

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **THE MARKET WEIGHTON SCHOOL**

Market Weighton

LEA area: East Riding of Yorkshire

Unique Reference Number: 118076

Headteacher: Mr J F Wilson

Lead inspector: Dr D A W Biltcliffe

Dates of inspection: 7<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup> March 2005

Inspection number: 268978

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	11-18
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	718
School address:	Spring Road Market Weighton Nr York East Riding of Yorkshire
Postcode:	YO43 3JF
Telephone number:	01430-873450
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M Brown
Date of previous inspection:	8 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> February 1999

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL**

This comprehensive school is smaller than the typical secondary school, educating some 370 boys and 348 girls aged 11-18 (including a sixth form of around 79).

Pupils' social and economic background is above average. Their overall attainment on entry at 11 is steadily rising and is close to average in most years. Virtually all the pupils in the school are white.

An average proportion of pupils has an official statement of special educational needs (SEN) or is identified as having some kind of special educational need. There are no pupils at an early stage of learning English.

In 2003-2004, nearly eight per cent of pupils joined or left the school other than at the usual time at the beginning or end of the school year.

The school gained the national Sportsmark award in 2003. It is proposing to apply for specialist status as a Business & Enterprise and Sports College.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1025	Dr D A W Biltcliffe	Lead inspector	
9034	Ms J W Biltcliffe	Lay inspector	
13452	Mr H Meggitt	Lay inspector	
11479	Mr J A Paine	Team inspector	English; drama
30576	Mr P Bannon	Team inspector	Mathematics
4607	Dr D E Ward	Team inspector	Science
11190	Dr W M Burke	Team inspector	Art; design and technology
8645	Dr J D Ward	Team inspector	Citizenship; special educational needs
8873	Ms C Evers	Team inspector	Geography; history
12470	Mr B Greasley	Team inspector	Geography ( <i>sixth form</i> )
17923	Mr M Shaw	Team inspector	Information and communication technology (ICT)
4829	Mr I H C Waters	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
4697	Mr R Black	Team inspector	Music
13217	Mr M D Butterworth	Team inspector	Physical education
10448	Mr M F Elson	Team inspector	Religious education
1819	Mr R H Crowther	Team inspector	Business education

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

This smallish, mixed comprehensive school of some 718 pupils (including 79 sixth formers) in East Yorkshire was inspected on 7<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> March 2005 by an inspection team led by Dr D A W Biltcliffe.

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is a fine, effective school.** It is good in most of what it does. It has some very good features and few weaknesses. It has made impressive improvement in GCSE results. By the end of Year 11, pupils' overall attainment is above average. This represents a good achievement. Teaching and learning are good overall and noticeably stronger than at the last inspection in 1999. Most pupils work hard and behave well. Pupils attend regularly and are very punctual. Sixth-form academic work is good; other aspects of provision for sixth formers are satisfactory. Senior management is very good: it provides effective, sensitive leadership. Speaking, spelling and spirituality, however, require improvement and not all statutory requirements are met. The school gives very good value for money in Years 7-11 and satisfactory value in the sixth form. This is a good school in which to study and grow up.

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

- Pupils make good progress and achieve well over Years 7-11.
- The 2004 GCSE results were above average and the school's best ever.
- GCSE English, mathematics and science all gained the high A rating for achievement in 2004.
- Provision is very good in main-school mathematics, science, and design and technology.
- It is unsatisfactory in information and communication technology (ICT).
- Sixth-form English and physical education (PE) are strengths. Biology is a weakness.
- Teaching is good and around one third is very good – a tribute to the school's efforts to improve.
- Statutory requirements are not met for ICT in Years 10-11, collective worship or sixth-form RE.
- Managers can be proud of what they have achieved.

Since its last inspection in 1999, the school has made good progress. It has, for example, raised GCSE results much higher than they were previously. Advanced-level achievement is good. Most pupils achieve well. There is much more good teaching than there was. Attendance is noticeably better. Managers focus firmly on academic success, good relationships and the school's ethos.

The school has made good improvement, too, in most of the main weaknesses identified in 1999. Academic attainment and achievement as well as teaching and learning quality are significantly better. Managerial leadership, planning and the implementation of policies are much improved. The library and extracurricular provision are good. Accommodation is better. Not enough progress has been made, however, on the provision of ICT in Years 10-11 (although plans are in place for September 2005) or daily collective worship. Steady progress has been made on sixth-form issues.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A\* - very high (in the top five per cent nationally); A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average. For Year 11, "similar schools" are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 9.*

**Pupils' overall achievement is good.** In 2004, the Year 9 national test results were average overall – a satisfactory achievement. Pupils' GCSE performance was above average. The proportion of pupils who gained at least five GCSE grades A\*-C was well above average. These results were a very good achievement. By the end of Year 11, overall academic attainment is above average and achievement good. It is well above average in mathematics, science, art, and

design and technology, but below average in ICT. Speaking and spelling need to be better. Overall, however, this is a fine school, academically and pastorally.

**Pupils' personal qualities are developed well.** Personal development is at the heart of the school's work. Relationships are warm, encouraging and sensitively handled. Most aspects (such as moral and social education) are promoted well. Cultural development is satisfactory, but should be wider. Spiritual growth is a weakness. Most pupils show keen attitudes to work and behave maturely. A minority are inattentive or chatter. Attendance is good. Punctuality is very good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of pupils' education is good. Teaching is good** overall and in most subjects. It was of this quality (or better) in seven out of every ten lessons seen. It is very good (or better) in around one third of lessons, a high proportion. The strongest teaching is found in mathematics, art, design and technology, geography, history and PE. It is unsatisfactory in ICT. The vast majority of pupils want to learn and do well. Teaching is a strength of the school.

The curriculum is generally well balanced, apart from insufficient ICT in Years 10 and 11. Many revision classes are available in Years 10-11. There are some shortages of books and equipment. Collective worship is rare: this weakness needs urgent attention. Sport is strong. A satisfactory range of extracurricular activities is provided. Special educational needs provision is good. Pastoral care and welfare are well handled. The organisation and welcome for new pupils are very good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The school's **leadership is very good and its management good.** The headteacher's very good, focused leadership has been a substantial influence on improving morale, commitment and achievement. Senior and most middle managers are strong and effective. School life runs smoothly. The key aspects of attainment, achievement, teaching and ethos are strong. Insufficient attention has, however, been paid to underpinning policies for evaluating school performance and for improving literacy, speaking, spirituality and cultural breadth. Governors play a satisfactory, supportive and increasingly well-informed role in school life, but do not meet all statutory duties.

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

Parents think that the school does a good job. They especially like its high expectations, the quality of teaching and the encouraging support pupils receive. They are pleased by their children's progress. A minority are concerned about pupils' behaviour. Pupils generally like the school, feel secure and appreciate what staff do for them. Although the inattention of a minority of younger pupils requires more effective correction, inspectors concur with the very positive tone of satisfaction expressed above. The school's popularity with parents and pupils is well founded.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- focus on improving pupils' speech and spelling across all subjects and years;
- improve classroom behaviour in a minority of lessons in Years 7-9;
- establish a comprehensive information system to analyse the school's performance;
- enhance pupils' spiritual and cultural development;
- improve the unsatisfactory provision in ICT;
- widen the range of experiences, life-skills and responsibilities of sixth formers;
- provide more books and equipment in several subjects;

**and, to meet statutory requirements, provide:**

- an ICT course for all pupils in Years 10 and 11;
- an adequate programme of religious education (RE) for all sixth formers; and
- a daily act of collective worship for all pupils.

## THE SIXTH FORM AT MARKET WEIGHTON SCHOOL

A good range of GCE AS-level and A-level courses, but no vocational courses, is offered in this small sixth form.

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**The overall effectiveness of sixth-form provision is good.** In 2004, GCE A-level grade quality and the pass rate were below average. Overall, however, students achieved well in these examinations. Of the six subjects that were fully inspected, provision is very good in English and PE, good in mathematics, geography and history, but unsatisfactory in biology. As lower down the school, attendance is good and punctuality very good. The vast majority of students show mature, positive attitudes to work. Teaching is good; over half the teaching seen was very good. The sixth form is managed satisfactorily: academic work is well supported and monitored, but students require both more enrichment opportunities and more guidance on post-18 life. The sixth form is not fully cost effective, but offers satisfactory value for money. Students are pleased with most aspects of sixth-form life.

#### The main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Although GCE A-level results were below average in 2004, most students achieved well.
- English, history and PE performed the strongest. Biology underperformed.
- Most students make good progress and achieve well in the sixth.
- Teaching was good (or better) in four out of every five lessons seen – a strong picture.
- A good spread of academic subjects is offered for a sixth form of this size.
- Not enough is done to extend students' horizons and life-skills.
- Speaking and spelling should be better.
- Statutory requirements are not met for RE and collective worship.
- Sixth formers provide a good role model for the rest of the school.

### 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	<b>English literature</b> is <b>very good</b> . Thorough planning, careful management and very good teaching ensure that students achieve well on this course.
Mathematics	<b>Good</b> provision in <b>mathematics</b> . Students achieve well as a result of good teaching, clear guidance and the encouragement of independent learning.
Science	Provision in <b>biology</b> is <b>unsatisfactory</b> . Lessons are thoroughly planned, but too often lack momentum, interaction and debate. Achievement is unsatisfactory.
Humanities	Provision in <b>geography</b> is <b>good</b> . Standards are above average. Effective teaching and assessment highly motivate students. They achieve well. Provision in <b>history</b> is <b>good</b> . Expert teaching prepares students thoroughly for examination courses. As a result, students work hard and strive to improve.
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	<b>Sports studies</b> is <b>very good</b> . Very good teaching ensures that students learn extremely well. Examination results are well above average.

*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**

The provision of academic support, advice and guidance is good. Students are gradually being involved in more decision-making about sixth-form life, but the sixth-form council is not effective. Guidance on post-18 work and higher education has satisfactory features, but requires improvement. The student body has insufficient access to the “movers and shakers” of the outside world or to tutoring in life-skills.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SIXTH FORM**

Sixth-form leadership and management are satisfactory overall, but require improvement. Strengths lie in the success of the school’s academic provision (especially its teaching), students’ achievement, the monitoring of academic progress and the establishment of a culture of hard work. Weaknesses lie in an inward-looking conservatism, restricted enrichment activities and the absence of a clear, whole-school policy – for governors, staff and students – to drive forward further improvements. Departmental leadership is good overall. The sixth form offers satisfactory value for money. It requires, however, greater clarity of purpose, planning and programming.

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

Students view most sixth-form provision favourably. They recognise that they are well taught and made to think hard. They appreciate the readiness of staff to assist them and believe that they are helped to research and study with sufficient independence. Over half feel that the quality of advice on future study or work is not good enough and that enrichment activities are too limited. Inspectors agree with all these views. The information that management has about the sixth form’s strengths and weaknesses is both a matter for celebration and the necessary basis of a coherent plan to improve sixth-form provision. Overall, however, virtually all students feel that they made the right choice to be a sixth former in this school.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in subjects and courses

Pupils' standard of attainment is, overall, in line with that expected nationally by the end of Year 9. It is above average by the end of Year 11 – a good achievement, bearing in mind pupils' average standard on entry to the school. In 2004, pupils' level of attainment was average in the Year 9 national tests, but well above average in the GCSE examinations. The GCSE results were the school's best ever, much higher than those at the last inspection and a very good achievement. Students' overall standard in GCE Advanced (A) level examinations in 2004 was, on most measures, below average, but a good overall achievement. The school is taking firm strides forward in raising pupils' achievement.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school academic performance has improved significantly since the last inspection.
- The 2004 GCSE results represent a very good achievement.
- Pupils' progress and achievement have improved substantially of late and are now good.
- In 2004, pupils did better in GCSE English and science, and worse in French and business studies.
- Most students achieve well at A level.
- Attainment by the end of Year 11 is well above average in mathematics, science, art, and design and technology.
- It is below average in information and communication technology (ICT).

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	32.5 (36.4)	n/a (33.4)
mathematics	36.3 (37.6)	35.5 (35.4)
science	33.5 (35.1)	33.1 (33.6)

*There were 136 (119) pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for 2003.*

#### Commentary

1. Pupils' standards on entry in Year 7 have risen over the last few years. From the time of the previous inspection in 1999 until 2001, the overall standard was average at best, whilst the entries of 2002 and 2003 were above average. The most recent, 2004 entry was of a lower, average standard. The 1999 average intake went on to achieve the school's best GCSE results ever in 2004 – a very good achievement.

2. In 2004, the overall standard reached in the Year 9 national tests was broadly average. The proportions of pupils who reached the basic Level 5 standard were a little above average in mathematics and science, and average in English. Results at the higher Level 6 were average in mathematics and science, but below average in English. These average 2004 results were lower than those of recent years.

3. The limited evidence available suggests that the 2004 mathematics and science results represented sound achievement. The unusually low English results (after appeals, remarking and some upgrades) were a poor achievement – in contrast to the department's substantial achievements in GCSE and at GCE Advanced level. The 2003 results, in contrast, were well above average: most pupils made an exceptionally good rate of progress in the three core subjects of English, mathematics

and science from the time they joined the school in September 2000 until they took their Year 9 tests in 2003.

4. Girls tend to be ahead of boys in English by the end of Year 9, but boys in this school are closer to the overall standard reached by girls than is typically the case nationally. Over the 2001-2003 period [national comparative data for 2004 were not available at the time of the inspection], boys did very slightly better than girls in mathematics and science, but there was not much difference in performance between the sexes.

5. By the end of Year 9, the overall level of attainment is average. It is above average in mathematics, science and music, but below average in ICT. Pupils' overall progress and achievement in their studies over Years 7-9 (and in most subjects) are good overall. They make satisfactory progress in English, art, citizenship, design and technology, and modern foreign languages. Achievement is unsatisfactory in ICT. Achievement was good (or better) in three-fifths of the lessons observed, but unsatisfactory in one in every ten lessons.

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	70 (59)	52 (52)
Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	91 (95)	89 (88)
Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	100 (98)	96 (96)
Average point score per pupil [best eight subjects]	309 / 38.9 (36.7)	283 / 34.9 (34.7)

*There were 135 (111) pupils in the year group. The figures in round brackets are for 2003. The method of calculating average point scores changed between 2003 and 2004: both methods have therefore been included in the above table to aid comparison between 2003 and 2004.*

6. In the GCSE examinations of 2004, the proportion of pupils who gained at least five grades in the range A\*-C was well above the national average. The proportion of those gaining five or more grades A\*-G – as well as average points scored – was above average. Every pupil gained at least one grade A\*-G. These results were the school's best ever. They showed a considerable rise from the results around the time of the last inspection and exceeded the reasonable GCSE targets the school set for itself. They represent a very good achievement and rate of progress from the standards that pupils had on entry in Year 7 and in their Year 9 national tests. They are also a tribute to the school's clear drive for continuous improvement and to management's success in leading the way forward.

