colleges are very good. The school is a member of several partnerships, such as the advanced skills teachers' initiative, that promote close co-operation between providers of education in the local area. It has strong and improving links with other schools as a result of its status as a specialist business and enterprise college. The practical effects of these partnerships benefit all parties. The learning and personal development of students at the King's School gain from collaboration with other schools, for example from drama and musical productions with Walton Girls' High School. Links with the primary school are very strong in relation to the business and enterprise college and the advanced skills teachers. The work of the latter enhances the learning and progress of primary school pupils, as was apparent during the inspection in an excellent science workshop for Years 5 and 6, led by the King's School's advanced skills teacher. Curricular links with primary schools are good overall, but are not consistent across the curriculum. They are well developed in mathematics and science but are weak in ICT, design and technology and religious education.
69. The school has good links with the local community. They are good in some subjects and enrich students' opportunities for learning and personal development. The physical education department, for example, has particularly well-established and beneficial contacts with local sports clubs through its extensive programme of extra-curricular activities. The history

department also makes very good use of the local area and amenities, such as Grantham Museum, as resources for learning. There are sound links with employers with regard to work experience.

## **Sixth form**

The sixth form has good links with parents, other schools and the community.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents continue to be very supportive of their sons' learning in the sixth form.
- Community links enhance extra-curricular activities and provide good opportunities for personal development.
- Links with the local girls' grammar school enhance the sixth form curriculum.

### **Commentary**

70. Parents make a valuable contribution to students' learning and progress. The majority of them expect their sons to go on to higher education. Their high aspirations have a positive impact on students' motivation and commitment to their work. As in the main school, parents give very good support to extra-curricular and enrichment activities.
71. Information on students' academic progress is good. The school provides parents with concise written reports at the end of each term. The quality of general information is good and is accessible on the school website. The very informative sixth form handbook can be downloaded from the site, for example.
72. There are good links with other schools and colleges. The school has a partnership with Kesteven and Grantham Girls' School over a linked sixth form curriculum. This enables both schools to offer their students wider opportunities for learning. The sixth form's links with universities are not extensive, although the ICT department has good contacts with several universities. Students have good links with primary schools and very good links with other local organisations through their involvement in community service. Many sixth formers are Millennium Volunteers, and some students of physical education are community sports leaders. Others serve their local community through their participation in the Duke of Edinburgh Award. These links make a very positive contribution to students' learning and personal development.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The leadership, management and governance of the school are very good.

### **Main school**

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headmaster and the senior team are ensuring that students achieve very well.
- The financial management of the school is very good.
- The ethos of the school is very good.
- The leadership and management of mathematics are excellent.
- Governors provide very good strategic leadership.
- The leadership of design and technology is unsatisfactory.

#### **Commentary**

73. The headmaster provides very good leadership. He has a very high level of respect from staff, students and parents alike. The headmaster has clarity of vision, a sense of



purpose and high aspirations. The school is very reflective in everything it does which is a direct result of the headmaster's calm, reflective approach to leadership. He has successfully married the long-standing traditions of The King's School with new educational initiatives. He has motivated the majority of staff to share his vision and work together very effectively to make the best provision for the school's students. The ethos of the school is very good. This is a school with a long tradition of producing the very finest young men and to this end the school is very successful.

74. The headmaster has been successful in building a team of very good senior leaders who all fulfil their responsibilities most effectively. All members of the leadership group are well informed and all have considerable expertise in each of their own specialist fields. The good line management system enables all aspects of the school's provision to be thoroughly reviewed with the major focus being the achievement of all students, an approach which is successful. The recently introduced 'team leaders' posts have been effective in ensuring there is a clear pathway between the senior team and teaching staff.
75. The school has used the grants it receives from being a specialist college to provide good support for other schools. The specialist status, which is shared with another local school, is bringing about benefits to both establishments.
76. The school improvement plan is a well-conceived document which is regularly evaluated. The plan provides a very good record of the progress the school is making towards realising its goals. The school's targets are focused firmly on the development of teaching and learning and the improvement of achievement for all its students. However, a weakness with the school's planning procedure is that some department plans do not link with the whole-school plan. Some department plans lack measurable success criteria and do not build on the whole-school aspects for improvement.
77. Monitoring of the school's performance and provision is very good. All aspects of the school's work, including the pastoral system, are monitored and suggestions are made to improve the already good systems. There is a rolling programme of department reviews. These reviews highlight areas of strength but also areas of weakness. There is a thorough evaluation of teaching and learning through classroom observation.
78. The management of the school is very good. The school is self-critical and develops suitable action plans with appropriate deadlines and this approach should be further developed so that firm action can be taken when weaknesses are identified such as those noted in a recent design and technology external review. Whilst the school operates very smoothly on a day-to-day basis there are aspects of the school's work that are good but can still be improved. For example, the central assessment system is good but the use of data within departments is inconsistent.
79. Middle managers share the headmaster's drive for improvement. There are examples of excellent leadership and management. For example, the leadership and management of mathematics are excellent. The department is focused on raising student achievement and to this end it is very successful. Effective self-evaluation in this department is a powerful blend of critical reflective practice and unlimited enthusiasm. This has resulted in significant improvement, in particular the steep rise in student achievement in all years. However, in design and technology, results have been falling for some years and this decline has not been checked. The weaknesses in the department have not been analysed sufficiently, especially in terms of teaching,

so any actions taken have been largely ineffective. The pastoral teams are led well and are crucial to the very positive ethos that pervades the school. The school site is well managed. High quality non-teaching staff provide valuable support throughout the school.

80. The senior leadership of the school and the co-ordinator for special educational needs have shown very good leadership in developing provision for special educational needs. The co-ordinator for special educational needs has managed procedures and administration for special educational needs very well so that support for students is very good.
81. New members of staff are made welcome and are well informed through a supportive and ongoing induction procedure. The very good programme of continuing professional development, including both teaching and support staff, is focused on improving the quality of education for students.
82. The financial management of the school is very good. Good commercial practices are the norm. The school received well below average funding in 2003/2004. The school provides excellent value for money.
83. The governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Governors have a very good strategic overview of the school; they work with the school in producing the school improvement plan. They keep a watchful eye on the budget and challenge the school leaders appropriately. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties well, although the statutory requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship for all students is not fulfilled.

## Sixth form

The leadership and management of the sixth form are good; governance is very good.

### Main strengths and leadership

- The good leadership of the head of sixth form has ensured that standards remain well above average and students achieve well.
- Governors provide very good strategic leadership.

### Commentary

84. Standards have continued to be well above average as a result of good leadership and management. The new head of sixth form took up post in September 2004; however, this year his teaching load is too heavy which is limiting the development of new systems. The head of sixth form combines the monitoring and promotion of both the academic and pastoral welfare of students well. There is a good relationship between the sixth form and the main school. The head of sixth form has identified that the curriculum caters well for the needs of higher attainers but for some relatively lower attainers the range of courses available to them is limited. Governors carry out their duties with the same attention to detail as they do in the main school. They have a very good knowledge and understanding of the issues associated with the sixth form such as inadequate accommodation. Governors are working with the senior team on a long-term strategy to improve the quality of accommodation.

## Financial information

### *Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004*

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	3422567	Balance from previous year	-328598
Total expenditure	3165239	Balance carried forward to the next	-71270
Expenditure per student	3493		

## OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

### Work-related learning (WRL)

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The two-week work experience programme is good and it successfully supports school-based learning.
- Subjects do not consistently take advantage of work-related experiences to enrich learning.

### Commentary

85. During the inspection no lessons directly related to WRL were observed. Consequently no judgments could be made in respect of teaching, learning or achievement.

86. Overall, the school provision is satisfactory, meeting statutory requirements. A recent audit has established the position of WRL and highlights the strength of the work experience programme. The school has had just two work experience programmes. The recent placements showed that students value their placements. They talk confidently about how they enhance their knowledge through the world of work and this helps with their general learning, as exemplified in English and business studies lessons. Teachers notice that they mature significantly during their placements and, on return, how they interact better with a wider range of people. Preparation and debriefing of work experience are good. Employers write very positively about the qualities of the students, commenting favourably on attitude, energy, initiative, independence and collaboration – all very important work place skills. Work experience is enabling the development of links with groups like the Grantham business club, Honda, Marriott Hotels and the Sign Express franchise. Teachers and parents are beginning to realise the big potential for enriching teaching and learning through the work place.
87. There are a few vocational courses taught in the main school: business studies, and applied business with ICT and a small group choose engineering at Grantham College. Careers guidance is thorough and an important element in the PDC. As a result, students understand the needs of employers, the changing world of industry and commerce. They learn how to prepare letters of application. Local firms help Year 9 students with the preparation of their applications and interview techniques. Work skills are enhanced by the excellent enrichment programme which gives many opportunities for leadership, responsibility and teamwork through sport, CCF, music, charity and house events.
88. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Three staff co-ordinate the WRL programme, which is in the early stages of its development. The school is building upon the success of its enrichment and work experience programmes. The specialist business and enterprise status is just starting to have a positive impact. However, the value of WRL does not yet enhance teaching and learning in different subjects. An analysis of WRL has been undertaken but as yet the impact of WRL has not been assessed. WRL was not a subject at the previous inspection.

## 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 **good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Very high	Very high
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Good

##### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students' achievement throughout Years 7 to 11 is good.
- Students' skills in speaking and listening are a particular strength.
- Teachers possess very good subject knowledge.
- Teaching methods and marking do not sufficiently take into account the needs of relatively low attaining students.

