

INSPECTION REPORT

Woolwich Polytechnic School for Boys

Thamesmead, London

LEA area: Greenwich

Unique reference number: 100187

Headteacher: Mr Byron Parker

Lead inspector: Val Lynch

Dates of inspection: 14th – 17th March 2005

Inspection number: 269009

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 – 16 |
| Gender of pupils: | Male |
| Number on roll: | 1123 |
| School address: | Thamesmead London |
| Postcode: | SE28 8AT |
| Telephone number: | 020 83107000 |
| Fax number: | 020 83106464 |
| Appropriate authority: | Governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr B Janes |
| Date of previous inspection: | January 1999 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is a large 11-16 comprehensive school of 1123 pupils. There are also 130 pupils studying post-16 courses in a franchise arrangement with Greenwich Community College. The school has grown rapidly in response to the closure of special schools in Greenwich and the closure of two other local schools. As a result, there is a higher than average proportion of pupils who have joined the school during their secondary education. There are a similar number of boys in most years, although Year 11 is a smaller year. The school is located in the London borough of Greenwich. Most pupils and pupils come from Woolwich and Thamesmead. The school is well established as a specialist technology college. In 2002, it gained a Sportsmark award. In 2004, it gained a Charter Mark award for its work on inclusion and was also designated as a Centre of Excellence by a national computer company. In 2003, it gained accreditation as an Investor in People organisation. When boys join the school in Year 7, the standards they have reached are well below average. Very few pupils are working at average or above average levels. A very high proportion have special educational needs and an equally high proportion have a language other than English as their home language. A number of these pupils are bilingual. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is above average. The school is part of the Excellence in Cities initiative within the borough and is part of two national projects, one for gifted and talented pupils, and the other for lower attainers.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|--|
| 1475 | Val Lynch | Lead inspector | |
| 10173 | Catherine Hinds | Lay inspector | |
| 1068 | Jan Allcorn | Team inspector | Mathematics |
| 34521 | Ruth Westbrook | Team inspector | English English as an additional language |
| 24453 | Gordon Jackson | Team inspector | Science Work-related learning |
| 18542 | Gerald Griffin | Team inspector | Information and communication technology |
| 15606 | Christine Hill | Team inspector | Art and design Special educational needs |
| 32672 | Stephen Hammond-Evans | Team inspector | Design and technology |
| 3687 | Godfrey Bancroft | Team inspector | Physical education |
| 22458 | Gilbert McGinn | Team inspector | History |
| 27082 | Geoffrey Henshall | Team inspector | Modern foreign languages |
| 8360 | Frederick Peacock | Team inspector | Music |
| 33081 | Mike Cooper | Team inspector | Geography |
| 4372 | Ralph Fordham | Team inspector | Citizenship Religious education |
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REPORT CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|-----------|
| PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT | 6 |
| PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS | |
| STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS | 8 |
| Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses | |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities | |
| QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL | 12 |
| Teaching and learning | |
| The curriculum | |
| Care, guidance and support | |
| Partnership with parents, other schools and the community | |
| LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT | 16 |
| OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES – Work-related learning | 18 |
| PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES | 20 |
| SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4 | |
| PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS | 36 |

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **good** school with many very good features. Achievement is **good** and is **very good** in Years 7 to 9. Teaching and learning are **good** and **very good** in Years 7 to 9. Leadership and management are **good**. The leadership of the headteacher is **very good**. The school provides **very good** value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Very good relationships within the school are characterised by outstanding racial harmony;
- The headteacher's clear vision has secured the growth of the school and rapid improvement;
- The school is very outward looking and relishes involvement in external initiatives and the chance to learn from others;
- Pupils' very positive attitudes and very good behaviour make strong contributions to their success;
- Teachers show genuine care and commitment to the inclusion of all pupils and to meeting their diverse needs;
- Rapid growth and change have limited the school's capacity to review its practice systematically.

Improvement since the previous inspection has been **very good**. Test results at the end of Year 9 have rapidly improved in recent years. GCSE results have also improved, but at a steadier pace. This improvement in results has been achieved within a period during which the school has grown as a result of the closure of special schools in the borough and two other local schools. This has led to an increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs. All the issues raised by the previous inspection have been addressed.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

In 2004, test results at the end of Year 9 were below average, but much better than those in similar schools. In English, results were average, but very high when compared to similar schools. Results in mathematics and science were below average, but well above those in similar schools. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher levels, although well below average, was well above similar schools in English and mathematics and in line in science. Work seen during the inspection reflects these results and shows very good achievement in English and good achievement in mathematics and science. Pupils do well in mathematics and science tests as a result of the very good additional support that is provided outside of the school day and pupils' enthusiasm to do well. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because information on their specific difficulties is shared widely with staff and they receive excellent support from the special educational needs staff. Pupils who are at the early stages of learning English also benefit from good support. When account is taken of the standards pupils have reached when they join the school and the number of pupils with special educational needs, achievement is good or very good in all subjects.

Year 11 results

| Performance compared with: | | all schools | | | similar schools |
|----------------------------|------------------------|-------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2004 |
| Year 11 | GCSE/GNVQ examinations | E | E | E | C |

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

GCSE results in 2004 were well below average, but as good as those in similar schools. These results have not been improving as fast as results nationally. Results in 2004 were above average in art and design, business studies, computer studies, English literature, mathematics, French and

Spanish. In these subjects, an above average proportion of pupils gained the higher grades. Pupils did particularly well in art and modern foreign languages. Results were below average in design and technology and history, and well below average in science and physical education. Standards seen during the inspection are well above expectations in art and design and above expectations in business studies, French, Spanish, history and music, and achievement in these subjects is very good. Standards are below expectations in English, mathematics, science and design and technology. However, achievement is at least good in these subjects, with the exception of science where it is satisfactory.

Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is **very good**. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **very good**. Attendance is **satisfactory**. The school promotes very good relationships, especially between pupils of different races, and celebrates its success.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching and learning are **good**. Teaching and learning are better in Years 7 to 9 than in Years 10 and 11. Teachers' very good subject knowledge is used well to plan lessons. This, along with pupils' very positive attitudes, leads to good learning. The school's focus on teaching and learning enables teachers to share good practice and to improve the quality and consistency of their teaching. Information from tests and assessments is used well to plan learning for individual pupils. The curriculum is good and is enhanced by a range of activities outside lessons, particularly additional study sessions after school and at weekends. The school benefits from very effective links with teacher training providers. The school has very good procedures to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety and is particularly good at identifying and meeting individual pupil's needs. The school has very good links with other schools and colleges both locally and internationally. The school works particularly well with the parents of pupils experiencing difficulty in school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The headteacher provides very good leadership and has effectively steered the school through a period of considerable change. He is well supported by an effective senior team. The leadership of other key staff is good, although some heads of department are not as effective as others. The school is very committed to inclusion and this aspect of the school's work is exceptionally well led. Management is good, but is not supported by an effective and rigorous approach to monitoring and evaluation. Governance is good. Governors are knowledgeable and effective, but currently do not fulfil all their statutory responsibilities.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and pupils are supportive of the school and particularly value the school's caring ethos. They recognise the good teaching and say it helps pupils to learn well. They appreciate the very good relationships evident throughout the whole school community. Pupils feel secure that there is always someone to talk to, but do not feel that the school always takes their views fully into account when planning school improvement. Inspectors endorse this view.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Develop and implement a policy for school review and self-evaluation;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Provide religious education for all pupils in Years 10 and 11;
- Find ways to fulfil the requirement for a daily act of collective worship.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is **very good** in Years 7 to 9 and **good** in Years 10 and 11. In 2004, test results at the end of Year 9 were **below average**, but **much better** than those in similar schools. GCSE results were **well below average**, but **as good** as those in similar schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well in Years 7 to 9 because their individual educational needs are accurately identified and very good support provided.
- Pupils do particularly well in art and design and modern foreign languages.
- Teachers provide very good support outside lessons to help pupils prepare for and succeed in tests and examinations.
- Pupils do not do as well in science as they do in their other subjects.

Commentary

1. When boys join the school in Year 7, the standards they have reached are well below average. This is because a very high proportion have special educational needs. An equally high proportion have a language other than English as their home language. The school has a very small proportion of pupils who are working at average or above average levels. Pupils settle quickly into school and by the end of Year 9 they have made good gains in their learning.

Key Stage 3

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 33.5 (30.4) | 33.4 (33.3) |
| Mathematics | 33.8 (33.8) | 35.4 (34.7) |
| Science | 31.1 (29.8) | 33.6 (33.3) |

There were 238 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. Results in national tests at the end of Year 9 have steadily improved since 2000. In English, the improvement in 2004 was outstanding and results were average and very high when compared to similar schools. It is likely that they will be above the average for boys nationally. Results in mathematics and science were below average, but well above those in similar schools. Results in mathematics have been steadily improving and those in science have now recovered after a dip in 2003. Unvalidated data shows that the proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 6, although well below average, was well above similar schools in English and mathematics and in line in science. Work seen during the inspection reflects these results and shows very good achievement in English and good achievement in mathematics and science. Pupils do well in mathematics and science tests as a result of the very good additional support that is provided outside of the school day and pupils' enthusiasm to do well. The school ranks first in the borough for progress in English and third for mathematics and science.
3. In 2004, teacher assessments were well above average in music and above average in design and technology, but work seen is not as good as these assessments. In modern foreign languages and art, the reverse is so. Teacher assessments were average, but the work seen

is better than this. In all other subjects, teachers assessments are below average. When account is taken of the standards pupils have reached when they join the school and the number of pupils with individual needs in the school, achievement is good or very good in all subjects. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because information on their specific difficulties is shared widely with staff. These pupils receive excellent support from the special educational needs staff. Pupils who are at the early stages of learning English also benefit from good support, although their needs are not always met in lessons.

Key Stage 4

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 | 35.0 (34.0) | 52.0 (52.0) |
| Percentage of pupils gaining 5 or more A*-G grades | 76.0 (75.0) | 89 (88) |
| Percentage of pupils gaining 1 or more A*-G grades | 93.0 (88.0) | 96.0 (96.0) |
| Average point score per pupil (best eight subjects) | 32.3 (33.5) | 34.9 (34.7) |

There were 180 pupils in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

4. In 2004, GCSE results were well below average, but were the same as in similar schools. These results have not been improving as fast as results nationally or as fast as the improvements in test results at the end of Year 9. However, due credit should be given for the significant increase in the proportion of pupils gaining five or more A* - C grades in 2003. Results in 2004 were above average in art and design, business studies, computer studies, English literature, mathematics, French and Spanish. In these subjects, an above average proportion of pupils gained the higher grades. This is a significant achievement for the pupils who took these subjects and for the school. Results were below average in design and technology and history and well below average in science and physical education. In science and physical education, the proportion taking the examination was much higher than nationally and included some of the lowest-attaining pupils. Results in 2004 were below the targets set for the school. The targets had not been set on the basis of data on pupils and the school does not see them as being realistic.
5. Standards seen during the inspection are well above expectations in art and design and achievement is excellent. Work is above expectations in business, French, Spanish, history and music, and achievement is very good. Standards are below expectations in English, mathematics, science and design and technology. However, achievement is at least good in these subjects, with the exception of science where it is satisfactory. There is no evidence to judge achievement in religious education. The school was unable to appoint a qualified subject specialist and decided not to run a course in Years 10 and 11.
6. Boys' language and literacy skills, numeracy skills and ICT skills are below average, but are developing well from what is sometimes a very low baseline. Because pupils make such good progress in Years 7 to 9, their skills are such that many can tackle the demands of their GCSE courses in Years 10 and 11. Although the English language skills of some pupils are below average, there are a number of bilingual pupils who are very successful in European and community languages.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are **very good**. Attendance and punctuality are **satisfactory**. Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school promotes very good relationships, especially between pupils of different races.
- The school celebrates success so that pupils have very positive attitudes and want to do well.
- Pupils behave very well because the school carefully promotes correct conduct.
- As the school encourages high levels of respect, pupils grow in confidence and self-esteem.
- The progress of a small number of pupils is adversely affected by their poor attendance.