7. Pupils' attainment of a grade in the range A\*-C in GCSE in 2004 was well above average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils gaining at least grade C in all these three subjects (62 per cent) was also well above the national average of 39 per cent. There has been a very substantial improvement in performance in every one of these three subjects (and especially in science) over the 2002-2004 period. This is a highly commendable achievement.

8. When pupils' performances in all the subjects they take in GCSE are compared with one another, pupils tended to do better in 2004 in English and science than in most of their other subjects. They did significantly worse in French and business education. The quality of grades obtained was well above average. Although no pupil achieved the highest A\* grade in 2004 in design and technology (food and graphics elements), Spanish, music or physical education (PE), over three-quarters of candidates gained at least a grade C in the subjects they took. When the school's results at GCSE are compared with those of schools with a similar social and economic background, this school's performance was better than most others in the group in 2004.

9. In contrast to what is typical nationally, boys and girls have recently done equally well in GCSE in this school. Although girls did slightly better than boys in 2002, both sexes have achieved equally well overall in the last two years. There are small differences in performance in some subjects: for example, girls did slightly better in English, whilst boys did a little better in mathematics and science.

Boys and girls show equal endeavour, partly as a result of the school's clear expectations of pupils as individuals.

10. By the end of Year 11, the proportion of pupils reaching nationally expected standards is above average overall. The proportion is, however, well above average in mathematics, science, and design and technology. It is average in citizenship, modern foreign languages and business education, but below average in ICT and religious education (RE). Pupils with special education needs (and especially where they have enough in-class help) usually make good progress. The most able pupils achieve well.

11. Pupils' level of achievement during Years 10 and 11 was good overall during the inspection. Pupils achieved well in around two-fifths of the lessons observed and very well indeed in a further quarter of lessons. Their achievement was satisfactory in three out of ten lessons. There was little underachievement except in ICT.

12. Teaching quality is the major factor in pupils' achievement. The school's clear drive to secure uniformly good teaching through a carefully planned programme of evaluating classroom practice is paying rich dividends. Pupils also do well in most lessons because teachers are usually very clear what they want pupils to learn, work hard on pupils' behalf and have the skill – impressively so in around one third of lessons – to translate their aims into action. Importantly, too, the majority of pupils try hard and show a good level of commitment to their studies. There is still, however, more to do: pupils sometimes do not make the progress they should when time is wasted through chattering or when teaching is undemanding.

13. Across the school, pupils' standard of literacy is average overall, although some aspects are better than usually found. Pupils' strongest features are their competence in scanning and extracting meaning from texts and their planning of written work. In contrast, spelling is not good enough. Presentation should be better in some subjects (art is a very honourable exception here). Pupils' capability and readiness to explain their views at length are better than usual. Too many pupils do not, however, do themselves full justice, because they do not speak with sufficient clarity and confidence in formal situations. Most pupils listen with good concentration.

14. Numeracy is above average overall. Few pupils have difficulty in handling basic number work. The fine work done by the mathematics department makes a major contribution here and is a strength of the school. Competence in using ICT, despite the school's unsatisfactory provision, is average overall: pupils gain enough experience (by a variety of means) to cope adequately with basic ICT applications.

## Sixth form

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of entries gaining A-E grades	91 (89)	92 (92)
Percentage of entries gaining A-B grades	30 (26)	36 (36)
Average point score per pupil	227 (230)	265 (258)

*There were 20 (35) pupils in the year group. The figures in brackets are for 2003.*

15. The GCE Advanced (A) level results were below average in 2004 for both the quality of grades and the average points that students scored. The pass rate was close to average. The results were a good achievement, however, because, taking into account the quality of grades that they gained in GCSE examinations two years earlier, most students made good progress in their studies to A level. On the subject grades that could be directly compared, for example, students made good (or better) progress in around two-thirds of their subjects and satisfactory progress in about one fifth. Most of the

unsatisfactory progress in the remaining fifth of entries occurred in biology or chemistry. A very high proportion of students made at least good progress in English, history and PE.

16. The 2004 GCE Advanced Supplementary (AS) level results of Year 12 were average for the pass rate and quality of grades. All students passed in art, chemistry, design and technology, French, history and PE. Pass rates were below 70 per cent in mathematics and physics.

17. Although only six subjects were inspected in detail, the overall standard of sixth-form work seen during the inspection was above average. Of the main subjects seen, attainment was at this standard in English, mathematics and geography and well above average in PE. It was average in biology (although an unsatisfactory overall achievement) and in history (although above average in Year 12). Overall, students achieve well during their time in the sixth form.

18. Students' capability in literacy is broadly similar to that of sixth formers nationally. The amount of extended discussion is a little greater than often found, although clarity of speech (as lower down the school) does not always match its content. Spelling is often a weakness. Students listen carefully and usually work hard. They have adequate competence in numerical work and ICT applications; the new ICT facility, available just for sixth formers, is already proving its worth. The overall climate for learning in the sixth form is good and students make solid progress in most subjects.

**Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Attendance is good. Punctuality is very good. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons and around the school are good. The school successfully promotes warm, positive relationships and has a strong ethos for learning. Provision for pupils' personal development, though it has gaps, is good overall.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Attendance has improved to a good standard since the last inspection.
- Punctuality for school and lessons is very good.
- Pupils' interest and involvement in the life of the school are very good.
- High expectations by teachers, parents and pupils themselves create a strong climate for learning.
- In a small minority of lessons in Years 7-9, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are unsatisfactory.
- The school does not do enough for pupils' cultural and (particularly) their spiritual development.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.0	School data	0.4
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.*

**Commentary**

19. Pupils' attendance is good and better than the pattern nationally. In the 2003-2004 academic year, it was 93.6 per cent. This was more than three per cent higher than the 90.4 per cent at the last inspection. The level of attendance improved further in the Autumn term of the current academic year to the very good level of 94.8 per cent. Punctuality for school and for lessons is very good.

20. Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard and successfully to improve its level of attendance. It publicises thoughtfully to parents and pupils, for example, the need for very regular attendance and has in place a wide range of effective ways to underpin its good intentions. Within this good picture, an unsatisfactory feature is that around one in every eight absences is due to parents taking their children out of school in term time for holidays. There is no problem of truancy from lessons in this school.

21. In class and around the school, pupils generally show positive attitudes and good behaviour. They relate well to one another and behave with consideration for others. The building and grounds are noticeably clean and pleasant. They are, to an unusual degree, free of litter and graffiti. In class, the vast majority of pupils show that they care about both their own and other pupils' learning. They listen to teachers attentively and work productively. Pupils are aware of, and accept, the school's high expectations of behaviour. In the corridors, apart from isolated examples of boisterousness, pupils move purposefully and quickly to and from lessons. At lunchtime, pupils queue patiently and then enjoy their meal in pleasant surroundings.

22. In a small minority of lessons in Years 7-9, low-level disruption or inattention by pupils impedes their own and other pupils' learning. In these lessons, a few pupils behave inappropriately or do not do enough work. When teachers fail to engage or control pupils sufficiently, pupils become demotivated and their achievement suffers. Such negative attitudes and misbehaviour, however, are untypical of the school as a whole and are not found in Years 10-11.

23. The school has set itself the aim of further improving its culture of 'zero tolerance' of inappropriate attitudes and behaviour, whilst continuing to reduce the use of fixed-term exclusion as a sanction. The innovative appointment of two non-teachers as "key stage tutors" in September 2004 has already had a positive effect. They are available during the day and every day to deal with personal and behavioural issues as they arise and to support pupils otherwise vulnerable to exclusion. The proposal to establish a base for seclusion within the school takes this valuable innovation forward.

24. Parents' perceptions of the school are favourable, and rightly so. Nearly all parents feel that the school has high expectations of behaviour and learning. At their pre-inspection meeting, they said that part of the school's improvement was due to its recent focus on behaviour management. Parents also said (very unusually) that they were unaware of any bullying in the school. Pupils, too, confirmed that they did not suffer from physical bullying or harassment and that they felt secure. This is a considerable achievement. Some did complain, however, as at the time of the last inspection, that name-calling and mockery (or "joking", as they call it) are a problem.

25. Pupils' personal development is good overall. Provision has improved since the last inspection. The school is now good at helping pupils to respect others, to apply the principles that distinguish right from wrong and to fulfil the responsibilities of living in a community. Pupils' cultural development, however, remains no better than satisfactory. For pupils who have little direct experience of cultural diversity, the school has not found sufficient ways of offering such opportunities within its provision.

26. Pupils' spiritual development is, as at the time of the last inspection, unsatisfactory. The school has made some improvements: all pupils, including those in Years 10-11, are now taught RE. It has not, however, addressed the issue of daily collective worship for all: pupils have no opportunity either to engage in an act of collective worship or to reflect on (for example) a "Thought for the Day". Across the life of the school, self-knowledge and spiritual awareness are areas of weakness in pupils' personal development, a situation not helped by the absence of an underpinning policy. This weakness is in strong contrast to the good quality of most aspects of provision for pupils' personal growth.

## Sixth form

27. The attendance of students in the sixth form is good. Attendance in the last academic year is unknown, because the school did not keep details of attendance in a coherent, centralised way. Attendance since September 2004 has been at the good level of 94 per cent. Students attend morning and afternoon registrations within school, but are also allowed some discretion for home study, as a privilege, in Year 13. Students are very punctual for lessons.

28. Students' attitudes and behaviour are good. They show strong levels of interest and involvement in lessons and around the school. The vast majority enjoy their time at school and get on well together. They appreciate the opportunities the school affords them and the availability of teachers to help them. They also make a valuable contribution to pupils in Years 7-11, partly because the school requires, and monitors, every student's active involvement in the main school.

29. The school makes good academic provision for students. It does not, however, meet the statutory requirements of the RE agreed syllabus or for collective worship. It also provides limited opportunities for students to experience the wide range of cultures (such as the economic, entrepreneurial, political and multi-ethnic worlds) to which they will soon be fully exposed on leaving school. With these important exceptions, the school's sixth form is a good place to learn.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed-period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	714	98	1
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

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

### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching and learning are good throughout the school. They are stronger, however, in Years 10-11 than in Years 7-9 and best of all in the sixth form. Teaching is significantly better

than it was at the last inspection. Most pupils learn well as a result of teaching usually being stimulating, encouraging and well organised. In a minority of cases in Years 7-9, pupils do not learn well enough, because they chatter too much.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good (or better) in seven out of every ten lessons.
- Nearly one third of teaching is very good (or outstanding) – a high proportion.
- Teaching is best in the sixth form: as a result, most students make good progress.
- Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory in ICT.
- Teaching is (at least) good throughout the school in mathematics, art, design and technology, geography, history and PE.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 153 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
9 (6%)	38 (25%)	60 (39%)	40 (26%)	5 (3%)	0 (0%)	1 (1%)

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; the figures in brackets show percentages.*

### Commentary

30. The quality of teaching and learning are good throughout the school, including the sixth form. They are stronger in Years 10-13 than in Years 7-9. Teaching is at its best in the sixth form. It is at least satisfactory in virtually all lessons throughout the school. Teaching is a substantial strength of the school.

31. The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection. In 1999, 93 per cent of the teaching was satisfactory or better. Now just four per cent of teaching falls below a satisfactory standard. Around 53 per cent of teaching was good (or better) at the last inspection, but that proportion has now increased substantially to 70 per cent. The proportion of very good (or better) teaching has also increased significantly from 21 to 31 per cent.

32. The school's major focus on evaluating and improving its teaching has been successful. It has been very well led, thoroughly planned and effective in operation. It is also the result of the concentrated effort that staff put into their work. The impact of this whole-school effort is seen not only in the improvement in teaching quality since the last inspection, but also in the recent very good achievement in GCSE examinations.

33. Main-school teaching is at its best in Years 10 and 11. In these years, three-quarters of teaching was at least good and one third was very good (and in two lessons outstanding). Only one lesson of unsatisfactory teaching was seen (in Year 11). In Years 7-9, teaching was at least good in three out of every five lessons and very good (or outstanding) in one fifth of all lessons. Just one very poor lesson was seen (in ICT). Further improvement is necessary, however, in these years. For this to happen requires some teachers to get a stronger grip on classroom discipline (sometimes with extra support) and a minority of pupils to stop chattering and being silly, so that all pupils can learn more.

34. Teachers have good command of their subjects. Teaching is particularly strong in science, but lacks some depth in ICT in Years 7-9. This depth of knowledge enables the vast majority of teachers to give appropriate structure and interest to their teaching programmes. They choose suitable topics to sustain pupils' motivation and effort. Most set clear objectives for lessons and ensure that pupils acquire sufficient subject knowledge and understanding. Occasionally, the work studied does not deepen specialist understanding adequately.



35. Lessons are well planned. In the best lessons, teachers are very clear what they wish pupils to learn and design lessons to maximise pupils' understanding. They set out aims clearly and share them with pupils. They time activities in such a way that much ground is covered within the hour lessons, that pupils know how long they have to complete each task and that a suitably brisk pace is maintained – but without rushing pupils through vital stages.

36. In contrast, where the stages of lessons are vague or not made clear to the class, pupils are discouraged from feeling involved and the pace of work slows. Sometimes, the early parts of lessons are well planned, but then lessons run out of time and end abruptly. In one case, where the teacher explained to pupils that he had tried to cover too much ground in one lesson, this apparent weakness was turned to good advantage by the mature understanding and response of pupils.

37. In an outstanding Year 8 lesson in mathematics on equations, for example, the teacher's exceptionally careful planning contributed much to the excellent progress that pupils made in this lower-ability set. Each stage of the lesson was interesting, challenging and very well paced. Work was well tailored to pupils' different capabilities, including clear progression to more difficult terms. The teacher's pertinent, lively questions sustained pupils' substantial commitment and understanding.

38. The enthusiasm and good humour of many other teachers, too, ensure that most lessons quickly engage pupils' interest. Those teachers who value pupils' views, give suitable prominence to thorough discussion and who positively channel divergent views, gain respect and hard work from pupils. In many lessons, teachers stimulate pupils' insight and enjoyment by well-informed interventions and interpretations. A slow pace and unnecessary noise or silliness, however, impede sufficient achievement in a few lessons.