##### Commentary

##### *Examination results*

89. In 2004, results at the end of Year 9 in the national tests were very high compared to the national average. Results at GCSE in both English and English literature in 2004 were also very high.

##### *Standards and achievement*

90. In Years 7 to 9, students' skills in speaking and listening are far above the national expectation. Virtually all students are keen to take part in a full range of speaking activities and can explain themselves fully, using lively and appropriate vocabulary. Students listen to each other and to their teachers intently. Written work is of a very high standard. Students possess very good basic skills and can express themselves with clarity and accuracy. Students read aloud with very good expression and have a very good understanding of what they read, though the extent to which they read more widely for their own interest is less than might be expected.
91. In Years 10 and 11, students further develop their skills in speaking and listening, becoming yet more confident and articulate, moving easily from one-to-one conversations to addressing the whole class. In class discussion they speak in turn and are ready to politely challenge the views of the teacher or other students. Students' written work remains of a very high standard. Most students are able to read, understand and formulate a response to complex literature. However, some of the relatively lower attaining students find difficulty in being able to express their response to literature adequately in writing.

### **Teaching and learning**

92. When teaching is most effective, teachers possess very good subject knowledge and so are able to teach very able and enthusiastic students at a high academic level. Students become stimulated and challenged and want to explore the subject more fully and enjoy using and developing their skills. Teachers have a good understanding of the requirements of the courses they teach and are well aware of the assessment criteria. They ensure that students also understand what they need to do to achieve very high standards and are, in fact, able to assess their own performance with accuracy. This is particularly evident in Years 10 and 11 but less so in Years 7 to 9. Teachers respect the intelligence and curiosity of the students in the way they teach. This means that the pace of lessons is brisk and the work is varied, so that students are interested and well motivated. The quality of questioning is good, so that students are probed and so think more deeply. In the more successful lessons, students are provided with the 'space' to assimilate new ideas and to share them with other students, so increasing their understanding. In the more effective drama lessons, too, students are given the opportunity to be active in their own learning by, for example, exploring new social roles through improvised drama. This helps them to become more socially confident and articulate. Homework is set regularly. The amount of written work set varies from group to group. Most of the marking is of good quality but some of it is superficial and does not provide students, especially the lower attainers, with the detailed guidance and specific targets they need if they are to improve. The vast majority of students have excellent attitudes to the work and their behaviour is exemplary. This makes a very important contribution to their achievement.
93. When teaching is less effective, teachers do not sufficiently take into account the prior attainment of all students, particularly the relatively low attainers. In particular, teachers tend to tell students what they should write rather than demonstrating to them how to perform the task. Some of the teaching relies too heavily upon the teacher talking for a large proportion of the lesson and does not create sufficient opportunities for students to be active in their own learning.

### **Leadership and management**

94. The head of department is a scholarly individual and is a good role model. He has done much to promote high expectations amongst students and teachers.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

95. Students' standard of literacy is very high in comparison with the national expectation. Students are very articulate and participate very well in lessons. Their reading and writing skills are also well developed, so students are extremely well placed to meet the various demands of the National Curriculum. Subjects are taught in such a way that students are provided with sufficient challenge for them to be able to continue developing their capacity to communicate in a variety of ways.

### **Modern foreign languages**

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

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Well above average	Very high
Achievement	Good	Excellent
Teaching and learning	Satisfactory	Very good

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards have risen since the previous inspection as a result of improved teaching.
- Very good teaching in Years 10 and 11 is a strong factor in the very high standards attained.
- There is a minority of unsatisfactory teaching in Years 7 to 9.
- Students' behaviour and attitudes to work are excellent.
- The use of marking is inconsistent.

## **Commentary**

### ***Examination results***

96. In 2004, the GCSE results were very high in both French and German. Results have improved since the previous inspection.

### ***Standards and achievement***

97. Standards have risen since the time of the previous inspection. At that time students' listening and speaking skills were reported as being less well developed than the skills of reading and writing. This has been corrected and students are now competent and confident speakers. There are now no differences in achievement across the four aspects of the subject. Students with special educational needs and those identified as gifted and talented achieve as well as other students. Students' very positive attitudes and work ethic also help their achievement. In Years 10 and 11, very good teaching, combined with very positive students' attitudes, helps students to make excellent achievement.

### ***Teaching and learning***

98. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 and very good in Years 10 and 11. There is a minority of unsatisfactory teaching in Years 7 to 9. In these lessons work is not challenging enough to raise standards. Especially in Years 10 and 11, teachers have very good subject knowledge, not only of the language and grammar structures, but also of how best to prepare students for examinations. This is a strong factor in the rise in standards that has taken place. Students' behaviour is excellent and they have excellent attitudes to work. Where teaching is most effective, there is a strong focus on target setting for individual students and challenging work to enable them to reach their target grades. Students are actively engaged in these lessons and little English is spoken by either teacher or students. Teachers do not always pay enough attention to preparing work that is challenging enough for high attaining students or to providing extension work for those students who work particularly quickly. Relevant homework is regularly set. There are good procedures for assessment and good use is made of the data provided to show students how they can improve their work. However, the use of marking as a means of helping students to improve is inconsistent. There is a strong focus on speaking and writing in many lessons. As a result the subject makes a very good contribution to literacy development. The subject's contribution to numeracy, citizenship and work with computers is satisfactory.

### ***Leadership and management***

99. The curriculum is good and is substantially enriched by extra classes and by trips and exchanges abroad. The subject makes a very good contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. At the time of the previous inspection, monitoring of teaching was very limited. This has improved considerably and is a major contributory factor in the improvement in teaching that is now evident. The subject is very well led and managed. Clear improvements have taken place. There are clear and realistic priorities for development. The subject has made very good progress since the previous inspection.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **excellent**.



	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Very high	Very high
Achievement	Very good	Very good
Teaching and learning	Very good	Very good

Leadership	Excellent
Management	Excellent
Progress since previous inspection	Very good

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of mathematics, which supports students' learning very well.
- Teachers give very freely of their time outside of lessons.
- Students' overall achievement is excellent.
- The excellent leadership and management of the department have resulted in a dedicated teaching team committed to ensuring outstanding achievement and results.
- Assessment of students' learning and understanding is very good and is very well used to inform planning and targets.

### **Commentary**

#### ***Examination results***

100. Results in the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 9 were exceedingly high; they were an improvement on 2003. Similarly the GCSE results in 2004 were also exceedingly high and an improvement upon those of 2003, especially in the outstanding percentage of A\*/A grades attained in 2004.

#### ***Standards and achievement***

101. Students achieve very well in Years 7 to 9 and Years 10 and 11. The combined effect of this very good achievement, the very good teaching over time, the students' excellent attitudes to learning and the support outside of lessons, results in excellent achievement overall. By the end of Year 9, standards are very high. For example, higher attaining students in their shape, space and measures work use sine, cosine and tangent in right-angled triangles to find missing angles. The lower attainers have above average data-handling skills and can construct frequency diagrams, though do get confused in working out the median and mean at times. By the end of Year 11, standards overall at GCSE level are very high. The highest attaining students in the 'accelerated' group have, since Year 10, been studying additional mathematics as well as GCSE mathematics. Their standards in additional mathematics are well above average and at GCSE level are very high. Consequently, students in their mechanics work can very accurately resolve forces on a particle in equilibrium using trigonometric ratios. The relatively lower attainers have above average algebraic skills and can expand brackets of functions, though they do occasionally make basic mistakes where fractions are involved.

#### ***Teaching and learning***

102. The very committed teachers have a very good knowledge and understanding of mathematics and give very freely of their time outside of lessons to fully support students. Students are very well challenged during lessons, which have a very brisk, business-like pace. The three-part lesson structure is fully integrated and good use is made where possible of starter activities linked to the main topic of the lesson; however, recapitulation sessions are not as effectively used to consolidate learning.

Teachers plan their lessons well, though in some of the less effective lessons, the planning is not sufficient to sustain the pace and interest for the full 70 minutes. Very good use of questioning by teachers ensures a very clear understanding of how well the students are doing and leads to very articulate suggestions from the students on alternative mathematical approaches. Computers are used in lessons via interactive whiteboards. However, the interactive nature of this equipment has not been fully capitalised upon to further assist students' visual learning. Homework is used very well to consolidate and develop students' learning with optional extension work given to further interest and challenge the students.

### **Leadership and management**

103. The excellent leadership of the department has resulted in a dedicated and hard-working teaching team, committed to ensuring outstanding achievement and results. The excellent management results in a very strong, efficient department with a culture of high expectations of the students. A very good curriculum is provided with the provision of additional mathematics in Years 10 and 11 for the 'accelerated group', in order that they may be challenged fully to realise their potential. Very good planning and development take place alongside rigorous self-review to drive the department forward and raise standards even further. Very good, regular assessments of students' learning take place, the outcomes of which students are well aware of. Very good use is made of the resulting data to track students' performance, set targets and inform both planning and monitoring. Strong links have been developed both with primary and secondary partner schools to share good practice and provide teaching for their higher attaining students.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

104. The standard of students' mathematical ability across all subjects in the curriculum is very high. Additional support is given at lunchtimes to those students in Years 7 and 8 who have entered the school with weaker numerical skills, in order that they may access fully the curriculum on offer at the school.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Very high	Very high
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Good

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are very high in science in all year groups.
- Teaching is well informed, carefully planned and skilful, enabling students to learn effectively and do well in science.
- Most students have very good attitudes to the subject and work hard.
- Some lower attaining students in Year 11 do not do as well as they should in their investigative coursework.