Commentary

7. Pupils develop very good relationships with others and this is a major strength of the school. The atmosphere around the school and in lessons is extremely supportive, especially for pupils with special educational needs. Very high levels of mutual respect and trust are evident. Pupils work very well together in lessons, which helps them to learn from each other. Their success is strongly celebrated and rewarded publicly in assemblies, promoting the pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Pupils enjoy their lessons and because they are keen to do as well as they can they work very hard and achieve well. They talk enthusiastically about the extensive range of activities available to them and participate in them eagerly.
8. As mutual respect and consideration for others is central to the school's strong ethos, the multi-ethnic school is a very harmonious community. The religious beliefs of others are both respected and celebrated and pupils strongly value social, cultural and ethnic diversity. They show a strong interest in other people and their cultures. Spiritual development is now good. Teachers create more opportunities for pupils to reflect on their views and feelings, as in the effective Year 9 humanities course on identity. Pupils participate enthusiastically in assemblies that encourage them to be aware of global issue and to be reflective. However, the school does not hold a daily act of collective worship for all pupils.
9. Pupils behave very well because staff work persistently and successfully in promoting self-discipline and a safe environment. Consequently, boys are courteous and respectful to each other and adults. They take good levels of responsibility for themselves and for others. Pupils treat property carefully and respond well to the school's high expectations of their correct conduct. This creates a calm atmosphere around the school that encourages pupils to learn well. Pupils say that staff manage the occasional incidence of bullying very carefully. A few pupils misbehave, but the learning of others is seldom interrupted. The number of permanent exclusions is very low and the school monitors its fixed-term exclusions very closely. Staff work very hard, especially in the learning support unit, to keep all pupils in school by counselling them and checking their progress very carefully. Despite this, because the school has absorbed a number of boys with very challenging behaviour from the closure of two neighbouring schools, the number of fixed-term exclusions remains high. However, this firm policy has been effective in creating an orderly atmosphere where the vast majority of pupils enjoy being at school and achieve well.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

| Categories used in the Annual School Census | No of pupils on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| White – British | 539 | 191 | 2 |
| White – Irish | 3 | | |
| White – any other White background | 32 | 3 | |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean | 21 | 4 | |
| Mixed – White and Black African | 12 | 4 | |
| Mixed – White and Asian | 7 | | |
| Mixed – any other mixed background | 27 | 3 | |
| Asian or Asian British – Indian | 79 | 11 | |
| Asian or Asian British – Pakistani | 32 | 2 | |
| Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi | 18 | 1 | |
| Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background | 27 | 4 | |
| Black or Black British – Caribbean | 42 | 14 | 1 |
| Black or Black British – African | 159 | 34 | |
| Black or Black British – any other Black background | 34 | 12 | 1 |
| Chinese | 1 | | |
| Any other ethnic group | 42 | 13 | |

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

10. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. There are understandable reasons for the recent decline in attendance, mainly attributable to the absorption of a small number of pupils with behavioural problems from two closing schools. The progress of these relatively few pupils is adversely affected by their poor attendance. The school has very good procedures for rigorously promoting good attendance and works assiduously with parents to help them to support their child's attendance.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | | Unauthorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| School data: | 5.3 | School data: | 4.0 |
| National data: | 7.2 | National data: | 1.1 |

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **good**. Teaching and learning and the curriculum are **good**. Arrangements for pupils' care, welfare health and safety are **very good**. The school has **good** links with parents and the community and **very good** links with other schools and colleges.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good overall** and **very good** in Years 7 to 9. Assessment is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers' very good subject knowledge is used well in planning and teaching lessons.
- When teaching is unimaginative and lacks rigour, or involves too much talk by teachers, pupils become passive learners.
- Information from tests and assessments is used well to plan learning for individual pupils.
- The lack of regular marking in some subjects restricts pupils' knowledge of how well they are progressing.
- Very good relationships and the management of pupils support their learning.
- The school's focus on teaching and learning helps to improve the quality and consistency of teaching.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 116 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 12 (10%) | 33 (29%) | 39 (34%) | 26 (22%) | 6 (5%) | 0 | 0 |

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

11. Teachers' very good subject knowledge is used well in planning and teaching lessons, particularly in Years 7 to 9. Where there is excellent and very good teaching, as in art, modern foreign languages and business studies, pupils' learning rapidly develops because they have clear targets, understand what they have to do to improve and feel valued. In one excellent

lesson in citizenship, the high level of questioning helped pupils to learn well and develop a much wider knowledge of human rights. The good teaching in all other subjects, except science, reflects strategies that encourage high expectations and confidence that pupils can learn well and succeed. The successful lessons include a high standard of planning, well-organised methods and work matched to pupils' needs. Where this is inconsistent, as it is in some mathematics and science lessons, pupils become bored and lose interest and concentration. In lessons where teachers talk too much or where they teach the class as a whole for most of the time and there are no support staff present, pupils whose heritage language is not English struggle and are not well supported.

12. The use of assessment is good overall and helps pupils know how well they are doing. Where it is very good, as in history, physical education and business studies, assessment, marking, target setting and detailed feedback to pupils are used to raise standards further. Assessment is less secure in mathematics and science where the marking of work is inconsistent and many pupils do not understand the grading for National Curriculum levels. Support staff use assessment very well to track the progress of pupils with special educational needs. This use of assessment helps to increase pupils' confidence and self-esteem as they know how well they are doing. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported well because all support staff, not just those funded to do so, are very skilled at working with these pupils.
13. In all subjects, very good working relationships between teachers and pupils promote attitudes and behaviour that enhance learning. Pupils also appreciate the extra time teachers spend in helping them after school hours. These very good relationships show that there is a strong climate for learning being developed throughout the school.
14. The school has a very active learning and teaching group that includes representatives of all departments. This group ensures the school is at the forefront of developments in teaching and learning and is the driving force behind a number of initiatives. Although many initiatives have been introduced, monitoring is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that the best practice emanating from the group's work is implemented consistently across all subjects and that agreed policies are implemented.

The curriculum

The curriculum provided for pupils is **good**. The range of opportunities to enrich pupils' learning is **good**. Staffing, accommodation and resources are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent.
- The support for learning outside the school day is very good.
- Excellent support is provided for those pupils with low levels of literacy.
- The curriculum makes very good provision for those pupils who are recognised as gifted and talented.
- The requirement to teach religious education to pupils in Years 10 and 11 is not met.

Commentary

15. The curriculum for pupils in Years 7 to 9 is good and is satisfactory for those in Years 10 and 11. All pupils have access to all parts of the curriculum and to additional activities. Statutory requirements for the curriculum are not fully met as the school does not provide for a daily act of collective worship and currently does not provide teaching in religious education for pupils in Years 10 and 11. This is because it has not been possible to appoint a suitably qualified teacher. The issues identified at the time of the last inspection have been addressed successfully and improvement since that time is good. Developments include the benefits brought by the award to the school of specialist technology status and by participation in the Excellence in Cities programme.

16. Provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education, including relationships and sex education, is satisfactory. There are also satisfactory arrangements to ensure that pupils have access to careers guidance and to activities that help them to prepare for the world of work. Arrangements to prepare pupils for their post-16 education are good. However, the personal, social, health education and citizenship programme does not give sufficient attention to ensuring that pupils are fully aware of the dangers posed by abusing the use of drugs.
17. The school has a very diverse intake that includes pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and a significant proportion with special educational needs or behavioural difficulties. The curriculum provided for pupils with special educational needs is excellent and is very adaptable in meeting pupils' individual needs. For example, pupils have access to activities that support their social development and enhance the skills they need to work successfully with others. There is also excellent support for those pupils with low levels of literacy and a wide-ranging programme that challenges those pupils regarded as gifted and talented very well. The school has a very strong commitment to inclusion and seeks to ensure that all pupils have their educational needs met and fulfil their potential. It has created a learning support base that is very effective in providing additional help for pupils who have difficulty coping in lessons.
18. Support for pupils to learn outside the school day is very good. Pupils have easy access to resources, such as computers, to help them complete their homework. The school provides additional learning opportunities on weekends and during school holidays that support pupils very well in helping them to prepare for and to gain qualifications. Teachers give freely of their time to run many of these activities, which are greatly appreciated by pupils.
19. The school provides a good range of activities to enhance pupils' learning. This provision includes the effective use of educational visits and of visitors to the school to support pupils' learning effectively. Pupils' participation in sport and the arts is encouraged successfully. The effectiveness of the school's provision for sport has been recognised by the 'Sportsmark' award.
20. Apart from a temporary vacancy for a head of religious studies, there is a good match of well-qualified and experienced teachers to meet the needs of the curriculum. Because the school has a good record for training student teachers, a number of them remain with the school once they have qualified. This and the school's growing reputation means that it is a good place to work. Whilst the school has sufficient support staff and technicians, there is not enough support in some lessons for pupils in the early stages of learning English.
21. Accommodation is good overall and there is also good access for those with mobility difficulties. The school recognises the limitations of provision for study areas and the deficiencies of the art and music accommodation. Due to the increased numbers in the school, the dining area is very crowded at breaks and lunchtimes. It is only very good timetabling of split lunchtimes that ensure that time and space are used to best effect. The school's extensive grounds, including an all-weather pitch, are well used.
22. The school has a good range of subject-specific resources, including textbooks and computers. However, budget constraints have limited the school's ability to keep up to date with a replacement programme for computers. Departments such as English and music have difficulty accessing reliable computers. The gradual introduction of interactive whiteboards is improving teaching and the school Intranet system is proving useful for giving pupils information about lessons and homework projects.

Care, guidance and support

The school has **very good** procedures to ensure pupils' care, welfare, health and safety. The provision for support, advice and guidance for pupils is **good**. The procedures for involving pupils in the school's work are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is particularly good at identifying and meeting individual pupil's needs.
- Support staff make a significant contribution to pupils' well-being and self-esteem.
- Very good induction helps incoming pupils to settle quickly.
- Academic support provided by teachers is inconsistent.
- Procedures for formally harnessing pupils' views are not effective.
- Procedures for ensuring pupils' health and safety are very good.

Commentary

23. The school is very successful at identifying and meeting the needs of pupils with statements and the very large number of other pupils who present a very wide range of additional needs, including dyslexia. Teachers and staff who work closely with these pupils know them very well and make sure they get very good support for their learning and personal development.
24. Pupils new to the school benefit very well from the very good induction arrangements. Tutors and the head of Year 7 monitor pupils when they join the school both in Year 7 and at other times. In Years 9 and 11, the very good support for pupils making their choices for subjects for the following year ensures the best match for their needs. Support for pupils in care or those who have come from other schools is also very good.
25. The monitoring of pupils' academic progress is based on effective target setting and good assessment procedures. Progress reviews are issued each term and pupils have regular opportunities to discuss their progress with their tutors and co-tutors. Many staff promote very good relationships with pupils. Teachers use available data to identify any underachievement and set targets accordingly. However, the practice is inconsistent across all the subjects and pupils do not always know their targets and how to improve. In the learning support centre, there are very effective support systems and extensive links with external agencies. Data is used very well to identify and respond to specific learning and behaviour needs. Support is very accurately targeted and progress very well monitored.
26. There is a school council in the early stages of development. It is beginning to influence what happens in school. However, the arrangements for it are unclear to some pupils and it has little status with older boys. When given the opportunity, pupils are very willing to voice their views and contribute to the development of the school. Pupils are not yet sufficiently involved in decision making in the school and some older pupils do not feel their views are sufficiently valued when they are listened to. Older pupils especially find some staff difficult to approach with their views.
27. The trained child-protection co-ordinator effectively oversees all pupil referrals. There are very good relationships with social workers and the police. Not all staff have been trained in child-protection procedures, but all staff know who is the child-protection co-ordinator. The management of all health and safety issues is very good and procedures and documentation are up to date. Pupils feel very safe and happy at the school. Risk assessments are carried out thoroughly.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school works particularly well with the parents of pupils experiencing difficulty in school.

- Very good reporting systems ensure that parents can regularly check their child's progress.
- Excellent international links with schools bring many benefits to staff, pupils and other schools.
- The school provides insufficient information for parents on the content of the subject curriculum.

Commentary

28. Staff work hard and effectively to include parents in their child's education. Despite a large growth in pupil numbers recently, staff know the pupils and their families well. They involve parents quickly when any intervention is necessary. Parents report that any concerns are handled very effectively using correct procedures. Staff communicate particularly carefully with the parents of boys who have any special educational or additional need. The school arranges very effective support from an extensive range of agencies, and ensures that parents are partners in this collaboration. The school secures home language support from the local community for pupils and parents who speak little English.
29. Termly reports give parents a clear view of the progress their pupils make. The school achieves very high attendance at termly review consultations. Staff write to parents to celebrate good performance or share concerns, and to offer individual interviews. Consequently, parents discuss the detail of their child's performance on a very regular basis. A few parents expressed concerns about the lack of information about the curriculum. Inspectors endorse this concern. Although the school provides information to parents on option choices and there is an overview of the curriculum in the prospectus, parents do not get detailed information about what is planned in different subjects to help them support their children.
30. Many teachers have visited schools abroad and consequently established very strong links with foreign schools. Pupils respond eagerly to the needs of these schools for financial support and equipment. First-hand descriptions from both the teachers involved and the visiting foreign teachers promote the pupils' understanding of global issues. The links make a huge impact on the professional and personal development of those teachers involved. These experiences are then used to support the training, commitment and motivation of other staff in the school. Many of the teachers who have experienced visits are now involved in local and national projects. This ensures that other schools benefit from the commitment of Woolwich Polytechnic teachers to the programme.
31. The school has very good links with feeder schools, especially through links supported by its specialist technology college status. The additional funds attracted by the status enable it to share resources and facilities very effectively. Well-developed links with several local colleges enriches the curriculum for pupils. The franchise arrangements with Greenwich Community College are a very good example of how such arrangements can benefit both the school and the college and, most importantly, the pupils. An increasing number choose to continue their education by completing courses provided under the franchise at the school.
32. Recruitment and retention of teachers is helped by the productive links with teacher training providers, especially St. Martins who have a base on the school site. The school makes good use of local people to enhance the curriculum. Pupils benefit from a well-supported work experience programme. These good community links make a positive contribution to pupils' academic and personal development.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good** overall. The headteacher provides **very good** leadership and the leadership of other key staff is **good**. Governance is **good**. Management is **good**. The school does not fulfil the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship and the teaching of religious education in Years 10 and 11.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is very good at including all pupils in school life.
- The leadership and management of special educational needs and inclusion are very good, but leadership is not equally good in all subjects.
- There are many training opportunities for staff but opportunities within departments are not always well informed by the school improvement plan.
- The school provides excellent training for new teachers.
- Finances are very effectively managed and support the school's priorities.