39. A strong feature of the most successful lessons is the degree of intellectual or creative challenge that is presented to pupils. In these lessons, pupils have to think hard and discipline their minds. They are expected to focus their concentration, consider carefully possible alternatives and give reasoned answers. Teachers do not accept shallow thinking, unclear reasoning or lack of involvement. They expect accuracy, high standards in oral expression and good structure in written work as well as attention to detail in all that is done.

40. A minority of lessons, in contrast, are rather dull. They move steadily along, but lack much interest or intellectual muscle. Pupils' initial ideas are too readily accepted. There is little depth to the exploration of topics. Learning is not consolidated. Understanding is superficial and insecure. Occasionally, work is too complicated and results in disinterest or disaffection.

41. Classes are generally managed well. Most pupils want to learn and conform readily to the conventions of good classroom behaviour. Many are used to coming into class quickly and settling straight down to work, often with the minimum of guidance. These good lessons are typified by warm relationships, encouragement, suitable praise, good humour, focused work and high expectations of effort.

42. There is, however, a small minority of lessons in Years 7-9 that are inadequately controlled by teachers. In these, some pupils lack self-discipline and do not pay sufficient attention. They frequently chatter, act foolishly and do not listen to their teachers or other pupils. The result is that the pace of lessons slows down, time is wasted and the whole class does not learn enough. The unsatisfactory attitudes to learning of a minority of pupils urgently require changing.

43. Most staff use an appropriately wide range of teaching methods. They achieve a suitable balance between whole-class activities (such as explaining lesson content or drawing ideas and information together in a plenary session) and small-group or individual work. Lessons nearly always begin briskly and clearly. Such techniques as brainstorming are occasionally used well to stimulate thought and elicit wide-ranging ideas. A weakness in a minority of lessons is that teachers talk for too long, impose their own views or too readily provide answers.

44. Pupils' work is satisfactorily assessed. The quality of assessment is improving. It is good in English, mathematics, art, design and technology, history and business education. It is unsatisfactory in ICT, because it is inaccurate and pupils are not sufficiently guided to help them to improve. Assessment is not undertaken in citizenship. Target-setting across the school is appropriately challenging, although the school does not have an adequate management system in place to determine how well pupils have achieved compared to their entry standards.

45. In almost all subjects, marking is not done on a consistently regular basis or as helpfully as it could be to show pupils how they can improve their work. The best examples give suitable encouragement and precise guidance for improvement to pupils. The weakest provide a very sketchy commentary or just ticks. Substantial progress has, however, been made recently in raising teachers' awareness of assessment and using it to improve achievement in the school. Homework was set reasonably during the inspection, although pupils' planners sometimes reveal long gaps in its setting.

46. Teaching is good in most subjects and year groups. It is very good in Years 7-9 in science and in Years 10-11 in mathematics, art, and design and technology. It is satisfactory in English in Years 7-9, in RE in Years 10-11 and throughout Years 7-11 in citizenship and modern foreign languages. It is unsatisfactory overall in ICT. In all other National Curriculum subjects and in year groups other than those mentioned above, teaching is good. Some very good teaching was seen in English, mathematics, science, art, design and technology, geography, music, PE and RE. Examples of outstanding teaching were seen in mathematics, science, and design and technology.

### **Sixth form**

47. Thirty-four sixth-form lessons were inspected. The quality of teaching is good overall. Much is very good. It was satisfactory in one in five lessons and at least of this quality in all the lessons inspected. It was good or better in four out of every five lessons – good in one third and very good in another third. Four lessons seen were outstanding. The quality of teaching is similar in Years 12 and 13, although the highest amount (half) of very good or outstanding teaching was seen in Year 12.

48. In the six main subjects inspected, teaching is good in mathematics, geography and history. It is very good in English and PE, and satisfactory overall in biology. Amongst the other sampled subjects, teaching quality was very good in art, design and technology, and philosophy.

49. Most aspects of sixth-form teaching and learning are strong. Some notable features are the depth of teachers' subject knowledge, the level of intellectual challenge presented, the effective use of time, the workmanlike climate in lessons and students' capability at working independently. In a minority of lessons, insufficient attention is paid to ensuring that students express their views in sufficient depth or with enough clarity.

50. Assessment is good in the sixth form. It is very good in history where, for example, teachers interview students to analyse how they could improve their techniques of précis. It is good in English, mathematics, geography and PE. Peer-marking is a strong feature in geography, where students are given detailed mark schemes. There has been an over-generous assessment of coursework quality in biology and marking in the subject is unsatisfactory. Tracking systems are good. Targets are set by subjects using overall GCSE results as a guide and then refined to offer good levels of challenge. Students' progress is reviewed formally three times each year and appropriate intervention strategies are applied, where necessary. The use of assessment is underpinning well the good achievement of most students.

51. A recent survey of students' views gives a very favourable view of sixth-form teaching. Teachers are, almost universally, regarded as helpful experts who strongly encourage students to give of their best. They are felt to give ready assistance with any academic problems and to encourage independent study and research. Around three-quarters feel that their work is thoroughly

assessed, but only half think that they are kept well informed about their progress. Overall, however, both teaching and learning are thorough, stimulating and productive.

## **The curriculum**

Overall, the school provides a satisfactory curriculum. The curriculum is broad and balanced for pupils in Years 7-9. In Years 10-11, a good range of courses is provided, but the school does not ensure that all pupils are taught the National Curriculum for ICT. The development of literacy and speaking is not planned across all subjects. The sixth-form curriculum offers a good spread of academic subjects. Students are not, however, taught the full agreed syllabus for RE. The school does not provide a daily act of collective worship. Participation in sports is very good. Accommodation for subjects is satisfactory. The school has a good provision of computers. There are, however, insufficient books or equipment in some subjects and the library does not have enough books.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There is very good participation in sport.
- The improvement of speaking and spelling is not coherently planned.
- The school does not teach the National Curriculum for ICT to all pupils in Years 10 and 11.
- Additional revision classes help pupils to do well in examinations.
- There is no daily act of worship for all pupils and sixth formers are not taught enough RE.

## **Commentary**

52. There is a satisfactory balance of subjects within the curriculum for pupils in Years 7-9. All pupils study one modern foreign language and some begin a second in Year 8. There is very little opportunity for pupils to study drama.

53. A good range of courses is offered to pupils in Years 10 and 11. Vocational courses (including catering and manufacturing) are offered, sometimes in collaboration with a local college, for those pupils for whom a completely academic diet is inappropriate; the silver award of the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) also provides well for these pupils.

54. The school does not teach the National Curriculum for ICT to all pupils in Years 10 and 11. Although it now has firm plans to do so from the start of the next academic year, this gap was highlighted at the previous inspection and is a serious omission. Subjects such as business education and the "preparation for employment" course make a distinctive contribution to some pupils' education.

55. The school tackles the provision of work-related learning systematically. Its provision is satisfactory. All pupils are helped to prepare for the world of work through the careers elements of the school's programme of personal, social, health and careers education (PSHCE). Good use is made of the *Connexions* service to provide individual careers guidance. The school attempted to map exactly where work-related learning was being provided, but was not satisfied with its efforts. Rather than proceeding on inadequate information, it is now sensibly using a computer-based system to collate this information.

56. The school displays a good level of commitment to careers education. Careers provision is well established from Year 9 onwards, providing a sound basis for pupils' exercise of choice about future courses. Careers education is currently also being introduced into Years 7 and 8. The *Connexions* service makes a constructive input to this extension.

57. With the exception of ICT noted above, all pupils have the opportunity to experience all components of the curriculum. The ways in which pupils are grouped are generally appropriate. The exception is in science for younger pupils, where some teachers experience difficulty in meeting the wide range of needs within classes.

58. The different components of the curriculum are carefully reviewed and monitored. Subjects' schemes of work are appropriately drafted and of sufficient quality. The lack of a literacy policy, however, leads to subjects not adequately planning the contribution they can make to the improvement of the important skills of speaking and spelling. Too frequently, spelling and grammatical errors are not identified for correction. Similarly, coherent promotion of pupils' spiritual and cultural experiences is frequently overlooked, partly because the school does not have a policy to guide its work in these areas.

59. Pupils participate enthusiastically in a wide range of sporting activities. The school runs an impressive range of teams for a school of this size. Participation in the arts and other activities is satisfactory. On three days each week, additional classes for pupils taking GCSE are well attended. These contribute well to raising pupils' achievement. The school supports these constructively by arranging additional transport home on these evenings.

60. The school has sufficient, suitably qualified teaching staff (with the exception of provision in ICT). The provision of support staff is satisfactory overall. There is a need for more technical support in ICT, now that the school has a very good level of computer provision.

61. Accommodation is satisfactory. There is an adequate number of rooms, both specialist and general, for the curriculum offered. Rooms for most subjects are well grouped together, an improvement since the last inspection. The entrance hall sets a very positive tone and is well used to display the school's work.

62. The library is an attractive, bright and airy space. It has plenty of room for study and is well provided with computers. Pupils appreciate the weekly reading sessions held here, at which staff or pupils deliver readings. It has a limited stock of books, however – especially non-fiction. For reasons of cost, most of the fiction stock is in paperback form: as these books are well used, they quickly become worn. The library is unable to keep detailed records of usage, because it does not have a computerised borrowing system. The lack of a security system means that it is vulnerable to loss.

63. The school spends approximately half the amount of money normally found on resources for learning. In addition to the lack of library books, there is a shortage of textbooks in English, science, geography and history. In design and technology, there is a lack of specialised computerised equipment (as, for example, to undertake computerised design). In art, the lack of scanners and digital cameras reduces opportunities for pupils to manipulate images. In science, there is a shortage of equipment to allow computers to record the outcomes of experiments.

64. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) have good access to the school curriculum and to additional school activities. They usually attend daily lessons with their peers. Individual teaching in the learning support base is provided, whenever expert skill is required – as, for example, for pupils who are diagnosed as “dyslexic”. When pupils are withdrawn from mainstream lessons, good care is taken to ensure that continuity is maintained with lesson topics. The learning support department has very good resources and accommodation. It maintains full, written records of pupils' work and attainment and has effective methods of monitoring pupils' progress.

## **Sixth form**

65. Because it is a small school, the decision has been taken to offer an academic selection of courses. The sixth form's rationale has, however, not been recently reviewed, with the consequence that the purpose and programme for the sixth form are less clear than was once the case. The range of A-level courses is appropriately wide for a sixth form of this size. Although all students attend some RE lessons, there are not enough of these to cover the agreed syllabus. Provision of guidance for future choice is good on an individual basis, but this is inadequately planned for all, with the consequence that students view this provision as variable.

66. The accommodation for the sixth form has improved since the time of the previous inspection and is now satisfactory. Students have their own study room (equipped with computers) where they can work during private-study sessions as well as using the computers in the library. Although the library itself has few books for wider subject reading, individual subjects do have a sufficient range of textbooks and other materials to support study in the sixth form adequately.

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

The school provides well for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. The support, advice, monitoring and guidance given to pupils in Years 7-11 and to students in the sixth form are good. Arrangements for involving pupils in the life of the school are satisfactory, but could be better. The school's involvement of sixth-form students and taking account of their views is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school's arrangements for pupils' induction into Year 7 are very good.
- Procedures to ensure that pupils work in a healthy and safe environment are good.
- The appointment of separate, but complementary, pastoral and academic tutors works well.
- The school council does not function well enough as a responsible, representative body.
- Sixth formers do not receive sufficient, well-informed guidance about life after school.

### **Commentary**

67. Care and welfare are good and help pupils to develop well. Parents and pupils are united in praise for the induction of new pupils into Year 7. Procedures for child protection are fully in place and include a trained person, with designated responsibility, who trains other members of staff. The school also has a suitable medical room and a person trained to administer first aid. Arrangements for the health and safety of pupils, both on and off the site, are good. Proper procedures are in place and line- management of this responsibility is clear and systematic.

68. The toilets are clean and bright. They are maintained and serviced well to a standard not often seen. Pleasant, civilised conditions prevail in the dining room. Much attention is paid, too, to maintaining a good aesthetic standard in and around the buildings. Such good conditions contribute significantly to pupils' and teachers' sense of belonging to a community and to their being in an environment that is favourable to learning.

69. Personal support to pupils is good. The school is, however, aware that it does not do enough to enable tutors to act effectively as academic mentors to the pupils in their tutor groups. The desire for such empowerment underlies the recent, innovative appointment of two learning managers, part of whose role is to track pupils' progress and monitor the quality of their learning. Their role is at an early stage of implementation: tutors now require more training to use such information consistently and effectively to help pupils to make more progress. The school is formulating plans to remedy these weaknesses.

70. The school council is a recent, welcome addition to school life, but does not yet function as a sufficiently responsible and representative body, with its own officers and minutes. It has little significance for pupils. The record of the meeting held so far confirms that the school is right to identify the enhancement of the school council's role as a priority.

### **Sixth form**

71. The provision of academic support, advice and guidance to students is good. The school is also gradually seeking to involve students more in decision-making. For example, it responded to a request from students and held a conference for the whole of the sixth form in the Autumn term. The record of the meeting shows that a long list of issues was raised. The sixth-form council, the natural place for more detailed discussion, is not effective. The council has failed to deal with the pertinent

issues raised, partly because it has received insufficient guidance on how to handle divergence of viewpoints. This has led some students to feel that their voice is not heard and to express frustration about aspects of life in the sixth form.

72. The quality of guidance on the wider world of work and higher education has satisfactory features, but requires improvement. Two-thirds of students who responded to a survey of opinion expressed misgivings about the quality of advice they receive about what they should do after school. The inspection endorses this view. Although personal support and encouragement are good, advice and guidance to students about appropriate courses and alternative routes to follow after Year 13 are not broadly based. Students recognise that the range of experiences, life-skills and responsibilities they receive requires widening.

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

Parents have a positive view of the school and the education it provides for their children. They feel that teachers have appropriately high expectations and that teaching is good. The school has good links with the community, especially in sport. Information systems for parents are satisfactory overall: they have strong features, but could be better. Links with primary schools and the induction of pupils are strengths.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The transfer and induction of pupils from primary to secondary education are well handled.
- Links with the community, and especially the use of the sports facilities, are good.
- Parents are happy with the progress their children make.
- Links with other educational providers are limited, but those that exist are beneficial.
- Curricular information for parents and the school's website require improvement.

### **Commentary**

73. The school's links with parents are good. Parents hold a favourable view of the school and what it offers. Those parents who completed the pre-inspection questionnaire feel that their children make good progress and that the school is well led and managed. In particular, they are happy with the expectations that staff hold for their children. Some concerns were, however, raised in the questionnaire regarding the level of the school's consultation with parents, pupil behaviour and the range of extracurricular activities.