### **Commentary**

### **Examination results**

105. In the 2004 national tests at the end of Year 9, results were very high compared with the national average. Results have risen over the last few years, broadly following the national trend. Results at GCSE were also very high overall in 2004. Two groups in Year 11 took three separate GCSE science subjects; results were very high in chemistry, well above average in biology and above average in physics.

### ***Standards and achievement***

106. Standards seen during the inspection are very high in all year groups. All students have at least a good knowledge of the topics they have studied and higher attainers demonstrate very detailed understanding of the more complex ideas. For example, in a Year 10 chemistry group, students knew the formulae for common compounds and could distinguish between sulphides and sulphates. Students generally have practical and investigative skills that match their very high standards in other aspects of science. They work very carefully and thoughtfully and obviously enjoy the various practical activities. Higher attainers produce excellent GCSE investigative coursework, giving thorough evaluations of their experiments and making very good use of computers to present their work.
107. Students in all year groups achieve well so that, by the end of Year 9 and Year 11, their standards are even better than expected in relation to their very high test results when they joined the school. Hence their overall achievement by the age of 16 is good. The main factor in this good achievement is the good teaching that students receive.
108. Overall, students' very good attitudes, and their enthusiasm for the subject, have a significant positive effect on achievement. Nevertheless, there are some minor variations in students' attitudes and hence on how well they achieve in science. Attitudes are usually very good in lessons but, in lower attaining groups, some students do not make as much effort as they should with written homework and coursework. There are gaps in their exercise books, unfinished tasks and badly presented calculations. These students do not gain as many marks as they should in their GCSE coursework.

### ***Teaching and learning***

109. Teachers have very good knowledge of their subject and usually plan lessons carefully to challenge students and attract their interest. The better lessons are well organised, include a range of activities to maintain concentration and provide very clear information and explanations for students. In these lessons, teachers use questions very skilfully to explore whether students have genuinely understood. Occasionally, teaching is outstanding.

### **Example of outstanding practice**

#### **Interactive science lesson**

In a Year 9 lesson on the reactions of oxygen, burning and the environmental problems associated with burning fossil fuels, students' interest was immediately captured by an immaculate presentation using the digital projector. Captivating graphics were matched by superb and amusing sound effects. However, the slides did not merely entertain; they were constantly posing questions for students and then reinforcing correct answers. Students were then required to apply their knowledge in answering demanding written questions. The lesson concluded with a specially designed computer game in which students were required to use what they had learnt to compete in a quiz and hence to be the first to 'make a million'. The emphasis throughout the lesson was on maximising students' learning and, certainly, their learning was extremely quick and very secure; they also thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

110. However, there is considerable variation in the quality of teaching across the three science departments. There is more good teaching in Years 10 and 11, where teachers are more experienced with the content of the GCSE course, than in Years 7 to 9 where the schemes of work have recently been updated and improved. Where teaching is satisfactory, rather than good or very good, there are weaknesses. For example, there is sometimes a slightly slow pace for these students who are capable of learning very quickly. In some lessons, activities

are too mechanical, for example routine copying of notes and diagrams, and do not involve enough thinking. Although some marking is very helpful and tells students how their work might be improved, there are also patches of unmarked work in books in several teaching groups.

### ***Leadership and management***

111. The team leader knows his three departments well and has a clear understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. Most of the team, both teachers and technicians, share his determination to raise standards and provide the best possible science education for students. The department development plan identifies good priorities for improvement and the planned changes, notably the increased use of ICT in science lessons, are already having an impact. Monitoring of teaching and learning is good but there is scope for improvement in terms of following up monitoring with more action to ensure that all students experience science teaching that is consistently good or better. Within the science department, several teachers have particular strengths. There is not yet enough sharing of the strategies and resources that these teachers use, to inform and improve the teaching of others.
112. Since the previous inspection, standards have risen from well above average to very high and teaching has improved. Hence the department has made good progress.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Very high	Very high
Achievement	Very good	Very good
Teaching	Very good	Good
Learning	Excellent	Very good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Good

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Students achieve very well as a result of teaching that is consistently good and often very good.
- Very mature student attitudes contribute enormously to learning.
- Work from students in Years 10 and 11 is not always assessed accurately.

### **Commentary**

#### ***Examination results***

113. Results in GCSE examinations in 2004 were very high and above those reported at the previous inspection.

#### ***Standards and achievement***

114. Students enter the school with broadly average standards in ICT. By the end of Year 9, students are highly competent in using a wide range of programs. They make detailed notes to record the development of their work. Students test their work thoroughly. They identify possible further improvements and evaluate how effectively their solutions solve problems. By the end of Year 11, students apply their knowledge skilfully to a wide range of practical problems. Most students write routines in

programming languages. They show a strong appreciation of the importance of design and layout, for example in websites. Work is documented in very great detail.

### ***Teaching and learning***

115. In Years 7 to 9, students benefit from very knowledgeable teachers. Time is especially well used so that students learn a great deal in each lesson. Students respond very well to frequent opportunities to solve problems. Good use is made of students' work to show others what they should aim for in their work. There is considerable variation in the amount of detail in comment when students' work is assessed, which leads to some students not knowing how to improve. Homework is used well to reinforce learning.
116. The strong features of teaching to younger students continue in Years 10 and 11. However, assessment is not always accurate and consequently a small minority of students taking the GNVQ course does not achieve the examination grades they should. Assessment of work from students not taking an examination course is inconsistent, again lowering achievement.
117. At all ages, students demonstrate very mature attitudes towards their work. They readily assist each other and enjoy experimenting to solve a problem. These exemplary attitudes, especially the capacity to learn independently, explain why the quality of learning exceeds the quality of teaching.

### ***Leadership and management***

118. The subject is well managed. An effective team of teachers has been created in a relatively short time. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection. Standards have risen and the quality of teaching has risen.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

119. At all ages, students demonstrate very high levels of competency when using ICT. Students appreciate the advantages the use of ICT brings to ensuring the highest levels of presentation to their work. They also recognise the ease with which refinements may be made such as when an essay has been word-processed. Excellent use of ICT is made in music to produce musical scores of compositions. In modern foreign languages, students use translation engines to check their work. Students use computer-aided design and manufacturing packages with confidence in design and technology.
120. The school has more computers than is generally found in a school of this size. Nevertheless, some subjects, including mathematics and physical education, experience difficulties arranging to use computers.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Geography**

Provision in geography is **good**.

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

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Satisfactory

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching leads to students achieving well.
- The curriculum is good and enhanced through fieldwork in each year.
- There are insufficient opportunities for students to develop independent learning skills.
- There are inconsistencies in the quality of marking across the subject.

### **Commentary**

#### ***Examination results***

121. Results in the 2004 examination were above average but lower than those in recent years. Attainment at grades A\* and A were below average. Students did less well than in their other subjects. The reasons for the decline are known and are being addressed.

#### ***Standards and achievement***

122. By the end of Year 9, students are achieving well and have appreciably improved their geographical skills and knowledge of places. They are competent in map work, and use data very well to analyse information. Students know about the development needs of countries and are conscious of the moral issues concerning international trade. Written work is very well structured with good use of technical terms so that standards reached are much higher than normally seen. The quality of work of a few students, however, is lower because they do not explain answers fully or take sufficient care with illustrative work. Students are competent in using ICT to research assignments such as the collection of data about the wealth of countries. In Years 10 and 11, students make appreciable gains in knowledge of topics, with higher attaining students illustrating answers very well with case study information, but a minority does not use knowledge of places enough to support theoretical study. Students achieve well in improving their question and answering skills because teachers emphasise this in lessons. High standards are reached by many students in coursework and quality is improved with the use of ICT. Students build on their knowledge of the local area from earlier years and use this to develop GCSE coursework assignments based on Grantham.

#### ***Teaching and learning***

123. In Years 7 to 9, lessons have clear aims and are well planned with work matched to individual needs, particularly higher attaining students. As a result students show much interest; they are keen to apply themselves to tasks and achieve well in lessons. Students with special educational need are identified in planning and they achieve well because of the support they receive. Good use is made of learning resources, particularly books and ICT, and they help generate interest and enthusiasm for learning. Teachers explain points clearly but do not provide enough opportunities for students to develop self-reliance through geographical enquiries and group work. In Years 10 and 11, teachers have very good subject knowledge and have high expectations of students' effort and achievement. Most students rise to the challenge and make good progress, but occasionally immature attitudes reduce achievement. Lessons are well planned and focus on training students to think about issues and to apply knowledge. As a result they are able to analyse information, but do not always

illustrate answers with examples. Marking is regular with helpful summary comment but there are inconsistencies in quality across the subject.

### ***Leadership and management***

124. The subject is well led with clear guidance about teaching and learning. The improvement plan identifies appropriate priorities but the criteria for identifying success are insufficiently specific. Teachers are well supported with very good opportunities to update skills through additional training. The schemes of work provide a range of information about what is to be taught but are in need of further development. Arrangements to assess students' achievement are good but the procedures and use of National Curriculum levels are not fully informing students about standards. There has been satisfactory progress since the previous inspection.