Commentary

33. The headteacher has real vision and very high aspirations and provides very good leadership in promoting the school's aims. As a result, teachers and support staff have a shared commitment to the welfare and success of all pupils. The headteacher has very successfully steered the school through a period of considerable change, including rising pupil numbers, new buildings, and a franchise arrangement with a local college to ensure that post-16 pupils are in school to provide aspirational role-models for younger pupils. He is well supported by an effective senior team.
34. Governors fulfil their role well. They are committed to the school and provide strong links with the local community. They take a strong interest in the school's strategic development and are fully involved in key decisions. They are fully involved in constructing the school's improvement plan and are well informed about the school's progress, including its strengths and weaknesses. While providing good support for the school, governors also challenge proposals. Governors take their statutory responsibilities seriously and are actively seeking ways to resolve the situation in the two areas where they do not fulfil these responsibilities. The school does not provide all pupils with a daily act of collective worship and religious education is not taught to Years 10 and 11 because of staffing problems. The school has a clear race equality policy, which it monitors carefully. The school reports any racist incidents and tracks the attainment of pupils from different ethnic backgrounds.
35. The leadership of senior and middle managers is good overall. Most departments are very well led and department management is good overall. In a few departments, however, leadership and management are satisfactory and in these departments lack of monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and school policies are limiting improvement. The school has a very diverse intake that includes pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and a significant proportion with special educational needs or behavioural difficulties. The school has a very strong commitment to include all pupils in all its work, and this aspect is very well led and managed. The provision for pupils whose heritage language is not English is now led and managed by an assistant headteacher, who also has responsibility for arrangements for inclusion and special educational needs. Best practice in supporting learning is now shared and the support for pupils whose heritage language is not English is improving.
36. Planning and self-evaluation are satisfactory. The school's improvement plan clearly states the school's priorities. Responsibilities are allocated well and success criteria are listed. Much of the plan is the result of well-researched need, but the quality of teaching and learning is not systematically evaluated through regular observation of lessons. As a result, the plan is not sufficiently informed by findings from these evaluations. The plan also lacks arrangements for monitoring its progress and evaluating its success. The use of performance data to diagnose strengths and weaknesses is good. Examination results are analysed and discussed with heads of department, but the quality of the departments' improvement plans that follow is variable. In the best plans, there are clear strategies for improvement. Others lack specific points for action and do not show where training is required. Good use is made of performance management to support school improvement.
37. Newly qualified teachers and other new teachers are provided with very good induction and support. The school takes continuing professional development for all staff very seriously and consultants are regularly used to advise on improvements. The school has very good

international links and many teachers have travelled overseas to look at schools abroad. There is an active "Learning and Teaching Group" of staff that provides good training within the school. There are fewer opportunities for teachers to see good practice in schools locally. Whilst the school provides its staff with a wealth of training opportunities, professional development within departments is not always sufficiently related to the school's improvement plan. Therefore, the extensive training opportunities do not always support the school's own training needs.

38. Recruitment and retention are very good. Recruitment is a potential problem that the school has worked very hard to overcome. The school has an excellent record of initial teacher training. The school's recruitment of some of the successful trainees goes some way to ensuring that the school is fully staffed. The school has a good recent record of retaining teachers through good professional support and its policy of internal promotion. While this ensures staff remain at the school, it limits opportunities to bring in fresh ideas and different perspectives.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

| Income and expenditure (£) | | Balances (£) | |
|----------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------------|---------|
| Total income | 4,506,210 | Balance from previous year | -83,476 |
| Total expenditure | 4,386,045 | Balance carried forward to the next | 36,689 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 3,596 | | |

39. Financial management is very good. The school's budget is very carefully planned to match the priorities in the improvement plan. Expenditure patterns are compared with those of other schools. Forward planning has enabled the school to reduce its deficit budget one year early. The headteacher and the senior leadership team have been very successful at gaining funds from many different sources and the funds are very well used to enhance provision. Governors monitor expenditure effectively, finding the budget information provided by the school clear and helpful.

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

Work-related learning

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good links already established with local businesses and commercial organisations provide a wide range of opportunity from which pupils can benefit.
- The local authority advisor provides very good support and guidance.
- Pupils in Years 10 and 11 benefit from the provision of a wide range of business, applied and vocational courses.
- Staffing changes for this area have delayed overall co-ordination, planning and full monitoring arrangements.

Commentary

40. The main focus for the development of work-related learning skills is for pupils in Years 10 and 11. However, provision is also made for younger pupils, including a Young Enterprise scheme for pupils in Year 9. All pupils benefit from the school's citizenship and personal and social education programme and a variety of inputs from the careers and Connexions staff. These help to prepare pupils for their option choices in Year 9.
41. The school's business studies department is well established and attracts a large number of pupils to its GCSE courses that provide them with a good understanding of the demands of business, industry and manufacturing. Various departments offer applied GCSE courses that focus on key skills needed for employment. The school has also developed strong links with three local colleges, which provide a variety of vocational courses. Almost 20 per cent of pupils in Years 10 and 11 benefit from these vocational courses. Pupils are motivated and clearly enjoy studying in the professional training environment with other young people and adults. Pupils clearly benefit from these vocational courses and value the trade qualification obtained. This positive response to these courses explains pupils' high levels of achievement.
42. All pupils in Year 10 benefit from work experience and nearly all gain placements of their choice, with one pupil successfully gaining his placement on Harley Street. All pupils keep a record of their experiences from such work, which is evaluated by the school co-ordinator. Year 10 pupils also take part in a team-building exercise organised by the army. This year, a trip to the local ferry for Year 10 pupils is planned to investigate the labour market and will help to identify key skills in the workplace. In Year 11, there is an increasing focus on careers education, provided partly through cross-curricular links and the personal and social education and citizenship programme. Further input is provided by careers teachers and Connexions personnel with trips to careers fairs and pupils having the opportunity of using the Springboard website. Pupils are offered a good range of experiences to help them make informed decisions on vocational and academic courses post-16. They gain insights into different routes to further education, training and employment.
43. Leadership and management of this area of the curriculum have been affected by changes in the lead co-ordinator, who was only recently appointed. Although significant contributions are made to pupils' learning through the work of individual departments, the required audit of such activities has yet to be fully completed. The construction of a suitable development plan, which includes the cross-curricular elements, is now a priority. Methods used to monitor and evaluate the success of the various work-related learning opportunities have yet to be fully established. Links with the three participating colleges are well managed and pupils are given good support by both school and college staff. The co-ordinator is well supported by the local advisor, who is providing training to department leaders to ensure that all can identify opportunities that will enhance the school's overall provision.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The achievement of Year 9 pupils in external tests in 2004 was excellent.
- The head of department has led considerable improvement in examination results over the last three years.
- Teaching is very well planned and structured.
- Pupils respond well to the high expectations of their teachers.
- In Years 7 to 9, there is inconsistency in the amount of feedback that pupils receive on their work.