74. The school's prospectus provides parents with good information about the school. It is professional and well produced. The recently introduced termly newsletter, *Connect*, is very informative and very attractively produced, reporting on many interesting achievements and activities of the school as well as its wider links. The magazine is also widely circulated in shops and offices around the town and to local primary schools. This practice ensures a good link to the wider community.

75. Parents feel that, in general, they are kept well informed about their children's progress, although a few had concerns that the expected direct contact with form tutors made it more difficult to meet subject teachers. The recently reorganised system for monitoring children's progress, coupled with the termly parent-pupil-tutor reviews, aims to cover all subject-specific issues as well as general progress. It is too early to assess the full impact and effectiveness of this system and the extent to which it meets a wide cross-section of parents' needs.

76. Parents receive annual, written reports for each subject as well as details of attendance. The reports are satisfactory overall, but do not always give clear indications of attainment in each subject or how well pupils achieve. The head of learning support maintains good contact with the parents of pupils with special educational needs.

77. Parents are encouraged to contribute fully to their children's learning. This partnership is identified in the school prospectus and the homework policy. Part of its strength is to be seen in the emphasis placed on review evenings. The *Student Planner* also provides a means of regular communication between home and school, but there is inconsistency in the use of, and attention placed on, this link. The provision of year-group curricular information to parents and website links are underexploited.

78. The school believes strongly in the importance of its role in the local community. It fully recognises the widespread benefits this brings, including raising the aspirations of the community for its children. Sporting links with those outside the school are extensive. Community groups (including local primary schools) make good use of the outdoor playing fields and very good use is made of the indoor facilities. Some adult evening classes are held on the school site.

79. The school's close links with its contributory primary schools are a strength. Staff from the school visit primary schools to talk with pupils and teachers and to identify the needs of new pupils before they arrive in Year 7. Careful consideration is given to personal factors in the composition of tutorial and teaching groups. Limited links exist with other educational providers; where they do exist, the management arrangements are good. In recent years, for example, there has been a successful partnership with Bishop Burton College for two vocational courses for Years 10 and 11, as a result of which several pupils decided to continue in post-16 education.

### **Sixth form**

80. The school takes positive steps to sound out the views of students – as, for example, by using the Ofsted-format questionnaire. Of the 45 students who returned forms in the Autumn term of 2004, the vast majority felt the school's academic provision was strong, encouraging and effective. More than half, however, felt that they did not receive helpful advice on what to do after leaving school and that they did not have access to an adequate range of extracurricular activities and enrichment opportunities.

81. Inspectors concur with the main thrust of students' views. The sixth form is successful academically and, within the limitations of its small size, provides a good range of A-level courses. It has also responded well to enhancing the study and recreational facilities for students. Further improvements are, however, needed. The school requires a clear plan for the scope of its sixth form, for greater engagement with the outside world (as, for example, business and commerce, the professions, the arts and politics), for more responsibility to sixth formers and for enhancing their personal skills (particularly their formal speaking competence). Its recent organisation of a consultative sixth-form conference demonstrates its commitment to its students – a positive step towards enhancing the provision it makes, in cost-effective ways, and building on the generally high-quality teaching already provided.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The headteacher provides the school with very good leadership and is very well supported by a strong senior leadership team. Academic achievement is good and continues to improve under a well-coordinated, determined thrust to improve the quality of teaching and learning yet further. The leadership of other key staff is very good overall. Management is good overall. The governing body, too, is improving and performs its duties satisfactorily.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher leads all aspects of the school very well.
- Well-considered aims underpin all the work of the school.
- There is a very strong commitment to raising the standards of teaching and learning further.
- The school lacks a coherent management information system as a basis for judging performance.

- Leaders provide very good role models to other staff and pupils.
- Sixth-form academic provision is good, but enrichment activity is thin.
- Governors do not ensure that the school fulfils all statutory requirements.

## Commentary

82. On appointment, the headteacher identified the marked advantages to be gained by formulating precisely the school's aims and purpose. The result is that all staff now subscribe to the aims of the school, giving a most valuable sense of common purpose. The school improvement plan reflects these aims well. One highly significant outcome is that all staff are committed to the current emphasis on making further improvements to the quality of teaching and learning. The effectiveness of this focus can be measured by the marked improvement in examination achievement as well as the raising of teaching quality.

83. Governors show high levels of commitment to the school and provide good levels of support. They draw appropriately on members' broad expertise. The chair of governors uses his detailed knowledge of education to enhance members' ability to hold the school to account through probing questioning. A good example is the measures taken by the governing body to ensure that the recent reduction in the length of the teaching week would not jeopardise the quality of education.

84. The governing body plays a good part in helping to shape the vision and direction of the school. It does not, however, ensure that the school teaches the National Curriculum for ICT to all pupils in Years 10 and 11, that students in the sixth form are taught the full agreed syllabus for RE or that pupils have the opportunity to participate in a daily act of collective worship. Whilst these aspects of the work of the governing body are unsatisfactory, overall governance of the school is satisfactory.

85. The headteacher has led significant improvements to the school very effectively. In addition to the improved examination results, attendance has increased significantly and staff morale has risen. His calm, yet infectious, approach has ensured that other staff are not only very clear about the ways to make yet further improvements, but are also committed to doing so. He astutely recognises barriers to progress and is prepared to implement innovative solutions to problems: the reduction in teaching time, for example, was introduced to provide staff with a systematic way to spread good practice and root out unacceptable performance.

86. A key reason as to why the head's vision is successfully implemented is the unity of the senior management team. Whilst all bring their own perspectives and complementary strengths, their unified promotion of decisions and policies is highly effective in driving the school forward. As a result, leaders at all levels are effective in motivating other staff as well as pupils.

87. The current emphasis on improving teaching and learning is highly worthwhile and effective. Certain other areas, however, have been neglected. For example, the school does not have a policy for the development of literacy (which is one reason why standards of speaking and spelling are not as high as they should be) and these areas are not tackled in a coherent manner throughout the school. Similarly, the school does not have policies for the spiritual and cultural development of its pupils, with the result that these important aspects of the school's work are relatively neglected.

88. The quality of most of the school's self-evaluation is good. It has identified appropriate areas for improvement. Evaluation of success is not, however, as effective as it might be, because the school does not have a rigorous, effective system to manage evaluative information. For example, the school does not have a system to measure pupils' achievements or its overall performance with sufficient accuracy. The school is over-dependent on data and its interpretation from external sources. For this reason, the management of the school, whilst being good because day-to-day procedures work smoothly, is not quite as effective as its leadership.



89. The leadership and management of subjects vary from very good in mathematics and PE to unsatisfactory in ICT. They are good overall. Senior managers systematically oversee the work of departments through fortnightly meetings. These meetings are appreciated by subject leaders. The effectiveness of these meetings is, however, reduced again because of the lack of a central system to manage evaluative information.

90. Overall, teams are effective and the school's members function as a team. Unsurprisingly, the most effective teams are to be found in the most effective areas of the school. Whilst the school has good systems for sharing good practice within teams, it requires further improvement in methods of dissemination across teams.

91. The headteacher leads the curriculum and teaching very well. He has overseen a beneficial widening of the curriculum for pupils in Years 10 and 11. His focus on teaching and learning has been instrumental in raising achievement. The temporary attachment to the school of a consultant adds significantly to the school's capacity to evaluate its teaching and learning accurately.

92. The school is very committed to attempting to meet the needs of all its pupils. This is no easy task in a small school: the range of need is no narrower than in a large school, but the level of resource is much smaller. The school is seeking to provide a wider range of vocational courses, but does not always give balanced consideration to the implications of attempting to do everything itself. The school is, nevertheless, a very inclusive institution.

93. Since the last inspection, there has been good improvement in the school's work for pupils with special educational needs. Learning support is led by a teacher who has good knowledge of special education. The work of the support assistants is well organised, but requires more classroom monitoring. Pupils' statements, annual reviews and records are carefully organised and appropriately accessible. Subject teachers' awareness of pupils' needs has improved significantly.

94. The training needs of staff are efficiently identified. Training is well linked to the school's development plan. Performance management is integral to this process and so is very effective in contributing to improvements. The training of staff other than teachers is limited. Staff new to the school speak highly of the support they receive. The school makes a good contribution to the initial training of teachers, giving due consideration to its capacity to undertake this work effectively.

95. With the exception of some teachers of ICT, all teachers are suitably qualified for the work they do. The school manages the deployment of teachers well. It is implementing reforms of the teaching workforce effectively, so as to ensure that teachers' time is concentrated on teaching and not on administration. A good example of this process is the creation of the posts of key stage tutors: they have taken the management of behavioural incidents away from pastoral leaders, so that the latter can focus more on pupils' achievement.

96. The school's finances are well managed. Recent marked cuts in income have been successfully handled without a negative effect on standards. The school does, however, spend less on resources for learning than most schools of its size. As a consequence, shortages of textbooks and equipment have a detrimental effect in some subjects.

97. Governors oversee the school's use of finances appropriately. The recent external audit revealed no significant concerns. The school complies well with the principles of best value. Careful research showed the advantages (not just financial) of operating its own cleaning and catering services. The effect of the former is evidenced by the impressive freedom from litter and the cleanliness of the buildings (as well as the good condition of the toilets) and the latter by the increased consumption of school meals. The school receives less money per pupil than most schools but, as most pupils achieve well, it provides very good value for money.

## Sixth form

98. Leadership and management of the sixth form are satisfactory. Whilst a school of this small size can never provide for all needs, the narrow range of activities beyond the taught curriculum significantly reduces the quality of the sixth-form experience. Courses run smoothly and students achieve well. The progress of each student is carefully monitored by the head of the sixth form, who intervenes energetically, should any underperformance be detected. The school undertakes consultation with sixth formers – as, for example, through its annual conference for sixth-form students, based on answers to a questionnaire. Whilst the quality of teaching and learning for each subject is carefully monitored, the resulting information is not synthesised to provide a picture of the overall quality of life in the sixth form. An overall record of students' attendance is not kept systematically.

99. The leadership and management of individual sixth-form subjects range from very good to satisfactory and are good overall. Courses run smoothly and teams operate effectively. The sixth form is not cost effective, drawing, to some extent, on money allocated for younger pupils. The school has undertaken some analysis of costs, but greater precision is required. Furthermore, governors have not considered the extent to which they deem such subsidy from the rest of the school to be acceptable and have not, in recent years, considered the whole purpose and provision of the school's sixth form. That task is overdue.

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	2,514,284	Balance from previous year	46,300
Total expenditure	2,446,697	Balance carried forward to the next	113,887
Expenditure per pupil	3,410		

# **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**.

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

- Teaching is good in Years 10 and 11.
- The 2004 GCSE results were well above average and represented very good achievement.
- Good departmental leadership and management continue to improve standards.
- Teaching is satisfactory in Years 7-9, but requires improvement.

#### **Commentary**

100. The Year 9 national test results for 2004 were a little below average. They were significantly lower than those of 2003, when they were well above the national average. They were also lower than the results around the time of the last inspection in 1999. Quite against the normal pattern for the school, they represented a poor achievement from the time that pupils entered the school in 2001.

101. In strong contrast, the 2004 GCSE results were well above the national average. They were slightly higher than those of 2003 and substantially higher than they were in 2002. In 2004, 81 per cent of the girls and 75 per cent of the boys, for example, gained grades in the range A\*-C. The 2004 GCSE results showed a very good achievement from the overall standard pupils had when they entered the school in Year 7. Pupils tended to achieve better in English than they did in most of their other subjects.

102. The current overall standard of work in Year 9 is average. This represents satisfactory progress for pupils since the beginning of Year 7. The standard of pupils' reading is above average. Most pupils read fluently and with appropriate expression, although some find it difficult to extract the essential meaning from what they read. The regular practice of annotating texts in class helps pupils to consolidate their understanding and to ensure that they support their points of view by close reference to the texts they read.

103. Pupils successfully write, at an above average standard, for a range of purposes and audiences. Planning is a strong feature of their writing. As they move through Years 7-9, they show increasing confidence in drafting different sentence structures and then organising them into effective paragraphs. The presentation of work is broadly average, but not as good as it could be. Spelling, too, requires improvement: pupils often do not systematically check spelling when proof-reading their writing.

104. The quality of pupils' oral work is above average. Most pupils listen intently in lessons, but when teachers do not make lessons interesting enough or talk too much, pupils become talkative. A significant proportion of pupils do not speak clearly and audibly. Most pupils use technical language confidently and accurately. They sustain and develop discussion points well.

105. By the end of Year 11, the overall standard of pupils' work is above average. This represents good achievement from the end of Year 9. Most aspects of work (and especially written work) improve at a greater rate than earlier on in the school. The written work of higher-attaining

pupils, for example, is carefully planned and crafted to ensure that it reads coherently. Meaning is well conveyed through well-constructed, suitably varied sentences and paragraphs.

106. Teaching ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. It is satisfactory in Years 7-9 (but needs to be stronger), good in Years 10 and 11, and good overall. The lively, perceptive teaching in a very good Year 11 lesson engaged pupils' thinking deeply. They worked quickly in pairs to create a narrative or script that was made up of random words from Simon Armitage's poem, *Mother, any distance greater than a single span*. They then studied how the poet used language to explore the theme of parent-child relationships. In the stimulating discussion that followed, pupils deepened their understanding of the poem significantly.

107. The leadership and management of the department are good. The recently appointed head of department leads well by example. She is creating a strong specialist department and is well placed to improve some of the department's teaching. Revised schemes of work now incorporate units for drama. These units are, however, insufficiently detailed for Years 7-9 to guarantee adequate progression and continuity in drama skills, techniques and assessment. Assessment is good. There are some shortages of textbooks. Links with primary schools are in place, but have yet to focus on curricular continuity. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

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

108. The school does not have a cross-curricular policy for literacy or effective ways of monitoring and reviewing progress in this very important aspect of its academic work. The overall standard of literacy across the school is average. Most pupils, when asked to read aloud, do so accurately – although clarity and audibility require improvement. Many pupils join readily in discussions and most listen well.

109. The planning and structuring of writing are above average features of the school's work. Careful presentation is a notable feature in art, but the standard of writing in design and technology is below average. The standard of spelling and punctuation varies widely amongst subjects from above average to below average. This variation reflects the importance given by teachers to these matters and underscores the urgent need for a policy and consistent approach to literacy (especially spelling) across the school.

### **Modern foreign languages**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The department's good leadership and management are moving the subject forward.
- Teachers' planning of lessons is done consistently across the department.
- Marking is not consistently done in Years 7-9.