### **History**

Provision in history is **very good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Very high	Very high
Achievement	Very good	Very good
Teaching and learning	Very good	Very good

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Students achieve very well because of very good teaching by enthusiastic teachers.
- Briskly-paced lessons are interesting and very challenging and students behave very well and work hard in them.
- Teachers give very good feedback so that students understand clearly how to improve their written work.
- Students are very well motivated to succeed and value the subject greatly.

## **Commentary**

### ***Examination results***

125. Results in the 2004 GCSE examinations were very high and became even higher after re-marking increased the grades of almost a quarter of the students who sat the examination. This was an improvement on the consistently high standards of recent years.

### ***Standards and achievement***

126. By the end of Year 9, students reach very high standards and their achievement is very good. In both lessons, and written work completed at home, students show that their skills have developed very well in using historical evidence to interpret events. Relatively lower attaining students, in this very high performing school, achieve as well as others because teachers provide materials that are well matched to their needs.
127. In Years 10 and 11, students develop very high level analytical skills. The written answers produced by the great majority of students show a depth of understanding and reasoning that is much greater than normally seen. For instance, in work on how various sources give differing interpretations of living conditions in 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain, students infer convincingly in providing arguments to support their points of view. Students of all levels of attainment achieve very well and the standard of work seen reflects the very high levels reflected in the 2004 GCSE results.

### ***Teaching and learning***

128. In Years 7 to 9, standards of teaching and learning are very good. All students benefit from being taught by enthusiastic teachers who expect very high standards of work and behaviour. Teachers explain clearly the aims of lessons, and the development of higher thinking skills, among students of all attainment levels, consistently features in those aims. In a lesson on World War 1 that fizzed with interest, for example, groups of students were constantly challenged to make deductions from un-named artefacts and their answers reflected perceptively focused observations and very well reasoned conclusions. The link with Grantham Museum that provided the box of authentic items used by soldiers in the war greatly enriched students' learning by bringing the subject to life. The assessment of students' written work is very good. Teachers provide telling detail in written feedback so that students know clearly how well they are doing and what they must do to improve.
129. In Years 10 and 11, students produce very high quality coursework assignments and produce them by the deadlines, because teachers emphasise the importance of this to the gaining of very high GCSE grades. Lessons continue to be very challenging and move at a brisk pace. In one lesson, for example, students rose to the challenge and used their deductive skills to impressive effect in interpreting the complex international relations between the USSR and USA, and the impact on the 1962 Cuban crisis of the respective personalities, motives and 'brinkmanship' of Khrushchev and Kennedy. Teachers' assessments of written answers are very thorough and informative about how to gain higher GCSE grades. Students' learning continues to be enriched by very good use of study visits to several sites of local historical significance, and to the battlefields of Northern Europe.

### ***Leadership and management***



130. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The head of department is an enthusiastic leader whose clear and intelligent vision for the further development of the subject, very good organisation, and willingness to embrace relevant innovation serve as a model for other subject leaders. Schemes of work, for instance, are of very high quality and, together with searching analysis of results and careful monitoring of teaching and students' books, help to ensure consistency of teaching standards. There is a mutually supportive ethos in the department that benefits all, and underpins the very good relationships that teachers have with students. Progress since the last inspection has been very good; standards are higher and teaching has improved.

## Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Well above average	Short course – above average Full course – well above average
Achievement	Good	Short course – satisfactory Full course – very good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Good

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good subject expertise enables teachers to support students' understanding.
- High expectations of behaviour ensure a good working environment.
- Teachers adopt a philosophical approach to questioning which provides very good challenge for students.
- Lack of opportunity for independent learning is reducing achievement.
- Lack of time and homework in Years 10 and 11 stifles investigation and discussion, and reduces achievement.
- Students are not sufficiently involved in the assessment of their work.

## Commentary

### Examination results

131. In 2004, results in the full GCSE course were very high. Students followed a voluntary lunchtime session to complete extra work in addition to the lessons for the short course. Results in 2004 were well above average but lower than in the previous two years when they were very high.

132. Results in the short course GCSE were well above average and achievement was satisfactory; however, the proportion of the highest grades A\*/A was lower than previous years, as was the proportion of A\*-C grades. Almost all boys are now entered for the examination, but the time allocated for religious education is only just sufficient to complete the syllabus.

## Standards and achievement

133. By the end of Year 9, students are encouraged to question what they learn and to give interpretations in their own words. They have a good grasp of the key features of the faiths they study. Work is well presented and detailed; however, the need to complete the content of the course is limiting opportunities to consolidate what they learn.
134. Standards in the statutory religious education course (short course) are above average, and achievement is satisfactory. The time allocation is not enough to allow students to investigate independently, or to follow lines of enquiry. They record necessary features and responses to moral issues, but they do not have the time to debate issues or explore the effects of belief on a believer. They challenge opinions and are willing to discuss opposing views, demonstrating a high level of understanding, but discussion is cut short and so undeveloped. The lack of a homework facility further limits opportunities for independent research or development.
135. Standards in the GCSE course are well above average. Students discuss religious concepts with confidence and are willing to defend their own opinions. Students are able to undertake independent work in their own time and are committed to success. Their motivation is apparent in their voluntary attendance at lunchtime lessons and this results in very good achievement.

### ***Teaching and learning***

136. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have a very good knowledge of their subject and this enables them to challenge students with a high level of questioning and a philosophical approach to the subject. Students are encouraged to consider the thinking behind religious concepts and the significance of the beliefs on behaviour. Teachers' expectations are high and as a consequence students behave well and concentration in lessons is good. Students have limited opportunity for independent learning however, and the lack of a homework facility in the upper school further increases their dependence on the teacher. Lessons are less effective where the teachers' exposition and questioning dominate and students are not actively involved. They are able to opt out and their concentration lapses. In Years 10 and 11, the very short time available means that discussion and enquiry are cut short and achievement is limited. This is reflected in the reduced proportion of A\*/A grades in the short-course GCSE.

### ***Leadership and management***

137. The department is well led and managed. Teachers make best use of a very limited time allocation in Years 10 and 11, and their commitment is evident in the extra-curricular lessons to enable students to complete GCSE. Departmental documentation is being reviewed and there are plans to enable students to have a wider experience of visiting and meeting people from different faiths. Staff are good role models and have high expectations that are conveyed to students. ICT is not yet fully integrated into the department and although some students are involved in the evaluation of their own assessment, this has yet to be consistently applied.
138. Improvement since the previous inspection is good. All students now have the opportunity to achieve accreditation in religious education. Standards in Year 11 have risen.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

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

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Well above average	Above average
Achievement	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory

Teaching and learning	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
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Leadership	Unsatisfactory
Management	Unsatisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Unsatisfactory

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Insufficient attention is paid to health and safety in lessons.
- Lessons are often dull and slow, so students do not learn enough and underachieve.
- There is a good range of extra opportunities for students outside the school day.
- Standards are declining as a result of unsatisfactory leadership and management.

## **Commentary**

### ***Examination results***

139. Results in GCSE examinations were well above average in 2004, but students performed worse than they did in most other subjects. Whilst the proportion of students gaining grades A\* and A was very high, a quarter of students only gained grades D, E and F. However, these results do not include a sizeable group of students who studied the subject, but then dropped out before taking the examination.

### ***Standards and achievement***

140. Students arrive at the school with very high standards in the subject; even in Year 7 their ability to evaluate products is exceptional. By the end of Year 9, standards are well above average so students' achievement is unsatisfactory. Standards in aspects such as electronics, systems and control are very high indeed, with students' understanding of these topics far in excess of that usually seen. However, designing skills are only average as students get so few opportunities to design products. Students also do not have the breadth of knowledge that is usually seen, because they do not study all of the aspects of the National Curriculum. By the end of Year 11, standards are above average, reflecting students' unsatisfactory achievement. Skills in designing remain a relative weakness, as students have not spent enough time on developing the basics in earlier years.

### ***Teaching and learning***

141. Throughout the department, teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and control their students well. Homework is also used well to extend the amount time that is available for students; their excellent attitudes ensure that they make the most of their homework. However, these positive features are offset by more important weaknesses. Lessons are often slow and dull, with students carrying out repetitive tasks that are too easy for them, such as copying out work from computer screens or worksheets. This means that students are not doing enough work; their books have far less in them than would be expected of students of such levels of attainment. In Year 11, the same weaknesses lead to students falling behind in their coursework and not getting the grades of which they are capable. This is not helped by the unsatisfactory assessment, which is not accurate or sufficiently thorough to allow teachers to set targets for students.
142. Insufficient attention is given to health and safety in workshops; students are left unattended when working with tools and bags are piled in front of exits.

### ***Leadership and management***

143. Results have been falling for some years and this decline has not been checked. The weaknesses in the department have not been analysed sufficiently, especially in terms of teaching, so any actions taken have been ineffective. The department has fallen further and further behind other schools; teachers are still not using National Curriculum levels to assess students, for example. Despite adequate resourcing, the curriculum has become much narrower; much of the work is based on graphics and electronics, with no opportunity to study food or compliant materials, and too little design work. Nevertheless, staff are hardworking; the extra time they put into clubs is good and they have taken the lead in developing enterprise activities for students. However, rooms are untidy and cluttered; they do not project the image of a subject where high standards are the norm.

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS**

### **Art and design**

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

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

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Good

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Three-dimensional work is of a very high standard.
- Drawing and painting are very good.
- There is not enough focus on artistic considerations in some lessons.