Commentary

44. Results in Year 9 tests in 2004 were average and very high compared with similar schools. Achievement of these pupils was very good based on their prior attainment at the end of Year 6. The standard of Year 9 work seen during the inspection is below expectations. Achievement is very good. Pupils enter the school with standards that are well below average, but by the end of Year 9 standards have improved to below average. Test results have shown consistent and substantial improvement over the last three years.
45. GCSE results in English language in 2004 were below average, and work seen during the inspection in Year 11 is below expectations. In GCSE English literature, results were above average, and the standard of work seen during the inspection is in line with expectations. Examination results in Year 11 have also shown substantial improvement over the last three years. In 2004, Year 11 pupils entered Year 10 with standards that were well below average but left Year 11 with standards below average. Their achievement was good. Two-thirds of Year 11 achieved two GCSEs in English and the achievement of pupils in the English literature examination was very good. Pupils with English as an additional language and/or special educational needs make very good progress in English because of the additional support they receive from staff.
46. Teaching and learning are very good in all years. Lessons are well planned and structured and teachers are very clear about their high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. Classrooms are very well managed. Pupils respond very well to the positive working ethos within the department and attitudes and behaviour in lessons are very good. The work for lower-achieving pupils is broken down into small manageable steps and has a strong literacy focus. The provision of books that are of particular interest to boys has done much to encourage pupils to read more, and good links exist with the school library where a similar focus has increased interest in reading. The department is using a wide range of strategies to support the development of boys' writing, and these are raising standards. In most lessons, there is an emphasis on opportunities for speaking and listening to each other in pairs or groups as a means of developing ideas. Pupils more readily respond to class questioning after these opportunities. There are fewer opportunities for pupils to give formal presentations after discussions. Very good working relationships exist between teachers and pupils and the level of individual support from teacher to pupil is high. Teachers have very good knowledge of the subject and examination requirements, and pupils are very well prepared for external examinations. Teachers are beginning to use ICT in the presentation of their lessons with very

good effect, but there are fewer opportunities for pupils to use computers than is necessary because of restricted access for the department.

47. Assessment is good in Years 7 to 9 and very good in Years 10 and 11. In Years 10 and 11, pupils' work is marked thoroughly prior to re-drafting and guidance is given to pupils on what they need to do to improve their work. In Years 7 to 9, most pupils receive very good feedback from their teachers on their written work and targets are regularly set with National Curriculum levels. The quality of marking is inconsistent and some pupils receive little written feedback on their work, which affects the amount of progress that they can make.
48. Leadership of the department is very good. Very good planning has been well informed by the clear vision of the head of department, and is clearly focused on raising standards. He has led significant change in the department over the last three years that has brought about considerable improvement in standards across all years. He has been very well supported in this by the second in department. Analysis of relevant data has been integrated in to the development planning process. Schemes of work are thorough and there is a process for their review. A number of initiatives are planned into the department's work to contribute to raising standards. Management in the department is very good. Systems within the department are effectively organised. The department is an effective team. There are planned opportunities for development within the department's meeting time. Monitoring and evaluation of the department's work have focused on examination results and policies and are beginning to raise standards. There are plans to give greater emphasis to the monitoring of teaching and learning within the classroom. Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good. Results in Year 9 have improved. Teaching and learning are now very good, and leadership and management have improved.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

49. Standards of literacy in Years 7 to 11 are below average. The provision for literacy across the curriculum is good. The literacy co-ordinator's attendance at the learning and teaching group promotes the school's policy across departments. A number of initiatives effectively provide literacy activities within the school. A reading week is well supported by drama, English, modern foreign languages and humanities. Subject-specific dictionaries have been bought for geography and there are plans to extend this resource to other departments. The literacy co-ordinator has strong links with the librarian and, as a result, there is effective promotion of reading within the school. In geography and history lessons, a wide range of strategies are used to develop extended writing. In drama and physical education, there is an emphasis on developing oral skills. Key words are displayed and used in most subjects. Whilst some departments make a very good contribution to the development of literacy skills in lessons, there are missed opportunities in mathematics and science.

Modern foreign languages

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results at the end of Year 9 and at GCSE are consistently improving.
- Leadership provides clear vision and direction.
- The department celebrates the wide range of languages spoken by boys.
- Boys are well motivated by the high quality of teaching.
- There is currently little liaison with primary schools.

Commentary

50. Teachers' assessments at the end of Year 9 in 2004 showed over two-fifths of boys attaining the nationally expected level, with almost half of those at higher levels. This represents improvement over the previous year. The majority of boys in the current Year 9 have already

attained, or are on course to attain, the nationally expected level. Standards are above average, and achievement is very good, given the well below average attainment of boys on entry. Standards in Panjabi are average, which represents good achievement on one hour per week. Boys with special educational needs achieve well. They show a good standard of accuracy in spelling and grammar, and are capable of producing coherent shorter pieces of extended writing.