### **Commentary**

110. The proportion of pupils attaining grades A\*-C in French in the GCSE examination in 2004 was below the national average. Although this represents a decline from the results of 2003, twice as many pupils (over four-fifths of the year group) had been entered for the examination. Girls performed better than boys. Pupils tended to do worse in French, however, than in most of their other subjects. The results for a much smaller group of pupils taking Spanish in GCSE were above average; boys performed better than girls.

111. French and Spanish alternate each year as the first foreign language that pupils learn on entry in Year 7; a minority start a second modern foreign language in Year 8. By the end of Year 9, the overall standard of attainment in Spanish (currently the main Year 9 language) is average. This represents a satisfactory achievement. Most pupils have a sound understanding of topic vocabulary

and different constructions. This knowledge enables them to carry out a suitable range of different tasks – as, for example, matching up sentences in both languages. Pupils extract information from cassettes successfully.

112. The quality of speaking varies widely. Some pupils speak well from memory (as in a Year 7 Spanish lesson), whilst others in Year 9 are still dependent upon substantial prompts. In French, Year 8 pupils read aloud their sentences to the rest of the class successfully. Pronunciation in each language is usually satisfactory. Pupils write at an appropriate level (though at varying lengths) in each of the two languages. Year 9 pupils in Spanish, for instance, write about past and future events with reasonable accuracy and are currently learning to use the present continuous tense.

113. Standards of attainment by the end of Year 11 for the pupils' main foreign language, Spanish, are average. Pupils showed a good understanding, for example, of a wide range of cognates, used to describe people's characteristics, that were successfully consolidated in a listening exercise. Higher-attaining pupils extended sentences in a narrative role-play and presented them effectively to the whole class. In their coursework, they display a wide range of different vocabulary, tenses and opinions.

114. A very small group of pupils additionally studies French in Year 11, at an average standard. Coursework is sound. Two pupils who took part in a video-conferencing exercise with a native speaker were too dependent on their prompt sheet, partly because they had not prepared their topic sufficiently. In Year 10, however, higher-attaining pupils read their presentations about school to their partners with confidence and enthusiasm.

115. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily in each language in Years 7-11. Over time, pupils receive a solid grounding in the way that the languages work and are fully conversant with relevant grammatical terms. They acquire a sound knowledge of relevant vocabulary, verbs and tenses. Lessons are well complemented by worksheets to consolidate understanding. Most pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to that of other pupils. This is because work is well matched to their needs and they receive good support from both learning assistants and teachers.

116. In the lessons observed, teaching and learning in each language ranged from good to satisfactory. They are satisfactory overall. Teachers seek to make work interesting and involve pupils productively. Pupils' attitudes to learning ranged from very good in some Year 10 and 11 classes to unsatisfactory in a Year 9 Spanish class; in the latter case, a significant minority did not learn enough because of their inappropriate behaviour. Planning is consistent across the department: all lessons start with a short revision task and pupils are told what they have to learn. Lessons include appropriately varied activities and (usually) different skills.

117. Where the teaching is good, pupils work well in pairs and capably present their results to the class. In these lessons, pupils are challenged well and have to think hard. In a Year 8 French class, for example, every pupil read out a sentence at the end of the lesson. The teacher was thus able to ascertain that the lesson objectives had been successfully achieved. Some lessons, however, do not end with such a crisp evaluation of what has been retained. Teachers use resources well. The marking of pupils' written work in Years 7-9 is not done consistently enough.

118. The subject leader provides clear educational direction for the department and has a good vision for the future. Management of the department is good, based on a thorough evaluation of practice. Year 11 pupils are closely and effectively monitored to ensure that they meet their targets. Accommodation has changed considerably since the previous inspection and is now enhanced by very good displays. Interactive whiteboards and video-conferencing have been successfully introduced. Recent improvements have been good and are helping the department to move forward.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils work hard and achieve very well by the end of their time in school.
- Teaching is enthusiastic and highly challenging.
- High quality leadership and management are relentlessly driving up standards.
- Day-to-day marking does not always inform pupils how they can improve their work.

### **Commentary**

119. In 2004, results in the Year 9 national tests were above average. This was a sound achievement from pupils' entry standards in Year 7. By the end of Year 11 in 2004, pupils attained GCSE results well above the national average. This represented very good achievement from entry standards.

120. Pupils currently in Year 9 demonstrate the same good achievement. They have good attitudes to the subject and there are significantly more pupils than usual working at a high standard. Pupils at all levels of ability (apart from a minority of very weak pupils) achieve well.

121. In Year 11, pupils have remarkably good attitudes to their studies and to school life in general. They attend regularly, are punctual for class and work very well independently – as demonstrated, for example, by the value they place on homework and the standard they produce. As a cohort, they are well above average. This represents very good achievement from Year 7.

122. Teaching is good in Years 7-9, very good in Years 10-11 and very good overall. It is at its most effective with pupils in Year 11, because they are mature and determined to succeed. They learn particularly well at this stage, because teachers ensure that pupils have much practice in solving examination questions. Teachers vary imaginatively the way they present questions to pupils and carefully highlight common errors. They use ICT well to demonstrate concepts clearly to pupils. Pupils also make effective use of computers to draw shapes, including graphs.

123. Teachers make every effort to ensure that pupils understand their work by showing how different methods can be used to solve the same problem. A strong feature of the very good teaching is the importance placed on using correct mathematical terminology and on the discussion of mathematical ideas. Teaching is rarely less than good. When it is just satisfactory, it is because learning objectives are not identified for pupils. It is never unsatisfactory. It is occasionally excellent, particularly when work is closely matched to the needs of individual pupils so that they make maximum progress.

124. Teachers' assessment of pupils' work is good. Target-setting is challenging. Pupils' progress is carefully and accurately reviewed, with the clear identification of work where improvement is needed. Marking is done on a regular basis, but does not always give pupils sufficient guidance as to how exactly they could improve.

125. Leadership and management are very good. The relatively new subject leader has focused very clearly and successfully on improving achievement. Teachers are deployed very effectively, there is a clear vision of what mathematics can mean to pupils and ideas are shared openly. The messages in assessment data are very well understood. Morale is high. Results and innovations (such as the impact of using new technology) are analysed thoroughly. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

126. Pupils show good levels of competence in mathematics across the range of subjects. They measure and weigh accurately and sensibly, for example, in design and technology, and show good spatial awareness in art. They handle financial and statistical data well in business education. In science, geography and history, they interpret data meaningfully, whereas in ICT, they show less competence than expected. There is a policy in place for mathematics across the curriculum. This includes clear guidance on the uniformity of methods in calculations and correct labelling when drawing graphs.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Science GCSE results are consistently well above the national average.
- Pupils enjoy their science lessons, and particularly practical activities.
- A strong emphasis is placed on pupils describing and explaining scientific theories and phenomena.
- Achievement in Years 10 and 11 is very good.
- There are only limited opportunities for pupils to use ICT.

### Commentary

127. Pupils' overall attainment on entry to the school in Year 7 is close to the national average. By the end of Year 9, their attainment in the 2004 national tests was slightly above average. Overall, this was a sound achievement. Over recent years, GCSE results have improved dramatically. In 2002, science results were below average, but they soared in 2003 and improved further the year after. In 2004, three-quarters of the pupils gained a grade in the range A\*-C and one quarter of the boys taking double-award science gained A\* or A grades (compared with ten per cent nationally). These results represent very good achievement in Years 10 and 11.

128. The overall standard at the end of Year 9 is above average. A prominent feature of the department's work is the allocation of time to "cognitive, accelerated thinking in science education" (CASE), a national scheme. This has resulted in pupils being more proficient in some of the oral skills that are often missing or underdeveloped amongst teenage pupils. Pupils at this school are more willing than usual to enter into discussion and to seek further clarification from their teachers.

129. Pupils enjoy both their own practical work and the demonstrations given by their teachers. They handle equipment competently, with due regard to safety. The national science teaching strategy has been adopted for Years 7-9. Some lessons embrace all the strategy's components, but in other lessons, no element was observed. Some lessons emphasise the correct use and spelling of scientific words and an in-depth understanding of technical words. Most exercise books of pupils in Years 7-9 are kept neatly.

130. By the end of Year 11, the overall standard of work in the double-award science groups is well above average. In Years 10 and 11, boys and girls are taught in separate classes. Girls in particular indicate that they find this arrangement helpful, because they feel it enables them to ask questions and seek clarification with confidence. Staff, too, feel that they can more easily adopt a stricter or nurturing approach, as circumstances require. More pupils are entered for higher-tier examination papers than might be expected. The number of pupils gaining the highest grades is double the national rate.

131. Pupils readily acquire new skills – as, for example, in a very good Year 11 lesson, when pupils of lower ability set up glassware to collect carbon dioxide. These pupils (many of whom had special educational needs) were introduced to the reaction of dilute hydrochloric acid and marble

chips, and were then required to time the collection of quantities of gas. In some schools, pupils of much higher ability would have found the task difficult. Each year, a few pupils in these lower-ability classes gain at least a grade C in science – a creditable achievement.

132. There are, however, weaknesses in the work of pupils in Years 10 and 11. Many take less care than younger pupils and teacher handouts are not always kept close to the relevant pages in exercise books. There is little evidence in pupils' books of extended writing or of the inclusion of work that involves the regular use of computers and the Internet.

133. Teaching ranges from outstanding to unsatisfactory. Overall, it was very good in Years 7-9 and good in Years 10-11. In two outstanding lessons seen, teachers rapidly (and with humour) engaged the interest of the pupils. They allowed an adequate time for pupils to explain their answers and often asked them for more explanation. All aspects of the lesson were logically built around pupils' practical work and teacher demonstrations. Both teachers and pupils thoroughly enjoyed their lessons.

134. In contrast, teaching was unsatisfactory in a Year 7 class, because the work was pitched too high for both middle- and low-ability pupils and lacked sufficient variety of approach. All pupils were expected to work at the same pace; this was too fast for some of limited ability, especially when the class had no support assistant allocated to it. This lesson illustrates the need for the department to ensure that classroom assistants are always deployed in accordance with need, especially where behavioural issues arise. The use of support assistants for statemented pupils is good. The two technicians service well the requirements of this busy department.

135. Leadership in the department is very good, because the head of department and an Advanced Skills Teacher work in tandem to the benefit of pupils. A recent overhaul of courses, approaches and materials has occurred. This revision has already led to improvements in pupils' work in Years 7-9. Management is good. A weakness is the inconsistent depth of marking of pupils' exercise books, the absence of grades and little indication of how well pupils achieve. The modular examinations that form part of the double-award course are used to good effect. Effective progress reviews, booster classes and school assemblies are used to praise students for their achievements.

136. The department has sufficient equipment, although datalogging apparatus has come to the end of its useful life. Many textbooks are outmoded; some pre-date the introduction of the National Curriculum. Science rooms are scheduled for a total refurbishment during 2005, when current deficits in ICT provision are expected to be remedied. There has been steady, satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The National Curriculum is not currently being taught to all pupils in Years 10 and 11.
- In too many lessons, the work is too easy or pupils do not have enough to do.
- Pupils are not given enough information on the quality of their work or how to make improvements.
- The opportunity to study for an examination after school is a good addition to the curriculum.
- Computers do not always work, because the school does not have enough technical help.

### **Commentary**

137. Pupils enter the school with average standards. The work of pupils in Year 9 is below that normally seen. This represents unsatisfactory achievement. Higher-attaining pupils produce attractive presentations (as, for instance, about a theme park), combining computer programs well.



Pupils of average attainment insert video-clips into presentations, but do not understand about computer control. Lower-attaining pupils combine text and graphics, but do not readily use computer-aids to help to make their spelling and grammar accurate. Pupils are not fully aware of the intended audience of their work. They do not plan their work in detail and so, when asked to evaluate work, write descriptions of what they have done rather than assess how effectively it meets its aims.

138. Most pupils in Years 10 and 11 currently do not follow an ICT course. They use computers in some of their work in other subjects, but the school does not record where this occurs. In consequence, the school cannot guarantee that all these pupils are taught what is required by the National Curriculum. The school has firm plans for all pupils in Year 10 to be taught ICT from the start of the next academic year. A small number of pupils in Year 11 take a General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) course after school. This course makes a good addition to their curriculum.

139. By Year 11, higher-attaining pupils construct relational databases and produce attractive multi-media presentations. Pupils of average attainment use simple spreadsheets to produce charts, but do not explain how their work meets the needs of their intended audience. Lower-attaining pupils use a range of programs, but do not use more involved features (for example) to improve layout. Pupils do not write accounts of how they have developed their work. Notes on their work are at best superficial. Pupils test their work, but do not record these tests sufficiently – as, for example, by using screen shots.

140. At all ages, boys and girls achieve similarly. Pupils with special educational needs achieve as well as other pupils. These pupils are occasionally helped by learning support assistants, but these assistants do not always have the necessary computer skills to be able to provide full support. Teachers are not provided with sufficiently detailed information on how to meet the needs of these pupils.

141. Teaching and learning range from satisfactory to very poor and are unsatisfactory overall. In Years 10 and 11, this is because the majority of pupils are not taught ICT in a systematic way and their progress is not recorded. In Years 7 to 9, some (but not all) of the unsatisfactory teaching is accounted for by the fact that some teachers are not experienced in, or trained to teach, the subject.

142. Too often, pupils are not given enough work to do or their work is at a very undemanding level. In one Year 8 lesson, for instance, pupils were required to write only a very simple document with three web-links. They had done a very similar task the previous week and were not clear why they were doing it again. For these reasons, pupils swiftly lost interest in the lesson and unsatisfactory behaviour was not dealt with by the teacher. In Years 7-9, pupils have unsatisfactory attitudes towards the subject, because teaching does not engage their interest. These attitudes frequently lead to a significant minority of pupils disturbing the learning of others.

143. Teaching does not give sufficient importance to developing the skills of planning, testing and evaluating work. Pupils do not keep records of the improvements they make to their work and what led to them identifying the need for alteration. In consequence, pupils do not develop skills which will be essential for them in the subject, not least to gain good examination marks.

144. When work is marked, pupils are not given an accurate indication of the current level of their work. Written comment is too generalised to help pupils to identify clearly how their work can be improved. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are not sufficiently aware of what they should do to gain marks for their coursework. This leads to their documentation being incomplete or lacking sufficient depth.

145. Leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The school was informed by the previous inspection that it was not teaching the National Curriculum. Although omissions for pupils in Years 7-9 have now been tackled, older pupils still do not receive their statutory entitlement. For this reason, improvement since the previous inspection has been unsatisfactory. Help has been given to non-specialist teachers to enable them to teach the subject, but more support is needed.