### **Commentary**

#### ***Examination results***

144. Results in the 2004 GCSE examinations were well above average. However, students achieved less well in art and design than in most of their other subjects. A smaller than average proportion of students choose this subject.

#### ***Standards and achievement***

145. By the end of Year 9, students acquire very good skills in drawing and painting. They use colour effectively to depict emotions in portraits in the Expressionist style. Work in clay modelling is particularly impressive with regard to design and creativity and the ability to handle clay correctly. In Year 7, the design and construction of African masks are very impressive with all students achieving very high standards. These show good achievement given students' average standards of skills and techniques on entry to the school. However, standards are lower in some groups than in others, depending on the work done and the quality of teaching.

146. Because of timetable arrangements no GCSE lessons were observed. However, a scrutiny of students' work shows standards to be well above average. All students show a good understanding of composition and the power and impact of line. Drawings are bold and paintings are strong with a lively use of colour. The structure of work within the themes explored and the depth and detail in research and development of ideas indicate very good teaching overall. Students' written notes describing the origin and development of their ideas are very impressive in linking their own work to ideas gained in research.

#### ***Teaching and learning***

147. Teaching and learning are very good overall. However, there is variation in practice between teachers in Years 7 to 9. Where teaching is very good the teacher gives very inspiring demonstrations on the skills and techniques of handling clay and mixing and applying paint to convey mood and expression. In these lessons students are encouraged and helped to be creative and imaginative and all work is highly individual. There are, however, some weaknesses in teaching where students are not given clear instructions or guidance, for example on how to use a viewfinder to select interesting compositions. Similarly they are not given sufficient guidance on techniques for scaling up work effectively. There is not enough consideration of artistic merit in these works or in work in designing the front page of a newspaper. In the best lessons all

students are given very good one-to-one guidance and support so all make equally good progress. In general, students have very good attitudes to art. However, when the teaching and work given are not inspiring they show a subtle measure of discontent and impatience.

148. In the best lessons the subject makes a good contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by considering these aspects in students' own work and in the work of artists.

### ***Leadership and management***

149. The new leadership has moved decisively to ensure that GCSE standards are not affected by changes in staffing. There is no technician help and this limits the range of work that can be done. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. Standards have improved and are significantly higher in GCSE.

## **Music**

Provision in music is **very good**.

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

Leadership	Excellent
Management	Very good
Progress since previous inspection	Very good

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Students achieve very well because they have very positive attitudes and teachers pass on their expert knowledge effectively to help students learn.
- High quality leadership has resulted in the subject becoming very popular and considerably improving over the last few years.
- Not all aspects of teaching and marking are consistent, occasionally resulting in some students not learning as well as others.
- Students' performance and social skills are greatly enhanced because they have lots of opportunities to take part in high quality ensembles.
- Substantially improved computer resources have raised standards and allowed all students to achieve really well.
- Accommodation is unsuitable for large practical activities and is restricting opportunities for more instrumental lessons.

## **Commentary**

### ***Examination results***

150. Results in the 2004 GCSE examinations were very high which is exceptional considering the number of students entered was double that normally found. Students did as well in music as they did in most of their other subjects.

### ***Standards and achievement***

151. Standards on entry to the school are above average. Some students enter the school having had hardly any contact with music, whilst others are already good instrumentalists. Students have highly developed performance skills because they receive good quality instrumental

tuition and have lots of opportunities to take part in high quality ensembles such as the excellent school big band. A significant aid to their achievement is their excellent attitudes and ability to work really well on their own and in small groups. By the end of Year 9, the highest attainers can create improvised melodies, skilfully combining them with a ground bass. They use computers very well to score their pieces. By the end of Year 11, students are very accomplished performers with many achieving the highest levels in instrumental examinations. Higher attainers are confident composers and create skilfully structured pieces that display the highest level of understanding of musical devices such as syncopation and complex harmony. All students in Years 10 and 11 are skilled in using music software to refine and enhance their pieces; they use technical language extremely well when describing the music they hear and study. Theory and appraising work are less developed but still show a very clear understanding of the examination requirements.

### ***Teaching and learning***

152. Students learn very well because they have wonderful attitudes to work and teaching is on occasions excellent. Teachers plan lessons thoroughly and expertly demonstrate musical ideas. Lessons for older students are closely linked to the examination syllabus and delivered more consistently. In the best lessons students make much better progress than expected because teachers give succinct instructions and constantly challenge the students to work even harder. The pace of lessons is brisk and lively which keeps the students focused and enthusiastic about their learning. It is in these lessons that the students learn the most. In Years 7 to 9, teachers sometimes talk for too long and 'spoon-feed' the students with work that is occasionally too easy for most of them. In these lessons students become bored but because they have excellent attitudes to work they still manage to achieve very well. The marking of work is generally good but is inconsistently applied. Most work is marked with helpful comments informing students what to do to get better, but some is just ticked or given a brief comment such as "Well done". Targets are shared well with students so they know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.

### ***Leadership and management***

153. Leadership is characterised by a very clear vision and pure enthusiasm for driving the subject forward. Day-to-day management is underpinned by highly organised documentation and effective schemes of work. Great progress has been made since the previous inspection. Standards have risen and numbers entered for examinations have flourished. There are now twice as many students partaking in instrumental lessons than at the time of the last inspection and over 300 students join in the wide range of high quality out-of-school activities each week. The department has embraced the spirit of business and enterprise and successfully hires out the school ensembles to the local community. The income from this and the fund-raising endeavours of students helps to provide the much needed resources. Many distinguished musicians visit the school, providing superb workshops for the students. Accommodation is unsatisfactory; teachers and students have to work in totally unsuitable rooms. Many students are prevented from learning instruments because of a lack of appropriate rooms and large groups struggle to perform in the cramped conditions. It is a tribute to the excellent attitudes of students and patience of staff that these activities are so successful.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Provision in physical education is **good**.

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

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good leadership provides a clear vision focused on raising standards.
- Students achieve well because of good teaching and their very good attitudes towards the subject.
- Poor indoor accommodation constrains the curriculum, and restricts students' opportunities to achieve high standards in some activities.
- An excellent extra-curricular programme offers opportunities for all students, especially the gifted and talented, to excel in school and beyond.

### **Commentary**

#### ***Examination results***

154. The 2004 GCSE results were well above average.

#### ***Standards and achievement***

155. Above average standards in Year 9 represent good achievement in relation to students' broadly average starting point on entry to the school. Boys achieve well in athletics and team games, as seen in football and hockey. Students with special educational needs are well integrated, and achieve as well as their classmates, well illustrated in basketball.

156. In Year 11, overall standards are well above average, reflecting good achievement. Students following the core curriculum course continue to achieve well in games, as seen in cricket. Students following the GCSE course show a very good knowledge and understanding of theoretical aspects, and attain high standards in their practical work. Standards in extra-curricular sport are very high, reflected in many students' successes at district, county and national level in a range of sports. The Year 7 and Year 9 football teams became District Champions during the inspection.

#### ***Teaching and learning***

157. Knowledgeable, enthusiastic and well-planned teaching motivates students and demands a high level of activity. Students' attitudes are very good, well illustrated by consistently high standards of participation, dress and behaviour. Students' enthusiasm for the subject is reflected in their support for extra-curricular activities, and the effort they put into their work. Good teaching reflects challenge, pace and high expectations. The best learning occurs when students are rigorously challenged to improve their performance, as seen in indoor athletics, and are made to think deeply by probing questioning, well illustrated in a GCSE theory lesson. In practical lessons, it is the rigorous emphasis on quality and improvement that distinguishes the very good teaching from the good. There is insufficient planning for the development of students' evaluating and improving performance skills. Marking of GCSE coursework does not give students enough advice on how to improve, or indicate the progress they are making.

#### ***Leadership and management***

158. Very good leadership supported by a strong team provides clear vision and direction for the subject, well illustrated by the consistent improvement in examination results and the increased numbers opting to study physical education. This is to the department's credit because poor indoor provision constrains the curriculum and

restricts students' opportunities to achieve high standards in some activities. Health and safety risk assessments in physical activities are incomplete. A particular strength of the department is accurate self-evaluation, and areas for improvement that are clearly identified. An excellent extra-curricular programme provides opportunities for all students, especially the gifted and talented, to excel in school and beyond. Students benefit from strong links with the community, local sports clubs and other schools. The school is well on the way to achieving the aim of the national strategy for 85 per cent of students to receive at least two hours a week of quality physical education.

159. Very good improvement has been made since the previous inspection. Standards in practical activities have risen in all years, and GCSE results have improved.

## BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

### Business studies

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

	Year 11
Standards	Very high
Achievement	Very good
Teaching and learning	Very good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Good

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching brings about very good achievement for students of all abilities.
- Students are challenged well to achieve at the higher grades.
- The use of ICT is not fully exploited to further enhance students' learning.

### Commentary

#### ***Examination results***

160. Results in the 2004 GCSE examinations were very high when compared with the national average. Particularly significant is the percentage of higher grades, with the number of A\*/A grades being well over three times the national average.

#### ***Standards and achievement***

161. By the end of Year 11, students show a clear understanding of business ideas and processes and have a genuine understanding of the values involved in business and economic decision-making. Students in Year 10 show a perceptive grasp of trade unions and the process of collective bargaining. They explain why workers join trade unions and make an effective analysis and evaluation of the benefits members hope to receive. Students in Year 11 display knowledge and skills well beyond what might typically be expected. They confidently demonstrated this in a very good lesson about exchange rates and international trade, clearly stating how changes in exchange rates affect the business community.