51. Standards of attainment at GCSE in 2004 were above national averages for boys in French, and high in Spanish, with all boys attaining a pass grade. In Year 11, achievement is very good overall. Standards in French are average. Higher-attaining boys produce written coursework and speaking test preparation of a high standard of accuracy and range of vocabulary and construction, and attain well on GCSE higher-level tasks. Middle attainers, however, are less secure in their use of tenses. In Spanish, standards are above average, being particularly enhanced by good attainment in listening and reading tasks by lower-attaining boys.
52. Among the higher attainers are several boys from lower years, who are part of the department's policy of early or fast-track GCSE entry. Previous candidates have progressed to AS and A2 level while still in the school. The department also enters boys for qualifications in their native or an acquired language. Up to 30 boys a year take a wide variety of languages, with a high rate of success.
53. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers are expert or native speakers of the foreign language. Very good learning is enabled by the consistent and very effective use of the target language in lessons, which are very well planned and structured. In addition, teachers vary activities to maintain boys' interest and motivation, especially with the use of games and fun. They also constantly promote literacy skills in awareness of grammar and constructions. They use the two foreign language assistants, support staff and trainee teachers very effectively in supporting boys' learning. ICT is very well used to support language learning and revision, and is a good motivating factor. Homework is well used for consolidation and extension. Marking is frequent and consistent, and boys are always aware of how well they are progressing and of how to improve.
54. Leadership and management of the department are very good. There are firm policies and strategies in place. There is very good self-evaluation, and swift action on any problems that arise, such as the high proportion of D grades in 2004 French GCSE. The departmental team has been in the forefront of whole-school developments, contributing to in-service training. It is also heavily involved with the training of student teachers through its link with St. Martin's College. Particularly impressive is the excellent support of boys who wish to further their existing language, through extremely effective links with other schools and in the community. Monitoring and evaluation of teaching are good. Members of the team, and of other departments, have formal opportunities to observe each other and to share good practice. There is, however, insufficient liaison with feeder primary schools. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. Panjabi is more firmly established in the school, GCSE results have improved, boys participate willingly in class and are confident speakers, use of ICT is very good, and the monitoring and evaluation of teaching is regular and efficient.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Results in national tests for 14-year-olds and at GCSE represent very good achievement.
- The work of the special educational needs and English as an additional language staff makes a significant contribution to the good progress boys make.
- Boys want to do well and take full advantage of the competent teaching they receive.
- Mathematics staff give willingly of their time to provide additional support outside lessons and to help boys revise for public examinations.
- Monitoring and evaluation of the department's work are not yet detailed enough to identify areas for further improvement.
- There is too little use of computers to support the boys' learning because of difficulties of access.

Commentary

55. Given their well below average attainment on entry to the school, boys achieve very well in mathematics by the end of Year 11. Over the last two years, performance in national tests for 14-year-olds, although below average, has been much better than that of boys in similar schools. At GCSE level, performance has been average. Results at the highest A*-C grades are good. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
56. Standards seen during the inspection for boys currently in Year 9 and Year 11 reflect this very good achievement in national tests and examinations. Whilst just below the level expected nationally, the standards represent good and often better progress for these pupils who will be taking national tests and examinations this summer. Boys have very positive attitudes towards learning which enable them to do well in public examinations, helped by the strong revision programme provided by the department.
57. From looking at pupils' work and talking with them, the overall quality of the teaching is good and as a consequence pupils' learning is good. Boys want to learn and take full advantage of the competent teaching they receive in lessons. This, plus both the well-planned and informal additional support a significant number of pupils receive, enables the boys to achieve very well over time. The support comes from the special educational needs department and English as an additional language staff in mathematics lessons, withdrawal lessons and clubs. The mathematics department staff also give freely of their time outside lessons, and boys of all levels of ability and from a range of ethnic groups frequently come back at lunchtimes and after school to sort out any difficulties. Pupils' books show consistent application over time, with work that covers national requirements and is well matched to pupils' abilities. Boys identified as gifted and talented achieve well because the department has a programme that effectively meets their needs.
58. Teaching seen in lessons during the inspection was never less than satisfactory, but was good in only a few. Teachers have good subject knowledge and explain the work clearly. Expectations of behaviour are high. Homework is regularly set and most pupils complete it. The use of the electronic whiteboard is improving teachers' presentation of new ideas and makes lessons interesting for pupils. Work is regularly marked, with some helpful feedback from teachers. However, teachers do not always fully check pupils' understanding of new ideas, particularly those pupils who are not yet totally secure in their English, by asking probing questions that encourage the boys to explain their answers. Boys follow routines accurately, but not always with the understanding that will achieve the highest possible examination results and prepare them for post-16 study.
59. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The head of department leads a committed and happy team of mathematicians who enjoy their teaching and work well together. The new

accommodation is well looked after. Displays create an attractive learning environment, demonstrate the contribution to mathematics of different ethnic groups and cultures, and show how celebrities use mathematics in their work. However, some aspects of the department's work identified for improvement at the time of the last inspection have not yet been fully addressed by the relatively new head of department. Strategies to monitor and evaluate the department's work are still not rigorous enough to identify areas for further improvement. Opportunities for pupils to use computers are still too limited. This is because the class sets of laptop computers take too long to load the software required and the computer rooms are frequently booked. Currently, schemes of work do not contain the guidance on different teaching strategies and approaches that would enable more teaching in lessons to be better than satisfactory. Boys make good progress throughout their time in the school and achieve very well in national tests and examinations. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory overall.

Mathematics across the curriculum

60. Although overall standards in mathematics are below those expected nationally, pupils' skills in mathematics across the curriculum are adequate for the needs of different subject areas, for example, pupils cope with graph work in science and the use of formulae when constructing spreadsheets in information and communication technology. Numeracy skills are close to nationally expected levels for 11-14 year olds, but not as strong for older pupils. The school has a draft numeracy policy in place, but the promotion of mathematical skills across the curriculum is variable, ranging from very good to satisfactory. It is satisfactory overall. A particularly good example in art and design was the development of pupils' ratio and proportion skills during work on perspective.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Increasing numbers of pupils gain higher-level passes, especially in Year 9.
- Although examples of very good and excellent teaching were observed, too much teaching is unsatisfactory.
- Reduced curriculum time for certain pupils in each of Years 7 and 8 creates inequalities in their learning.
- There are inconsistencies in the frequency and quality of marking.