Insufficient information is obtained as to what pupils have learned before they started the school, making it difficult to pitch work for pupils in Year 7 at an appropriate level. The department's evaluation of its work is too inaccurate to be of much use in identifying the improvements needed. The department requires an overhaul.

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

146. The school has very recently increased significantly the number of computers it has. It now has good provision. At the time of the inspection, subjects had not yet been able to take full account of these improved ICT facilities when planning their work. The lack of specialist ICT equipment restricts achievement in science, art, and design and technology. Currently, the school does not employ enough technical help to ensure that computer equipment will function properly.

147. Pupils have average levels of competence in the use of ICT. In many subjects (as, for example, English, geography and history), pupils use ICT well to enhance the presentation of their work. Video-conferencing in French allows pupils to converse with native speakers of the language, so improving their speaking skills.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Geography**

Provision in geography is **good**.

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

- Effective teaching results in pupils learning well.
- Most pupils are interested in their work, behave well and achieve well.
- Good leadership has led to a good rate of improvement since the previous inspection.
- Recent assessment of pupils' work in Years 7-9 has not been accurate.

#### **Commentary**

148. The proportion of pupils obtaining grades in the range A\*-C in the 2004 GCSE examination was above average. A larger than average proportion also gained the highest A or A\* grades. These results were an improvement on those of 2003.

149. By the end of Year 9, pupils' overall attainment is in line with what is expected nationally. The standard of work seen during the inspection was of similar quality. Most pupils achieve well in Years 7-9, because they are taught effectively and because they work hard and learn well.

150. Most pupils in Years 7-9 have good knowledge and understanding about such topics as the globalisation of trade, the effect of global warming and the impact of the physical environment on human activity. Most understand soundly the processes involved in the formation of such physical features as volcanoes. Their knowledge of where places are is, however, often weak: pupils in Year 7, for instance, did not readily identify Africa on a world map. Pupils' map work is satisfactory. Although most use an atlas adequately, many do not transfer information accurately from it or label maps clearly. The higher attainers explain links between human activity and the physical environment well. They argue a point of view clearly, both orally and in extended writing.

151. The overall attainment of pupils by the end of Year 11 is above average; only a small proportion of pupils produce below-average work. Most pupils build well on their standards at the end of Year 9 and continue to make good progress. Teachers set suitably demanding work on interesting topics. Pupils are attentive and behave well, and so achieve well.

152. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 have good knowledge and understanding. Higher attainers understand well such complex issues as those surrounding the concept of “fair trade”. They have very good understanding of such aspects of physical geography as volcanic activity and its impact. The geographical content of their extended written work is of an above average standard, but spelling is often weak. Lower attainers know and understand why some parts of the world are poorer than others. They also explain how poverty can be linked to human activity – such as in the production of jeans.

153. Teaching is good overall; some lessons have very good aspects within them. As a result, pupils learn well. Teachers successfully set high expectations of work and behaviour in almost all lessons. Good relationships between pupils and teachers mean that pupils are prepared to work hard and cooperate in learning. Most lessons have a brisk pace, so that pupils cover a lot of ground. Teachers use a range of activities within lessons that motivate pupils, creating in them a wish to learn more. Tasks and resources are suitably matched to pupils’ capabilities, so helping pupils to learn successfully.

154. The department’s contribution to pupils’ spiritual and moral development is good. This was seen notably in a lesson on the impact of the recent Asian tsunami, in which pupils in Year 7 were encouraged to think about not just the physical, but also the emotional, impact of the disaster. It also featured prominently in lessons with Year 9 on the exploitation of labour in the manufacture of jeans. Occasionally, some poor behaviour from a minority of pupils hinders the learning of all.

155. The department is led well and is managed satisfactorily. Under a strong head of department, there are a clear ethos of hard work and a committed effort both from the team of teachers and from pupils. The department has made good improvement since the previous inspection. GCSE standards have risen and achievement is now good. Both the teaching and the learning resources for lower attainers have improved.

156. In contrast, the scheme for assessing pupils’ work in Years 7-9 led to very inaccurate evaluations of standards in 2003 and 2004. The tasks set for assessment are now being rewritten to improve this weakness. Teachers make effective use of ICT in their teaching. A recent purchase has improved the stock of atlases, but there are not enough good-quality textbooks for pupils in Years 7-9.

## **History**

Provision in history is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good teaching in most lessons means that pupils learn well.
- Most pupils show interest and involvement in their work and so achieve well.
- Effective leadership and management has helped to raise boys’ attainment at GCSE.
- In a minority of lessons, poor behaviour impedes learning and achievement.

### **Commentary**

157. In the GCSE examination of 2004, the proportion of pupils who gained grades A\*-C was above average. It was well above average for grades A and A\*. The proportion who gained an A\*-G grade was close to average. Boys’ achievement of A\*-C grades was significantly above the national average for boys. These results were an improvement on those of 2003.

158. By the end of Year 9, pupils’ overall attainment is in line with that expected nationally. Most pupils achieve well in Years 7-9. This is because they are taught well and because they usually concentrate hard and show interest in their work.

159. Most pupils in Years 7-9 have good knowledge of past events. They explain why events

have happened and the reasons for change over time. High attainers produce detailed work. They evaluate and use a wide range of historical sources well. They understand that conflicting views of the past can co-exist. Their written work is usually mature in style. It also frequently contains spelling errors, which teachers do not always correct. Lower attainers usually have satisfactory, but often quite superficial, knowledge about the past. Although they use sources adequately for information, they often have difficulty in making valid deductions; this weakness is sometimes due to their low level of literacy.

160. The standard of work of pupils currently taking the GCSE course is above average. Most pupils achieve well, building effectively on the standards they reached by the end of Year 9. Teachers set high standards in lessons and pupils show a positive desire to learn.

161. The work of the majority of pupils in Years 10 and 11 shows a good depth of knowledge and understanding. Pupils use a range of sources competently to build up their understanding, although many do not draw inferences from pictorial sources as easily as they do from text. This was evident, for instance, in the work of pupils in Year 10, when using late 19<sup>th</sup> century paintings to evaluate differing views of the lifestyles of American cowboys. The highest attainers understand clearly the reasons for different interpretations of the past. Their oral answers are often lengthy and articulate. Lower attainers explain changes over a period of time satisfactorily – as, for instance, in their work on medicine. They do not, however, easily skim-read texts and extract key details.

162. Teaching ranges from good to unsatisfactory and is good overall. As a result, most pupils learn well. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and hard work. They almost always manage pupils well. Pupils like their teachers and are happy to work hard in lessons. They show interest and are invariably attentive. Teachers use an appropriate range of activities that motivate pupils and encourage them to learn effectively. The tasks set allow pupils of high ability to reach high standards.

163. The support from class teachers and learning assistants for pupils with special educational needs is good, so that these pupils achieve well. The strong support for pupils taking GCSE, both in class and in after-school revision sessions, helps them to know how to improve their work and reach high grades. In a small minority of lessons, however, poor behaviour from a minority of pupils impedes the learning of all the class. Teachers occasionally set tasks that are too complex, thereby causing frustration among pupils and limiting their achievement.

164. The department is led and managed well. The department has made sound improvement since the previous inspection. The head of department has a clear commitment to raising standards. The department works well as team. There has been a willingness to try out different ways of raising standards – as, for instance, in teaching some boys and girls in single-sex groups for GCSE. There are not enough textbooks for pupils who take GCSE to have a textbook which they can use at home.

## **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
- Attitudes to RE are very positive in Years 7-9.
- The standard of work seen in Year 11 is still below average.
- Procedures for assessment require improvement.

## Commentary

165. By the end of Year 9, pupils' work is at the standard expected by the agreed syllabus. Pupils have satisfactory knowledge about the beliefs and practices of Christianity and of the other religions they study. They understand how religious belief makes a difference to a person's life. They relate what they learn to their own lives and reflect on questions that are difficult to answer. They develop their own point of view by considering other views and giving reasons. Pupils progress well during Years 7-9. They are very positive in attitude and achieve well.

166. Attainment in Year 11 is below average. Pupils show good understanding of personal and social issues. They also recognise how people have conflicting values between, for example, the sanctity of life and the quality of life. They gain sound benefit from the GCSE short course, *Religion and Life*. They fail, however, to develop to the full the detailed knowledge and depth of understanding of which they are capable. Pupils are positive in attitude to the subject. Their achievement is broadly satisfactory, but should be greater.

167. Teaching and learning are good in Years 7-9. The teaching shows strong command of the subject, good planning and high levels of emotional and intellectual engagement with pupils. Teaching methods are effective and teachers make good use of learning resources. Most teachers are also good at fostering positive attitudes and ensuring good behaviour. Pupils respond well to the good teaching and high expectations they experience and make good gains in what they learn.

168. Teaching and learning in Years 10-11 vary widely from very good to unsatisfactory and are satisfactory overall. Where teaching is very good, it makes very effective use of resources. The pace of most lessons is brisk and pupils also have opportunities for reflection. They develop their thinking skills well in groups. Teaching is unsatisfactory when the teacher inadequately incorporates the specific knowledge of Christianity and Islam that the course requires. Sometimes the teacher's presentation lasts too long, leaving too little time for pupils to be actively involved in what they are being taught.

169. Assessment is broadly satisfactory and is in line with the expectations of the agreed syllabus. Although teachers make learning aims clear in lessons, the department has no agreed system for measuring attainment. Procedures for assessment require improvement, because pupils have too little awareness of how well they are doing or what they need to do to improve.

170. Leadership is good. The subject leader has successfully introduced new schemes of work and the GCSE short course. He shows clear vision, a strong sense of purpose and high aspirations. Management is satisfactory. Procedures for assessment require improvement and the department currently lacks the capacity for rigorous self-evaluation. The school now meets the statutory requirement to provide teaching for pupils in Years 10-11, an improvement since the last inspection. The introduction of an accredited course has not only secured compliance with what is statutorily required, but also improved the curriculum and laid the foundation for higher standards. The achievements of the new subject leader and the overall improvement since 1999 have been good.

## TECHNOLOGY

### Design and technology

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The 2004 GCSE results were well above average.
- Many pupils achieve well as a result of high-quality teaching.
- Inadequate ICT resources are restricting further improvement.

## Commentary

171. When pupils enter the school in Year 7, their overall standard of work in drawing and using hand-tools is average. By the end of Year 9, attainment is average overall. Standards are often above average in practical work. Achievement over Years 7-9 is satisfactory overall and often good. As a result of the range of experiences provided for them, pupils have a clear understanding of both the designing and making processes and how to evaluate their work. Poor spelling and handwriting frequently spoil written work.

172. By the end of Year 11, the overall standard of attainment is well above average. In all aspects of the subject, practical work is of a very high standard. Coursework folders in resistant materials, in particular, show how standards have improved. Pupils use computers well for designing, word processing and the presentation of data.

173. Current achievement in Years 7-9 is satisfactory overall and sometimes good. In a Year 7 food lesson, for example, all pupils achieved well, as they decorated the cookies made in a previous lesson. In textiles, another Year 7 class achieved very well, when using hand- and machine-sewing techniques to make puppets. Pupils with special educational needs (including one with sight impairment) are well supported by a classroom assistant and achieve as well as everyone else.

174. As a result of teachers' emphasis on team-working, a Year 8 class achieved well when working with resistant materials. They successfully controlled coping saws when cutting acrylic. Most pupils achieved an accurate fit when assembling pieces of acrylic to form decorative covers for their lamp bases. Year 9 pupils achieved well, too, as they produce flapjacks, using industrial batch-production methods. Pupils are not good, however, at clearing away afterwards. Ingredients spill over working surfaces and wiping-up cloths drop on stools or the floor. In a Year 9 ICT lesson seen, achievement was barely satisfactory. Too much time was wasted, because lower-attaining pupils did not listen to instructions.

175. Achievement by the end of Year 11 is very good overall. All pupils enjoy making quality products. Most, too, recognise the value of clearly communicating on paper the processes covered. Lower attainers often have difficulty recalling the skills they have used. Higher attainers are generous with their support for others. As a result, pupils' motivation is very high, in Years 10 and 11, in all aspects of the subject.

176. Teaching and learning are always at least satisfactory, usually good, and in half the lessons seen, very good. Overall, teaching is good in Years 7-9 and very good in Years 10-11. Two lessons were outstanding, because teachers' assessments were very effective in helping pupils to understand the quality aimed for in their practical textiles work and their resistant materials coursework. As pupils in both groups affirmed, "teachers' messages are very clear and we know what to do".

177. Other strengths of teaching and learning stem from teachers' shared enthusiasm for the subject and from pupils' desire to know more and gain better skills. Noise levels are sometimes too high. Where behaviour management is good, noisy pupils are supported seamlessly back into lessons. On occasions, however, control is inadequate and learning slows. Marking and written feedback to pupils concentrates well on content, but too little on matters of presentation, handwriting and (particularly) spelling. Homework is set regularly and is a strong feature of the department's provision.

178. The new leader of the subject has inherited a very strong team that includes two skilled technicians. Leadership and management are good. Fresh ideas and high expectations are challenging staff to reappraise their practice. Inaccurate teacher assessments in Years 7-9, for example, have been recognised: moderated samples of work are being gathered to guide future assessment closely. Very high quality workbooks have been produced to support learning in textiles and food in Years 7-9. This initiative has not yet been extended to resistant materials.

179. Minor health and safety issues require improvement. The department's ICT resources are not adequate: there are too few computers, working printers and other peripherals available for developing design and manufacturing processes. Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good: all weaknesses identified in 1999 have been fully addressed.

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS**

### **Art and design**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The GCSE results of 2004 were the best of recent years, but should be higher.
- High-quality art displays enrich the whole of the school's environment.
- Poor ICT resources hold back pupils' achievement.

### **Commentary**

180. The standard of attainment on entry to the school is average. By the end of Year 9, pupils' overall standard is average for drawing and painting techniques. Collage designs and pupils' knowledge and understanding of artists such as Mondrian and cultures such as that of the Aborigines are stronger features. This level of attainment represents satisfactory achievement over time.

181. GCSE results have improved steadily over the past three years. In 2004, all candidates gained at least the minimum G grade; the proportion who gained the higher A\*-C grades was below average. Boys achieve lower standards than girls. In Year 11, the current overall standard is above average. Higher attainers draw very well from observation, producing, for example, pen and ink studies of twigs and charcoal, tonal studies of cylindrical forms. Most pupils use sketchbooks effectively for developing ideas and for research. Abstract collage studies are a strong feature.