#### ***Teaching and learning***

162. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. Aims of lessons are clear and relevant to students' needs. Lessons are planned very thoroughly. Over a period of time, students' work demonstrates that the range of teaching methods used is varied and students are therefore able to develop different ways of working. Students in Year 10 benefited from the highly appropriate task of examining different examination answers related to questions based around business systems. The teacher skilfully used a variety of effective teaching methods, which encouraged and engaged all. Students respond extremely well to the variety of challenges offered to them. They are very helpful and considerate. They are extremely enthusiastic and keen to work hard. Assessment is good as students are helped to judge their own work and to set targets for further improvements.

#### ***Leadership and management***

163. Leadership and management of the department are good. There is a focus on improving standards. Staff share a common purpose and make an effective

contribution to the school's goals and values. There has been good progress since the time of the previous inspection with standards and teaching improving.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

### Citizenship and PSHE

The school has chosen to teach the citizenship programme through the Personal Development Curriculum (PDC), all subjects, collapsed timetables and assembly themes.

Provision in citizenship is **good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Above average	Above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

  

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Not applicable

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The scheme of work for the PDC is good; it successfully integrates citizenship.
- There is a citizenship ethos across the school as citizenship is 'caught as well as taught'.
- Whole-school activities like voting and supporting the school council and charity work enhance active citizenship.
- Many subjects do not contribute sufficiently to the citizenship programme.
- Assessment procedures and reporting arrangements do not sufficiently inform the progress that students are making in developing citizenship skills.

### Commentary

#### **Examination results**

164. Students do not follow an examination course in citizenship.

#### **Standards and achievement**

165. Students join the school with an average level of understanding about citizenship. By the end of Years 9 and 11 they have above average skills of enquiry and knowledge about becoming informed citizens which shows they achieve well during their time in the main school. The above average standards are the consequences of a well-planned PDC which successfully integrates citizenship into the weekly lessons. Citizenship is enhanced when a collapsed timetable allows activities like the Year 7 finance day and the Year 10 Holocaust Day to enrich citizenship programme. Visits from theatre groups successfully involve students in issues concerning prejudice, discrimination and alcohol. The school's ethos promotes citizenship as citizenship is 'caught as well as taught'. Students have very good attitudes both in lessons and about school. The vast majority of students show a duty and obligation to others and the community. Divisional councils and school council also provide good opportunities for all students to take part in the democratic process.

#### **Teaching and learning**

166. Teaching is consistently good, which ensures students learn well and become well-informed citizens. In the majority of the PDC lessons, motivated students are well

engaged in both enjoyable and interesting activities. This is the result of a very well planned programme, which successfully supports tutors in lesson planning. Good planning gives consistency to the citizenship element of the teaching within the PDC. However, there are elements of the citizenship programme undertaken by different subjects which are less well developed and they have less impact. Most teachers show very good knowledge of citizenship and topical issues but opportunities are frequently missed to develop citizenship themes, which would further enrich teaching. Overall, teaching methods are good and they successfully engage students. For example, card activities are used to prioritise employment qualities and sustainable development scenarios. The level of student debate is good especially with a partner but discussion is less successful when there are four or five members in a group.

### ***Leadership and management***

167. Good progress has been made with the introduction of citizenship through the PDC programme. However, only a few subjects like music, history and religious education contribute well to citizenship development but usually it is not made explicit. Assessment and reporting systems do not allow students and parents to see the progress made over the three strands. The school is committed to the development of citizenship. The whole-school ethos contributes significantly to developing good citizens. Citizenship was not a curriculum subject at the last inspection.

## SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM

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

*The table below shows entry and performance information for courses completed in 2004.*

### **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	4	100	98.3	75	50.2	90	87.1
Biology	16	93.8	96.6	25	40	76.3	79.3
Business studies	19	100	98.9	63.2	39.4	95.8	81.8
Chemistry	20	95	97.7	45	50	81	85.7
English	26	100	99.2	69.2	36.4	95.4	81.1
Economics	11	90.9	98.8	63.6	54.3	90.9	89.8
English literature	8	100	99.4	75	44.9	100	85.5
Design and technology	12	100	97.8	75	35	101.7	77.9
Drama	4	100	99.6	50	42.8	100	99.6
French	4	100	99	50	53.1	90	88.9
General studies	85	98.8	94.9	27.1	30.5	73.6	72.9
Geography	14	100	98.8	64.3	46.4	92.9	85.2
History	19	100	99	73.7	45.6	104.2	85.1
Information technology	5	100	96.3	40	25.7	92	71.1
Mathematics	41	100	96.8	68.3	56.6	99.5	89.5
Other social studies	12	91.7	97.4	16.7	42.5	66.7	81.6
Physics	11	100	96.7	72.7	45.3	101.8	82.6
Music	10	100	98.2	30	37.1	72	79.5
Religious studies	1	100	100	0	50	40	87.4
Other languages	1	100	100	0	66.7	80	95.6
Other social studies	12	91.7	97.4	16.7	42.5	66.7	81.6
Sports studies	13	100	97.8	69.2	30.9	103.1	75.4

## ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

The focus subjects for the inspection were English literature and German.

### English literature

Provision in English literature is **good**.

	Year 12	Year 13
Standards	Well above average	Well above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Good

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve well as a result of good teaching.
- Stable staffing has led to a good match of teachers to the curriculum.
- Marking of students' work does not relate to the assessment objectives of the syllabus.
- There is very limited use of ICT in English literature.

### Commentary

#### **Examination results**

168. Results at A-level were well above average in 2004 and similar in 2003.

#### **Standards and achievement**

169. Students are able to articulate sophisticated views on a wide range of texts. The higher attainers show understanding and insight of a breadth of literature. They offer opinions, in both oral and written work, which are based on a range of interpretations about texts. They are confident at exploring underlying meanings, and in their written work they are able to use critical vocabulary, and present well-structured arguments.
170. The relatively lower attainers, who are performing well above average, are able to appreciate a writer's intentions in texts. They can relate this to the way the writer chooses a particular form, structures the work, and uses language. The standard of written work seen is well above average and accounts for the fact that the students achieve more of the top grades than the national average.
171. The students are highly motivated and 'self-starting' and have very positive attitudes to the subject. This results in good achievement. One weakness in the standards is the below average use of ICT in their work, particularly at the drafting and redrafting phase.

#### **Teaching and learning**

172. The English department has benefited from having staff stability for a number of years, which has resulted in a good match of teachers to the curriculum. The department has a range of expertise, which brings a wealth of experience to the lessons. As a result, examination grades are well above the national average.



173. Teachers have a very good knowledge of their subject, and are very passionate about literature. Their enthusiasm for the subject is very obvious, and motivates the students to learn, and this is reflected in the good achievement of the students. Teachers have extremely high expectations of students, which promotes a very positive work ethic in the subject. Teachers make it very clear to students what is expected of them. The students are aware of this and this motivates them to work hard, and results in excellent classroom behaviour, which results in good learning.
174. The assessment objectives are placed at the forefront of the teaching, which gives the students clear guidance as to what is expected of them in coursework, and in the examination. However, when tasks are assessed, the comments made by teachers do not relate to these. Comments tend to refer to technical errors, or content, rather than the skills that the assessment objectives are testing. This is reducing the proportion of A grades which the students achieve. It also means that students are not developing the appropriate skills base for the synoptic paper. They do less well on this unit, compared to the others, as a result. There is very limited use of ICT to support learning and to push the B grades up to the top grade.

### **Leadership and management**

175. Good leadership has ensured that standards are well above average and that students are achieving well. The scholarly head of department is a good role model, and motivates the staff to work hard. Management of the department is good. The head of department has high expectations of the staff. He is a good delegator, and has outlined very clearly their individual roles and responsibilities (including voluntary ones). This also shows his clear vision about how the department is to be run. Assessment of written work is an area of development for the department. The department does not have a formal assessment policy which ensures that marking of students' work is in line with the assessment objectives, and occurs on a regular basis. The department has made good progress since the last inspection when the results in English were average.

### **Literacy across the curriculum**

176. Levels of literacy are very high. Students are very articulate and their writing is of a very high order.

## **German**

Provision in German is **satisfactory**.

	Year 12	Year 13
Standards	Average	Average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Teaching and learning	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Leadership	Satisfactory
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since previous inspection.	Good

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The quality of spoken German is not as high as might be expected from students at this level.
- Students work hard and have excellent attitudes to work.

## Commentary

### **Examination results**

177. Results at A-level were in line with the national average in 2004 and were similar to those attained in 2003. Students achieve satisfactorily in relation to the grades they gained previously in GCSE examinations.

### **Standards and achievement**

178. Students have a good understanding of the detail of authentic written material from German newspapers and articles. Their spoken German is satisfactory and they have an adequate vocabulary to discuss important topical, political and environmental issues. Students' written work is at the level expected for the course, but there are limited examples of extended writing with a wide range of vocabulary and sophisticated language, especially in Year 12. Students have not had the full benefit of the improvements that have taken place in teaching in the main school and this has affected achievement in the sixth form.

### **Teaching and learning.**

179. Teachers have good subject knowledge, both with the level of spoken and written German required and with the technicalities of how best to prepare students for examinations. However, inspection evidence indicates that too much English is spoken in lessons, by both students and teachers, and this leads to students not being as competent with spoken German as they could be. Good assessment procedures give students an indication of their present level of performance and of their likely grades. Analysis of students' work indicates that teachers' marking varies in both regularity and thoroughness, especially where students are taught by more than one teacher. This is a factor in the inconsistent quality of written work produced by students. Teachers give students a high level of personal support and this improves students' self-confidence. Students are attentive and highly motivated and respond very well in lessons where teachers have high expectations of their performance.

### **Leadership and management**

180. In the past, relatively few students have chosen to study German in the sixth form, but an encouraging rise in numbers is now taking place. Trips abroad and exchanges with schools on the continent have substantial benefits in terms of students' learning, experience and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Leadership and management are satisfactory.

## **MATHEMATICS**

The focus subject for the inspection was mathematics.

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

	Year 12	Year 13
Standards	Well above average	Well above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Very good
Management	Very good

Progress since previous inspection	Good
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The school offers mathematics at AS level and A-level and it is very rare for a student not to complete the course. The school offers AS and A-level in the areas of the core mathematics, pure mathematics, mechanics, statistics and decision mathematics. Students have the opportunity to study further mathematics.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good and consequently students are well motivated and work hard. They learn very well as a result.
- There are very good methods of assessing attainment and monitoring and tracking achievement so that students can see how they are progressing and what they need to do to improve.
- Students do not have enough opportunities to make extended contributions in class discussions.
- Students would benefit from better links with universities that would enhance their mathematics further.

## **Commentary**

### ***Examination results***

181. In 2004, results at A-level were well above the national average. Students did significantly better in mathematics than they did in the other subjects they studied.

### ***Standards and achievement***

182. Overall achievement is good, given the students' attainment on entry to the course, which is above the level usually seen. The quality of students' written and oral work is generally well above that expected at this stage in the course. In pure mathematics, students demonstrate very good understanding of the chain, product and quotient rules when differentiating and can apply these when investigating and solving problems with trigonometric functions. They have very good recall of the combination of trigonometric functions and their outcome. Students studying decision mathematics are able to complete tables using improvement index, adjustment and cycles of adjustment and finally they can transfer accurately the existing cells to calculate the transportation pattern to calculate the optimal solution. They demonstrate a very good understanding of critical path analysis. A high quality of work was seen by the students of further mathematics when manipulating complex numbers.

### ***Teaching and learning***

183. The good level of knowledge of the teachers leads to clear explanations of concepts. One of the strengths of the better teaching is the quality of challenging questions and good planning of lessons where teachers match both questions and examples very well to the ability of the students. This challenges and inspires students to tackle questions with confidence. In the better lessons, teachers build on previous learning and ensure students understand the mathematical concepts. They summarise these with students for future reference, for example when students were calculating volumes of revolution. There are very good relationships between students and teachers that promote confidence in students. Teachers set and insist on high standards of presentation in written work. Students have a mature approach to mathematics and are well motivated. Consequently they put in a good level of intellectual effort and acquire new knowledge expeditiously. Attitudes to work are very good, but there are few opportunities for students to work together either in pairs or in groups so that they can discuss mathematics and learn from each other. Students are attentive in lessons and are interested in the subject. They are generally engaged throughout the lesson and a high level of concentration is maintained. They respond well to questions and volunteer questions and answers. However, in a minority of lessons, there are missed opportunities to involve students more actively in lessons. A considerable amount of work is achieved by students. The day-to-day marking and assessment of students' work are good. Constructive diagnostic marking of the regular assessments takes place, indicating to students where they have made mistakes and what they need to do to improve. Teachers and students are able to track their own progress through a consistency in marks given. Homework is set regularly. It is used very effectively to consolidate and extend new work that is introduced in the lesson.

### ***Leadership and management***

184. The very good leadership and management are rooted in effective consultation and collaboration amongst teachers. There is a clear vision for improvement. Teachers work very well together and are keen to raise standards in mathematics. Teachers provide students with very good support at lunchtimes and in revision classes. There are very good procedures for assessing the students' performance as they progress

through the sixth form. The wide range of topics within the mathematics curriculum provides students with good opportunities to study new areas of the subject, ensuring that interest and motivation are maintained and extended. There are few links with universities and this is an area for improvement.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

185. Competence in mathematics is very high. Students' competency in the use of physics and ICT is particularly good.

## SCIENCE

The focus subject for the inspection was physics.

Provision in physics is **good**.

	Year 12	Year 13
Standards	Well above average	Well above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

  

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Good

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching ensures that students of all levels of attainment are achieving well.
- Some errors in students' work, especially practical, go unnoticed.
- Good leadership and management have led to improvements in standards.

### Commentary

#### **Examination results**

186. Examination results were well above average in 2004.

#### **Standards and achievement**

187. Students' knowledge and understanding of the topics they have studied are exceptionally good. They cope easily with new topics, and their capacity for logical thought allows them to quickly apply their new learning to different situations. Students' practical skills, on the other hand, are only average; they often underestimate the difficulty of a task and consequently make silly errors in their work, such as failing to measure between the correct points. Such errors also crop up in their written answers, where descriptions and calculations are perfect, but then marks will be lost by missing out the units for example.

#### **Teaching and learning**

188. Teachers choose the activities well to ensure students learn about new topics, at the same time as they develop their practical skills and/or examination technique. The background knowledge of some teachers is quite exceptional, for example confidently describing their experiences with particle accelerators that bring the topic alive. Gentle humour, appropriate to sixth form students, is a feature of most lessons, leading to students enjoying their time in physics. However, not all lessons share these attributes. Errors go unnoticed in some lessons taught by teachers who do not have the same depth of subject knowledge as others. Nevertheless, teachers always set work that is demanding and students have developed very good note-taking skills. In other respects, students' independent learning skills are not as good; they tend to rely too heavily on the teacher for hints and guidance, rather than having the confidence to try something for themselves.

### ***Leadership and management***

189. Three teachers, who work as a close-knit team, teach the course. Teachers have a good awareness of the standards attained by their students, and also their individual strengths and weaknesses. The head of subject has a clear focus on maximising achievement; the staff have been deployed well to make the most of their skills, while at the same time allowing for their further training in the subject as they become more experienced. Standards have improved considerably since the previous inspection.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

The focus for the inspection was the AVCE ICT course. One Year 12 computer studies lesson was observed. Work seen was of a very high standard. In a very good lesson, students used their programming skills to produce databases of high quality.

Provision in ICT is **very good**.

	Year 12	Year 13
Standards	Very high	Well above average
Achievement	Very good	Very good
Teaching and learning	Very good	Very good

Leadership	Very good
Management	Very good
Progress since previous inspection	Not applicable

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Students achieve very well because of very good teaching.
- Very high levels of independence and maturity also contribute significantly to students' achievement.
- Students' learning is enhanced through work placements in the local community.

### **Commentary**

#### ***Examination results***

190. This is a new course and will be examined for the first time in 2005.

#### ***Standards and achievement***

191. Students in Year 13 use their programming skills well to add features to solutions using standard programs. They describe their work accurately but lower achieving students do not always include sufficient detail or go into enough depth. Students show very impressive levels of self-motivation. They enjoy solving problems and take a manifest pride in their completed solutions. Work is presented to a very high standard. Standards of work from students in Year 12 are higher because they started the course with higher levels of achievement

#### ***Teaching and learning***

192. Teachers have excellent knowledge of the subject and how to teach it. A key feature of the effectiveness of teaching is the strong emphasis placed upon solving problems. Very good use is made of computer-assisted learning such as when students used a debugging facility to help them rectify errors in database programs they had written. Teachers are fully acquainted with examination requirements. This knowledge was

seen to be used very effectively when Year 12 students were helped in their preparation for a forthcoming examination.

193. Work placements make a significant contribution to the learning of many students. Some students regularly assist the school ICT technicians, others provide technical support to local primary schools and yet others help local companies implement ICT into their business. Students not only enjoy these placements but further their understanding of how their skills can be deployed.



### **Leadership and management**

194. A choice of course enriches the curriculum of the sixth form. Courses have been appropriately chosen to meet need and clear plans for further development will provide even greater enrichment. Beneficial links have been widely established, one example being a lecture on artificial intelligence by a professor from a local university. Teachers delivering the course co-operate well and the course runs smoothly.

### **Information and communication across the curriculum**

195. Students display very high levels of competency when using ICT. They know the advantages brought from its use. A key skills course is provided for those students needing to develop their skills further. In mathematics, students use graphical packages well to investigate the properties of curves. In physics, students use ICT to record and analyse the results of experiments. In art, a visiting artist uses ICT extensively in his own work and helps students deploy his techniques in their work.

## **HUMANITIES**

The focus subject for the inspection was history.

### **History**

Provision in history is **very good**.

	Year 12	Year 13
Standards	Well above average	Well above average
Achievement	Very good	Very good
Teaching and Learning	Very good	Very good

Leadership	Very good
Management	Very good
Progress since the previous report	Very good

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good teaching produces challenging lessons that move at great pace and lead to students achieving very well.
- Students work very well independently and relish the frequent opportunities to bounce their ideas off each other in group discussions.
- The analysis of students' previous attainment and the setting of challenging but realistic targets for their future achievements are very rigorous.
- Students are highly motivated and like the subject very much, and the numbers opting for it have increased significantly in recent years.