182. Achievement in lessons in Years 7-9 is sound overall. Pupils in Year 7 make good progress in extending their drawing and painting skills. In Year 8, many use sketchbooks well to refine their ideas – as evident in the posters they create, using ICT. Pupils apply their minds well to the problems encountered when, for instance, they draw school corridors, using one-point perspective. Year 9 pupils read challenging texts about Egyptian culture silently, but had no opportunities for reading aloud. Whilst higher attainers recall and can sequence events in the texts they read, lower and middle attainers require time for reflection or to talk with a partner in order to clarify their understanding. When Year 9 pupils are given the opportunity to work in groups to research words in a dictionary and discuss their ideas (as in the production of surreal sentences), their motivation is high and achievement very good.

183. Achievement by the end of Year 11 is very good overall. Year 10 pupils benefit from such learning approaches as modelling and visual mapping that are being piloted in this year group as part of the "Leading in Learning" project. Most pupils create good still-life drawings. Higher attainers create very effective compositions. The emphasis on computer graphics in Year 11 has enabled boys to achieve as well as girls, but pupils' access to equipment is limited and equipment is often unreliable.

184. Teaching is good in Years 7-9 and very good in Years 10 and 11. The strongest features are teachers' subject knowledge and a deep interest in how pupils learn. Teachers' demonstrations communicate very well the quality being aimed for. Classroom management is very good. Thoughtful opportunities are provided for pupils' moral and social education. Cultural development is sound, but opportunities are missed to enhance pupils' self-reflection and spiritual growth. Focused discussion is satisfactory, but could be stronger. Homework is set regularly and work is

marked frequently, but evaluative written feedback on work often fails to explain precisely why something is considered good.

185. The new subject leader faces a big task. Leadership and management are good. Assessment procedures have improved and are now good. Achievement is much improved and resources have been reorganised. There is a better environment for artistic learning both within classrooms and through high-quality displays in other parts of the school. Standards at GCSE, however, are still not high enough, ICT resources are inadequate and team-working within the department is no more than satisfactory. Nevertheless, improvement since the previous inspection has been good: teaching, learning, assessment, tracking and monitoring progress, cultural development and curricular coverage have all improved.

## **Music**

Provision in music is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The 2004 GCSE results were well above average.
- Consistently good teaching ensures that pupils learn and progress well.
- Musical education here is supported by good accommodation and some very good resources.
- The school provides good opportunities for instrumental music.
- The development of singing skills is the weakest feature of provision.

### **Commentary**

186. Results in the 2004 GCSE examination were well above average, particularly in the proportion of pupils gaining the highest grades. In current work, the overall standard towards the end of Year 9 is above average. Pupils have good musical knowledge and understanding. They perform accurately at keyboards. They have good recall of previous work. Their music books show very good standards of presentation, including accurate music-writing. At all stages, pupils have a strong response to beat and by Year 9 have a good feeling for harmonic movement. Pupils achieve well in Years 7-9.

187. The overall standard of work is above average by the end of Year 11. This represents good achievement. Pupils respond well to the consistently good teaching they receive, working with purpose and interest. In Year 11, they are very committed and show considerable enthusiasm for their course. They respond particularly well to the very new facilities for ICT in music and attain an overall standard in this aspect of work that is well above average.

188. Teaching is good throughout the school. It is characterised by good planning that secures solid progression and develops pupils' confidence in music. It is strong in subject knowledge and convincing in its quietly enthusiastic delivery. The assessment of standards and progress is strongly integrated into the structure of lessons, is directly related to National Curriculum levels and ensures that pupils know how to improve their work. Teaching and learning are enhanced by some very good resources and good accommodation.

189. Under good leadership and management, the department has improved very well since the previous inspection. Resources for learning have improved dramatically and have contributed to the marked improvement in standards (which are uniformly good). Provision for keyboards and ICT is very good. It is encouraging significantly more pupils to take music as an option in Years 10 and 11 as well as encouraging an enthusiastic response in Years 7-9. Classroom singing is not, however, at the same standard as other aspects of the musical curriculum.

190. The day-to-day running of the department is very smooth and undertaken efficiently. Opportunities for learning instruments and for vocal studies are very well organised and there is



very clear evidence of the pupils' enthusiasm for these opportunities: around 120 pupils are taught each week by visiting teachers.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE results are well above the national average.
- Well-planned lessons help pupils to learn and achieve well.
- Clearer assessment is needed to help pupils understand their levels of performance.

### Commentary

191. By the end of Year 9, pupils' overall standard in practical activities is average. It is best in boys' soccer where, for example, they display good techniques. They play well, retaining possession of the ball by accurate passing and good ball control. Most head the ball confidently. Year 7 pupils have a sound standard in those basketball skills covered during their first year, especially in their passing and shooting skills. Boys understand defensive systems in basketball and use them well in games. The standard in badminton is average: most pupils have a basic range of racket skills. From the standard at which they entered the school, both boys and girls (including those with special educational needs) achieve well.

192. By the end of Year 11, the overall standard of practical work is above average. Girls achieve well in dance. In one lesson observed, they considerably extended, improved and choreographed a dance sequence. Most of them had good timing and the necessary degree of aesthetic awareness to ensure that their work had good quality. Boys and girls play volleyball to an average standard, making good progress in executing such basic skills as the dig and volley. Practical standards are highest amongst pupils on the GCSE course. Most pupils achieve well.

193. GCSE results have been well above the national average for a number of years, especially for the proportion of grades A\*-C obtained. Written work for this course is well above average in standard. The best work is extremely well presented. Most pupils use ICT appropriately to present homework. Practical standards have been enhanced by an increase in time for the subject for pupils in Years 10 and 11. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs achieve well.

194. Teaching is good (and occasionally very good). Lesson preparation is thorough. The practice of sharing learning objectives with pupils helps them to achieve well. Relationships between teachers and pupils are always very good. As a result, pupils cooperate and collaborate very effectively, when they are required to do so. Specialist staff, all of whom have good subject knowledge, teach lessons confidently and stimulate pupils' interest. Lessons start promptly. Most lessons have a vibrant atmosphere of enjoyment and purpose.

195. Leadership and management are very good. Teachers work well as a team. The day-to-day running of the department is efficient. Assessment of standards and progress is satisfactory, but the ease with which pupils can check their progress requires improvement. Accommodation is satisfactory, although playing fields are badly drained and outside courts require resurfacing.

196. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. Teaching time has been significantly increased for Years 10 and 11. The GCSE course and *Junior Sports Leadership Award* have been added to the curriculum. Extracurricular provision is very good. Individuals and teams perform well at district level. Within the last two years, soccer teams have visited Barcelona and Milan, and girls have played netball in Milan.

## **BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL SUBJECTS**

### **Business Education**

Provision in business education is **satisfactory**.

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

- Interesting, well-paced lessons engage the interest of the majority of pupils.
- Well-motivated pupils are sometimes disadvantaged by the unsatisfactory behaviour of others.

#### **Commentary**

197. Business education was offered for the first time at GCSE level in 2004. The results were a little below average and considerably below what pupils tended to achieve in most of their other subjects. Boys performed better than girls.

198. The current standard of work is broadly average and represents a satisfactory level of achievement. Written work varies in quality. Some is good – well presented, accurate and containing an appropriate analysis of the information that pupils have researched. Some other written work is incomplete and contains limited evaluation. As a result of well-structured guidance on format from staff, the marketing theory in Year 11 coursework (seen at the draft stage) is clearly presented, but often insufficiently related to the organisation being studied. Most classwork is coherent and well-structured. Recently introduced feedback sheets and more explicit use of assessment criteria are beginning to give pupils a clearer idea of how they can improve their work.

199. Teaching is good. Lessons are conducted in a relaxed, yet brisk and efficient manner. Topics are clearly presented. Pupils' skills in teamwork and decision-making are enhanced by effective individual and small-group tasks. A Year 10 lesson on marketing strategies, for example, concentrated on improving pupils' thinking skills and planning, leading them to consider how they learned as well as extending their knowledge. In a Year 11 lesson that explored theories of motivation, pupils focused realistically on the world of work and thoughtfully discussed their future work priorities. The two staff who teach the course are well focused on ways of improving teaching and learning. They work well together in revising and teaching the course.

200. Learning is good. Although a few pupils persist in lessons in an undercurrent of chatter and other mildly disruptive behaviour, the majority are attentive and make an informed contribution to discussion or answering questions. Most pupils work cooperatively in groups, show respect for one another's views and work enthusiastically on the topics presented. A minority, however, do not take full advantage of the interesting work prepared for them.

201. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The department has several promising initiatives with local enterprises (as, for example, in creating a marketing strategy for a local tourist industry), although it recognises the need to increase the range of such contacts. There is a thorough analysis of performance. Modifications to the teaching of the course and greater feedback on pupils' performance have been put in place to improve results.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

### **Citizenship**

Provision in citizenship is **satisfactory**.

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

- Some subjects and some whole-school activities provide good experiences of citizenship.

- Pupils' work is not assessed satisfactorily.
- There are too few opportunities for all pupils to experience responsibility.

### **Commentary**

202. There are no national norms available for this subject, against which pupils' attainment and experience can be measured. It was not possible to see any lessons during the inspection and thus make a direct evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning. Discussions with pupils and scrutiny of samples of work, however, indicate that pupils' overall attainment is typical of what is found nationally by the end of both Year 9 and Year 11. A new GCSE short course in citizenship has recently been introduced and this promises to raise standards in the subject.

203. Throughout the school, the achievement of pupils is satisfactory in most aspects of the subject. Citizenship is studied both in PSHCE time and also in the general curriculum – as, for example, in English, where pupils in Year 11 expressed a deep interest in the social issues described by Charles Dickens. In Year 9, pupils have gained benefit and enjoyment from learning about the cost of living, inflation, debit and credit in their lessons on domestic economics.

204. Overall, pupils have modest opportunities to contribute to the running of the school. They elect representatives to, and serve on, the school council. Discussions with pupils suggest, however, that they are insufficiently aware of the council's purposes, procedures and potential.

205. In recent times, pupils have been involved in a fair range of practical projects, some of which are featured in the school's high-quality magazine, *Connect*. The projects have included the realities of crime and punishment (as presented by prison officers to pupils in Year 10), meeting local councillors (Year 11) and membership of an interviewing panel from all year groups when nine staff were recently appointed.

206. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory overall. Assessment, however, is insufficiently detailed; the quality of teaching citizenship topics in other subjects has not been audited. The school has only a limited range of photographic and video-recorded evidence of pupils' participation in practical work to support its overall assessment and celebration of their work. Evaluation of the effectiveness of present provision (including the range of teaching methods used) is very limited. The school now requires a firm focus on improving these weaknesses and limitations.

## SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM

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

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

### *Level 3 GCE AS-level courses – Year 12*

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Art and design	2	100	78	0	22	35.0	28.5
Biology	8	87	64	12	10	31.2	19.8
Business studies	9	89	75	22	15	32.2	25.7
Chemistry	2	100	70	0	13	25.0	23.0
Design and technology	6	100	73	0	14	31.6	24.3
English literature	17	88	86	12	17	30.5	29.7
French	3	100	80	0	19	33.3	28.2
Geography	11	82	76	30	20	33.6	27.0
History	10	100	82	50	21	39.0	29.2
Mathematics	2	50	60	0	14	10.0	20.5
Physics	5	60	66	0	15	22.0	22.4
Sociology	12	92	72	33	20	35.8	25.9
Sports / PE studies	9	100	72	55	12	43.3	22.8

### *Level 3 GCE A-level and VCE courses – Year 13*

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Art and design	1	0	98	0	50	0.0	87.1
Biology	6	67	97	17	40	43.3	79.3
Business studies	6	100	99	50	39	83.3	81.8
Chemistry	2	100	98	0	50	60.0	85.7
English literature	10	100	99	30	45	82.0	85.5
Geography	4	100	99	25	46	75.0	85.2
History	8	100	99	38	46	82.2	85.1
Mathematics	2	100	97	50	57	80.0	89.5
Physics	2	100	97	50	45	90.0	82.6
Sociology	6	100	99	17	45	82.9	84.6
Sports / PE studies	4	100	98	75	31	100.0	75.4

## ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

### English literature

Provision in English literature is **very good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most students make good progress and achieve very well on this course.
- Courses at A level are planned and managed very well.
- The A-level results in 2004 represented uniformly good achievement.

#### Commentary

207. English literature is a very popular subject at both AS and A level. Thirty-six students currently study the subject in the sixth form. The 2004 results were average at both levels. Students' current overall standard is above average and their achievement is very good.

208. Year 12 students' interest and enthusiasm for the subject were much in evidence in a lesson in which they studied Ian McEwan's novel, *Enduring Love*. The assessment criteria for the module were thoughtfully used to focus their analysis and learning on chapter one. Students displayed detailed, confident knowledge of the novel, as they reflected on the author's use of structure and scientific language. Crucial to the deepening of the students' analysis and understanding was the teacher's use of probing questions in a way that nurtured students' critical awareness.

209. During a Year 13 lesson to extend their understanding of different genres, students worked intensively on a range of activities to illustrate the concept of lyric poetry. Following a quick "find the missing words" activity based on Philip Larkin's poem, *Talking in Bed*, students worked in two groups to create visual representations of the poem as an aid to writing a 20-word summary. Most students made very good progress on the task and then applied their perceptions well to three other poems. The quality of learning was enhanced by the teacher's enthusiasm and determination to develop the students' own thinking.

210. Teaching and learning are always at least good and are very good overall. Students learn effectively because teachers tease out their responses and nurture their critical judgements. The assessment of work is good. It provides thoughtful feedback to students, ensuring that they know clearly how they can improve their work.

211. Leadership and management are good. Schemes of work are carefully designed, ensuring that the syllabus is thoroughly covered. Several teachers share the teaching, with the resultant benefit to students of a wider range of specialist knowledge and differing styles of learning. The high quality of provision has been sustained since the last inspection.

#### Language and literacy across the curriculum

212. The overall standard of literacy across sixth-form subjects is a little above average. Most students structure their writing well and take adequate notes. The presentation of work varies from the exemplary to the untidy and is average overall. Spelling is not as good as it should be. Most students contribute well to discussion, although not always clearly or confidently. Students listen well.

## Modern foreign languages

213. There was no major focus in this domain, but a Year 12 lesson in French was sampled. Teaching and learning were satisfactory. In the short opening task, students described themselves to their partner, using their textbook as a prompt, with a fair degree of success. They consolidated these points in writing, but not with complete accuracy.

214. The main focus of the lesson was a video about the *Front National* in Marseille and its policy of giving a premium only to parents of white babies. Students linked some of the statements to the respective speakers in the video-presentation. Their oral ability was not strong enough for them to express the opinions that they wanted to give about the moral issues involved. The teacher had prepared the lesson well, made good use of worksheets and supported students well. Students worked cooperatively together, listened attentively and persevered with the tasks. They made satisfactory progress in the lesson, but their oral and aural skills are not yet strong enough for the demands of the course.

## Mathematics

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- All students achieve well.
- Consistently good teaching helps students to learn independently with confidence.
- Recruitment to courses is low and continuation to Year 13 has been poor in the past.

## Commentary

215. In 2004, the two students who completed the GCE A-level course achieved an average standard. This was satisfactory achievement from GCSE. The current Year 13 class is very small. There has been a significant dropout rate since the start of Year 12. The standard shown in algebraic work on calculating areas and volumes, given a mix of formulae (including trigonometric formulae), was above average. Particularly impressive was the speed of working and the rapid and accurate recall of formulae.

216. In the small Year 12 class, achievement is good and attainment is above average. Students have a strong grasp of algebraic work and most received high grades in the recently examined GCE AS-level module. In work on mechanics, they not only rapidly recall relevant formulae relating to motion, but also demonstrate a clear understanding of how they are derived.

217. Teaching is consistently good. Students achieve well, because they are determined to succeed. Teachers have a good command of their subject. They use good questioning skills to sharpen their students' abilities to probe deeply into their work. Occasionally, teaching is excellent – such as when the teacher used an Internet website: model solutions appeared line by line on the interactive whiteboard, immediately after the student completed each line by hand, using a marker on the other whiteboard at the front of the class. Both the pace of work and the expectation of writing each step in the most acceptable format led to excellent progress.

218. Learning is secure because teachers have succeeded in motivating students to take responsibility for their own progress. Assessment is good. Students know clearly where marks are won or lost. Teachers and students are honest and open about whether work is clearly understood. If it is not, then they strive to remedy the deficiency by further practice or adopting a different approach. This was seen where both a graphical and a formulae-based explanation were studied.

219. Leadership and management are good and improving. The range of resources used to make learning interesting and varied has been widened. Teachers are supported well by the

dynamic new subject leader. The number studying the AS-level course, however, is less than expected. The reasons behind the significant dropout from the previous year's AS-level course have been analysed carefully. Clear plans have been laid to increase both the take-up from the current Year 11 pupils and the retention rate through to Year 13. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

220. Students are competent in using mathematics in other subjects. They draw and interpret graphs accurately in (for example) all areas of science. In geography, all work of a statistical nature is well understood. Students in history are at ease with interpreting time-lines and graphs. There is, however, less evidence of mathematics being used in PE theory than would normally be expected.

### **SCIENCE**

221. The main focus was on biology, but chemistry and physics lessons were also sampled. The momentum and high achievement found in science lower down the school are generally not maintained by the small numbers taking the sciences in the sixth form. At A level in 2004, students made sound progress in physics, but unsatisfactory progress overall in both biology and chemistry.

222. In the Year 12 chemistry lesson seen, both the teaching and students' achievement were broadly satisfactory. Pupils were, however, making notes on catalysts for too much of the time in an otherwise interactive lesson. Relationships between the teacher and students are good. In a good Year 13 physics lesson seen on relativity, the students were led carefully through a series of steps where the teacher worked carefully on the board. Students were fully involved and readily sought clarification of points they did not understand.

### **Biology**

Provision in biology is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The 2004 A-level results were below average and represented underachievement.
- Teaching overall is just satisfactory, but students' preparation for examinations lacks rigour.
- Lessons are thoroughly planned, but often fail to emphasise the most important features of topics.
- There are only limited opportunities to use ICT within the subject.

### **Commentary**

223. In recent years, students taking biology in Years 12 and 13 have ranged from six to 14 in number. The overall achievement of the six candidates who took the A-level examination in 2004 was unsatisfactory. The overall attainment, too, was low. One student gained a B grade and another a C. Two others gained the lowest grade (E) and two failed the examination. In the recent, modular AS examination, two in every three students failed to make satisfactory progress (using their GCSE results as a baseline).

224. Three whole lessons were observed. Two lessons were just satisfactory and one good. In the good Year 12 lesson, students stained root slivers and then examined specimens for evidence of mitosis. This practical work fitted well with the theory being covered and, when backed up with microphotographs, showed in detail how cells divide and multiply. Although more work could have been squeezed into the available time, this lesson came together well in a relaxed yet purposeful environment.

225. In the two lessons that were just satisfactory, students were expected to make notes and then report their findings and explanations to the class. Inputs from the teacher amplified the students' observations and further information was added. Whilst explanations were sound and facts correct, the lessons proceeded with little momentum, discussion or engagement with students. There was little attempt to stress the most important features being studied from the rest of the material covered.

226. Students' files have an appropriate range of background papers, diagrams, their own notes and past examination questions. Work is marked satisfactorily. Standards of written work and students' oral contributions are average at best. There are no computing facilities readily available for students within the science department and no ICT-based activities were observed during the inspection.

227. Students work well together, but, whilst generally understanding new topics, remain quiet unless directly questioned. Students do not receive sufficient encouragement to seek clarification and explanations or to question what has been said. Lessons do not convey a sense of urgency. Students' application to work is otherwise good.

228. Two members of staff teach the subject at each of AS and A levels. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Assessment processes are broadly satisfactory, but a closer match is required between target grades and the results of modular examinations. There are few extracurricular opportunities for students to extend their scientific horizons and career aspirations. Links with higher education, health groups and industrial organisations are limited. Since the last inspection, improvement has been unsatisfactory, partly because the subject's results have failed to rise.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

229. Students have average levels of competence in the use of ICT. A room, equipped with computers available for students to use when undertaking private study, is a very valuable resource that is much appreciated by students. In mathematics, good use is made of materials on the Internet to provide students with model solutions to problems. In history, students use the Internet well for research – as, for example, about the effects of National Socialism on women in the 1930s.

## **HUMANITIES**

230. The main focus was on geography and history, but lessons were also sampled in philosophy, psychology and sociology. In an outstanding philosophy lesson inspected in Year 12 on theories of knowledge, the teacher's exemplary command of the subject and clarity of planning ensured that students remained well engaged with some of the most difficult philosophical concepts. The lesson's exceptional level of challenge was supported by highly imaginative resources that ranged from crisps and mushrooms through pictorial illusions to a computer-based presentation. Students worked very intensively, wrote readily and fluently and achieved very well. Similarly, students achieved very well in another Year 12 lesson on euthanasia through very good teaching that also included outstanding features – as, for example, the quality of resources, the high pace of learning and their own sustained application.

231. In a good Year 12 lesson seen in psychology, the teacher revised key examination techniques with students in a clear, well-paced, authoritative and encouraging manner. The predominant mode of interactive, teacher-led exploration was eminently suitable and well illustrated on the topics of stress and abnormality. The significance and intricacies of examination questions were pertinently explored. Although students' overall achievement was satisfactory, not all of them took part in discussion or were encouraged to venture a view.



232. In the sound Year 13 sociology lesson on population that was inspected, students showed good attitudes and achieved satisfactorily. Their skim-reading of texts and solid groupwork enabled them to formulate their views well. Some identified key evidence, but found it difficult to link this evidence to analytical conclusions. The satisfactory teaching drew on a good range of resources, but had a tendency to do too much for the students and to over-formulate views for them.

## **Geography**

Provision in geography is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The overall standard of work is above average.
- Carefully planned lessons and effective teaching result in good achievement.
- Rigorous assessment informs students clearly how they can improve their work.
- Fieldwork is insufficient to underpin examination coursework adequately.

### **Commentary**

233. The overall standard of work is above average. Results in the A-level examination in 2004 were close to average. All four students passed. In 2003, the results were well above average and half the students gained an A or B grade. Results in the 2004 AS-level examination, taken at the end of Year 12, were above the national average. Both these sets of results represent good achievement.

234. Students in Year 12 have a good knowledge of how cities grow. They understand how urban environments can be improved and why conflicts may arise as changes occur. Year 13 students explained knowledgeably why seasonal changes in climate occur in Africa. They understand the reasons for earthquakes and how the worst effects of such a phenomenon can be avoided.

235. Throughout the sixth form, students have good research skills and make effective use of ICT. They present their findings appropriately in well-structured essays, but their oral work lacks confidence. Students understand geographical terms, but in Year 12 do not use them sufficiently in written work. Statistics are calculated accurately, but students' analysis of the findings is weak. They have good knowledge of exemplars to illustrate the topics they study.

236. Teaching is good overall. Teachers use their comprehensive knowledge of the subject to plan well, give clear explanations and choose effective methods to engage students fully. Lessons are prepared, organised and managed well, so that learning proceeds at a brisk pace. Expectations are high. Insufficient time, however, is allocated to conclude lessons and successfully assess the objectives set.

237. Students are well motivated, work hard individually or in groups, quickly assimilate new information and persevere with challenging work. Homework is used effectively to extend lessons and to provide opportunities to prepare and research new topics. Essay work is marked thoroughly, with useful comments. Assessment is rigorous and provides a clear indication of progress made, the standard reached and how to improve.

238. Good leadership provides a clear sense of purpose and direction for the subject and has an appropriate focus on standards and achievement. The subject is well managed. Fieldwork opportunities are inadequate and do not fully prepare students for examination coursework. The subject has maintained the good standards achieved at the time of the previous inspection.

## History

Provision in history is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Expert teaching prepares students thoroughly for coursework and examinations.
- Students are committed to working hard and improving their work.
- Students are successfully encouraged to work independently.

### Commentary

239. The overall standard of students' attainment by the end of Year 13 is average. In 2004, all ten students who took the AS-level examination passed and half gained the highest A or B grades. In their first modular examination in January 2005, over half the students on the current AS course gained an A or B grade (well over twice the 2004 national average). Standards at A level rose from well below average in 2002 to average in 2004. In 2004, the proportion gaining an A or B grade was close to average and (as in 2002 and 2003) all students passed. The standard of current work is at least in line with course requirements and a significant proportion of students reach an above-average standard. Students achieve well, because they work hard and are taught thoroughly.

240. The majority of students have good historical knowledge and understanding. They explain well the reasons for past events and the motives for actions taken in the past. Students in Year 12, for instance, understood very well the complexity of factors leading to the outbreak of war in 1914. The highest attainers have considerable depth of understanding. They write well-structured essays, arguing their point of view convincingly and supporting it with valid evidence. The essays of lower attainers are often descriptive rather than analytical. Students use ICT well to research for their independent studies. They select and use information competently.

241. Teaching is good overall and sometimes very good. Teachers know their subject thoroughly. They ensure that students know how to use their own knowledge to answer examination questions well. Students are encouraged to work independently: teachers provide good support and guidance, but do not allow students to rely too heavily on them. Teachers set appropriately demanding work. As a result, higher attainers acquire the necessary skills to reach the highest standards. Students are expected to formulate their own views and justify their own opinions. Teachers expect students to make use of a wide range of historical sources, including those available on the Internet. Teachers provide students with very helpful comments on their marked work, so that students know clearly how to improve in the future.

242. The leadership and management of the department are good. Standards at both AS and A level have risen over the past three years. Teachers work well as a team – as, for example, when both teachers worked with the large Year 12 group to ensure that all students received good support for coursework, even though only one teacher was timetabled for the group.

## ENGINEERING, TECHNOLOGY AND MANUFACTURING

243. There was no major inspection in this area, but a Year 12 lesson in design and technology was sampled, a range of work studied and students' views sought. The lesson seen, on the shelf-life of products, was very well taught. As a result, students gained very good knowledge and understanding of designing and manufacturing processes. They also thoughtfully explored the moral responsibilities that designers must consider in order to preserve the quality of the natural environment. An experienced technician teaches relevant engineering skills – a particularly valuable input for resolving construction problems with metal. Students enjoy the course and most display high motivation. A broad range of useful products is designed, using a wide range of materials. Overall achievement is good. Designing and making skills and written work are above average, but presentation is too often spoiled by poor spelling.

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

244. Art was not the subject of a major inspection, but two lessons were seen and other work sampled. The present Year 12 students achieve very well, as shown in their abstract collages, written evaluations and relief sculptures (inspired by studying the work of such artists as Kurt Schwitter). Teaching and learning are very good overall. Students enjoy their lessons and often talk informally about their work. In both years, however, too little emphasis is placed on the value of formal, oral presentations or the discussion of ideas. The 3,000-word essay, on a chosen topic, is the weakest feature of Year 13 practice.

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

### **Physical education**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good teaching ensures that students learn extremely well.
- The 2004 AS and A-level results were well above the national average.
- Students' writing demonstrates a clear understanding of theoretical issues.
- No PE is provided for students who are not on examination courses.

### **Commentary**

245. In 2004, both sets of A-level results were well above the national average. They represented a very good achievement. Current students discuss topics at an appropriate, academic level. Some of their written projects, on a wide range of theoretical aspects, reflect considerable research and thought. The presentation of work, often with the use of ICT, is above average in standard.

246. In lessons, lively, informed discussions well reflect students' wide reading. Most students contribute strongly, offering thoughtful opinions and questioning issues. Discussions about the cardio-vascular system and about motivation and deviancy in sport, for example, were notable for their quality. Students listen well to one another. They achieve well. The AS-level course is carefully structured, enabling students to bridge the gap in theoretical knowledge between what is required at AS level and later in the A-level examination.

247. Teaching is very good (and occasionally outstanding). Relationships between teachers and students are excellent. Lessons proceed with lively pace and purpose, and often with good humour. Lesson preparation is very thorough and learning objectives made clear. Emphasis is placed on students' active contribution to lessons. When teachers require them to cooperate and collaborate, students do so very effectively and learn well.

248. Homework is carefully set to extend students; they respond by completing their tasks promptly and conscientiously. Teachers have very good subject knowledge and teach lessons with assurance. They stimulate students' interest and successfully demand high standards of written and oral work. Both coursework and homework are carefully monitored.

249. Leadership and management are very good. Students' work is effectively assessed: they are given suitably challenging targets and accurately predicted grades. Students require easier access, however, to their assessment profiles. A weakness of the school's provision is that no timetabled PE is provided for students who are not on examination courses.

## **BUSINESS**

250. There was no major focus in this domain, but a good Year 13 lesson of business studies was observed. Students worked well on a past examination question to enhance their skill in choosing, planning and writing A-level essays. Their carefully guided discussion with the teacher was supported by appropriate use of marking specifications and written guidance from a principal examiner. Students worked conscientiously in pairs and demonstrated a good grasp of the subject. They enjoyed debating the content of the answer and showed good skill in analysis. This good standard seen was in line with the slightly above average results in the 2004 A-level examination.

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

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