### **Commentary**

#### **Examination results**

196. Results in the 2004 examinations were well above average for both AS and A-level. Results were similar in 2003.

#### **Standards and achievement**

197. The great majority of students in Year 12 produce writing that analyses critically evidence from a wide range of historical sources, evaluates the views of different

historians and reaches very well supported conclusions. Almost every student continues to the A-level course, and in Year 13 they demonstrate well above average investigative skills. They become confident independent learners who produce written work that reflects clear thinking and a critical self-evaluation of the quality of work they are producing. They bring this constructive critical approach to bear when working together in lessons, and this greatly benefits the quality of all their work.

### ***Teaching and learning***

198. All students benefit from very knowledgeable and enthusiastic teaching. Teachers plan their lessons very well, including in them a range of individual and interactive activities that challenge and stimulate their students. As a result, students both learn and achieve very well in Years 12 and 13. In a Year 12 lesson on post-Civil War England, for instance, close analysis of sources enabled students to appreciate important differences in thinking between members of the Levellers, and compare this with the range of members' views within modern political parties. Similarly, a very good lesson in Year 13 ensured that students gained very good understanding of whether foreign influences were more important in bringing about the unification of Italy than the contributions of key people such as Cavour and Garibaldi. This lesson achieved the objective of sharpening students' awareness of the need for careful planning and the inclusion of concise and relevant supporting evidence in examination answers. Teachers are well versed in the requirements of examinations and their assessment of written assignments is accurate and the marking is detailed and thorough. The monitoring of students' achievement and progress, through frequent assessment and student target setting, is rigorous. Students' attitudes towards the subject are very positive and they greatly enjoy the lessons.

### ***Leadership and management***

199. Both leadership and management of the subject are very good. Well-structured documents that contain thorough schemes of work and guidance for staff are in place. Against the background of teachers' shared values, a spirit of critical self-evaluation ensures that continuous progress is made towards raising standards even further. That climate has resulted in very good improvement since the previous inspection.

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA**

The focus subject for the inspection was art.

However, one Year 12 lesson was seen in **music**. Students achieved very well because they were presented with a variety of interesting tasks and excellent resources. Highly effective teaching directed the pace of their learning at breakneck speed. Students' knowledge of appraising the music of Miles Davis, Jamie Cullum and Frank Sinatra was greatly increased. Standards were, overall, well above average and the students had outstanding attitudes to their work.

### **Art**

Provision in art is **very good**.

	Year 12	Year 13
Standards	Above average	Well above average
Achievement	Good	Very good
Teaching and learning	Very good	Very good

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is very good in extending students' vision and capabilities.
- Students have excellent attitudes and show impressive initiative and imagination.
- There is very good provision and use of ICT to extend learning.

## Commentary

### **Examination results**

200. Results at A-level have been above the national average over the past three years with three in four students gaining A/B grades in 2004. However, the numbers taking the subject in 2004 were too small for meaningful national comparisons.

### **Standards and achievement**

201. In work seen, standards are impressive especially in the range and quality of ideas and in the depth and detail in students' studies. Drawing and painting are striking in composition and in the quality of tone and texture achieved. Paintings vary from the subtle to the dramatic in the use of colour; there is a lively quality in all students' work. All work is highly individual, creative and imaginative. There is evidence of clear progression in the quality of work throughout Year 12 with students showing increasing confidence in experimentation by Year 13. All ideas are well researched and students show an impressive knowledge of works of art from the classical period to the modern and post modern. They are helped in their research and understanding by their very good skills in literacy. Their written notes are detailed and impressive in their individual interpretations of the impact of art in general and its effect on their own work. Students are very good independent learners.

### **Teaching and learning**

202. All students get intensive, high quality, individual tuition tailored to extend their vision within their chosen themes. The teachers have very good knowledge and expertise across a range of art disciplines and they work jointly to ensure that the students get the best possible provision and breadth in their studies. The use of a practising trained artist with extensive experience in film, theatre, television and illustration to assist in the teaching gives students added experience of the world of work. Assessment, including self-assessment, is an integral part of all lessons and students know what they have to do to improve at all points. There is very good, high quality provision in ICT within the department and this is well used for research and for the exploration and manipulation of images. Students have excellent attitudes to the subject. They value the provision in art and speak with enthusiasm about their studies. There is a very significant increase in the numbers taking art in the present Years 12 and 13.

### **Leadership and management**

203. The new leadership has concentrated on ensuring that standards are improved by the changes in staffing. There is very good extra-curricular provision including visits to museums and galleries. There is very good use of team teaching to enhance provision. Teaching, learning and standards have all improved since the previous inspection.

## **HOSPITALITY, SPORTS, LEISURE AND TRAVEL**

The focus subject for the inspection was physical education.

### **Physical education**

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

	Year 12	Year 13
Standards	Very high	Very high
Achievement	Very good	Very good

Teaching and learning	Very good	Very good
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Leadership	Very good
Management	Very good
Progress since previous inspection	Very good

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good teaching enables students to achieve far better than expected.
- Strong leadership inspires an enthusiasm for the subject, reflected in students' achievements in and outside lessons.
- Marking of coursework does not always let students know what progress they are making against targets set.
- There are excellent opportunities for enrichment and extra-curricular sport.

### **Commentary**

#### ***Examination results***

204. The 2004 A-level results were very high and place the school in the top five per cent of all schools nationally. Two-thirds of the students who took the examination achieved the higher grades.

#### ***Standards and achievement***

205. Students in Year 12 are confident in discussion and show a very high level of understanding of how sport has developed in this country, especially the factors influencing participation in sport today. In Year 13, standards are high. Students demonstrate very good research skills in preparation for making a presentation to their group. They have an impressive understanding of the issues surrounding hooliganism in sport. Standards in practical work are very high, well illustrated by the senior rugby team's success in winning the Lincolnshire Rugby Sevens Championship during the week of the inspection.

#### ***Teaching and learning***

206. Teachers have very good knowledge and infectious enthusiasm for the subject. Students are motivated by a range of interesting and challenging activities that enable them to have an active role in their learning, providing opportunities to take responsibility and make decisions. Students of all abilities benefit from the teachers' skilful use of questioning to stimulate discussion and consolidate learning. Opportunities for staff and students to use the full range of their ICT skills are limited, due to the lack of resources in the classrooms allocated. The analysis and use of assessment data to set individual targets and estimate progress are good, but the marking of coursework gives little indication of how students are performing against targets set.

#### ***Leadership and management***

207. Strong leadership and management ensure that consistently high standards are maintained. Students appreciate the good support and guidance they receive. Many students take advantage of the excellent opportunities to gain wider experience by assisting with extra-curricular activities and coaching younger students. As part of the Community Sports Leader Award, students also help in local primary schools. Since the previous inspection, progress has been very good. The A-level examination has been successfully introduced and results over the last three years have been consistently very high.

### **BUSINESS**

The focus subject for the inspection was business studies.

## **Business studies**

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

	Year 12	Year 13
Standards	Well above average	Well above average
Achievement	Very good	Very good
Teaching and learning	Very good	Very good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Good

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Results at A-level continue to be far better than expected nationally
- Increased levels of challenge have resulted in achievement at the very highest grades.
- Teachers share resources well, which are carefully organised to best promote learning

### **Commentary**

#### ***Examination results***

208. In 2004, results at A-level were well above average. Particularly significant is the achievement at the higher A and B grades.

#### ***Standards and achievement***

209. In Years 12 and 13, students demonstrate a confident understanding of key business terms and concepts. They can all interpret and evaluate information from a variety of sources and then analyse the information that they collect, draw conclusions and make predictions. They accurately use a wide range of business terminology. Students in Year 12 clearly demonstrated this when considering business ethics and then evaluating the moral issues that impact on the decision-making process. They realistically researched the advantages and disadvantages of ethically guided companies and expressed their views in an articulate manner when looking at the conflicts of ethics with making profit.

#### ***Teaching and learning***

210. Students in both Years 12 and 13 benefit from very good teaching. The range of teaching activities employed shows that all staff have an awareness of the necessity to meet the individual needs of students. Teachers provide informed answers to questions and skilfully lead discussions and investigations. A purposeful atmosphere exists in lessons. Students show curiosity, insight and imagination and thoughtfully reflect on fundamental questions. Teachers have excellent relationships with their students. This was evident in a Year 12 lesson when students were evaluating the strategies for success of various entrepreneurs. Examples used were both appropriate and relevant and during this lesson students were able to benefit from the commercial experience that the teacher brought to the learning process. Students in Year 13 display exemplary knowledge and understanding of key business terminology. This was demonstrated well when they were examining the impact of government policy on business. They showed a thorough appreciation of the effects of different government policies on the economy and the timing of this lesson was particularly appropriate, as it was budget day! However, sometimes there is insufficient development of industrial links to exemplify the topics being covered in lessons. Students' attitudes towards the subject are extremely positive and students really enjoy their lessons. There is good assessment of students' work and students are encouraged to set their own targets.



However, whilst individual student performance is frequently discussed, reviews are insufficiently systematic.

***Leadership and management***

211. Leadership and management of the department are good. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities and there is effective delegation of responsibilities. The head of department ensures that all members of staff share the common purpose of placing the students and their achievements foremost. There has been good progress since the time of the previous inspection but there are still lost opportunities to extend and develop students' understanding by drawing on their extensive prior learning.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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