Commentary

61. Year 9 test results in 2004 were well below average for all schools, but well above average compared with similar schools. These results indicate good improvement from the previous year. These gains are even more impressive given the substantial increase in the cohort size and the fact that it included a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Test results indicate very good achievement in Years 7 to 9, based on their overall below average ability on entry, and applies across all ethnic groups, although white boys do slightly less well.
62. GCSE results in 2004 were well below average for the percentage of A*-C passes, but comparable with similar schools. These results show a slight increase from the previous year in the overall number of passes obtained at these grades. However, the percentage pass rate represents a further decrease compared to the peak of 2002. In terms of their previous Year 9 test levels, these GCSE results indicate satisfactory achievement.
63. Overall, standards seen in lessons across all years were below average, but reflect the abilities of the pupils. For most pupils, their achievement by Year 9 is good, by Year 11 is satisfactory and good overall. Work seen in most books covered a wide range of standards and often failed to equate to the level of progress in lessons. There were frequent examples of

partially completed lesson topics and pupils' notes lacked sufficient accuracy and detail needed for higher-grade passes, particularly in GCSE examinations. This is one reason why achievement levels in examinations are not as good for older pupils, who will need to use these notes for module tests. The extensive revision programme provided, with additional support provided by the area science advisor and educational consultants, can also explain higher levels of achievement from pupils in Year 9. Achievement levels also relate to the pupils' degree of interest, their involvement in lessons and the variety of learning techniques used.

64. Although just over half of the lessons seen were good or better, a quarter were unsatisfactory. As a result, the overall quality of teaching and learning is only satisfactory, even though in most lessons the majority of pupils make clear gains in their understanding of the lesson content. Lessons are generally well planned, although for some the work is not sufficiently differentiated to meet the needs of all pupils. Excellent teaching featured a carefully judged pace and delivery, making sure that pupils were fully engaged in their own learning. The less successful lessons were largely attributed to less well-established working relationships and insufficient guidance given to pupils, which resulted in inadequate progress. Pupils with special educational needs made good progress due to the very valuable help provided from learning support staff. Pupils of all ethnic groups work very well together, and make equally good progress. Marking both within and across teaching groups is not consistent, and does not always inform pupils of their current standards and how to improve. Data collected from tests is used to guide teachers on pupils' achievements, although it is not analysed to indicate the success of the teaching in different topics.
65. Both leadership and management are satisfactory. Teachers work as a mutually supportive team with sharing of good practice encouraged. The two experienced laboratory technicians ensure that teachers' requirements are met and provide good support. Special attention is given to providing opportunities for professional development to department staff. There are clear guidelines and policies relating to all aspects of the department's work and satisfactory systems exist for monitoring the teaching. The problems of recruiting suitable teachers have resulted in the two half-year groups in each of Years 7 and 8 having a different amount of teaching time. This creates an inequality of provision during the academic year and also limits opportunities for the teachers to introduce a greater variety of curricular approaches to assist pupils' learning.
66. Since the previous inspection, satisfactory progress has been made in meeting most of the issues previously identified. Graph work is now at a good standard. Pupils are encouraged to develop their ICT skills through opportunities for web research and coursework. However, the department does not utilise data-logging devices in the teaching. Published schemes of work are used as a basis for teaching, but have not been developed to meet the specific needs of teachers and pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because of good teaching.
- Pupils enjoy their lessons.
- Very good assessment is raising standards.
- There are practical issues that hinder the achievement of some pupils.

Commentary

67. In Year 9, standards are below average. This is an improvement over the school's own assessments for last year, which were well below average, and reflects rising standards.

Achievement is good overall as the result of good teaching and an engaging curriculum. Some classes get too little lesson time and this is hindering achievement.

68. Results in GCSE were well above average in 2004 and better than results in other subjects. A significant minority of those starting the course were not entered for the examination because they did not complete their coursework. Achievement was very good for those who sat the examination. For current Year 11 pupils following a GCSE course, standards are in line with expectations. Pupils have a clear understanding of the benefits of computers to society, but are less secure on the moral and ethical questions raised. Achievement for GCSE pupils is good overall because they receive good teaching. Achievement of some pupils is hampered by their poor attendance. Standards for the small number of Year 11 pupils who do not take an ICT-based GCSE are below average. The course they follow meets requirements and is taught through subjects across the curriculum. Their achievement is satisfactory.
69. Achievement of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good in all years. The achievement of gifted and talented pupils is very good in all years because different and challenging work is planned for them that meets their needs very well.
70. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers' very good subject knowledge ensures learning focuses on key concepts. Pupils find work challenging and work hard to solve the problems they are given. They learn well through many varied activities. Attitudes are positive and behaviour is very good because of teachers' very good class management. Much marking is very good and tells pupils how they can improve. In a few classes, work is not regularly marked. Planning is good overall and teachers ensure pupils learn new skills when they revisit topics. However, teachers do not always ensure all pupils have reached the necessary standards before moving them on to more difficult work. As a result, a few pupils struggle with their learning.
71. Leadership and management are good. The head of department and his team of teachers are committed to raising standards. A thorough analysis of GCSE results has been undertaken and the conclusions and actions are raising standards. The work of new teachers is well monitored, but the lessons of established staff are not and this leads to a patchy picture of teaching strengths. Assessment is very good and is promoting good achievement. Regularly updated marks and grades show pupils where their work can be improved. The marks are well used by teachers to track pupils' progress and, in most cases, effective action is taken when standards drop. Improvement since the last inspection is very good. Standards have risen and achievement is now good. Teaching has improved and the National Curriculum is now taught.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

72. Provision is satisfactory. Other subjects provide satisfactory opportunities for pupils to practise and develop the skills they have learned in their separate ICT lessons. This is an improvement from the last inspection. The ICT work of subjects is well co-ordinated, but limited by the lack of up-to-date resources and many of the available laptops are too slow and unreliable. The school, now that it has a balanced budget, is planning to replace these. Very good use is made of computers in business studies, physical education and modern foreign languages and there is good use in design and technology for drawing and the control of machines (computer-aided design and manufacture). The use of computers in music and mathematics is unsatisfactory because these departments do not have sufficient access to computers or enough specialist software. Teachers across many subjects are making good use of the interactive whiteboards in their teaching. The school's network is exceptionally reliable and well maintained.

HUMANITIES

History

Provision in history is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching makes a strong contribution to pupils' achievement.
- Very good leadership provides a clear direction for the subject.
- The very positive attitudes of pupils promote very good learning.
- Assessment procedures are used very well to guide pupils towards improvement.
- Computers are not used regularly as a valuable resource by pupils.

Commentary

73. Teacher assessments of pupils' standards at the end of Year 9 in 2003 and 2004 were average. Standards in Year 9 are currently average. This represents very good achievement, given that pupils enter the school with history skills that are well below average. Year 9 pupils, especially the most able, write effectively at length. Their skills of critically analysing sources and interpreting events are well developed. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as a second language also achieve very well as they are provided with good support and work which matches their needs.
74. GCSE examination results in 2004 were below average, as they have been consistently in recent years. The evidence from the inspection is that standards by Year 11 are above expectations and pupils achieve very well. Pupils' skills of independent enquiry, interpretation and analysis of sources are developed well, particularly through their well-written coursework. They make very good gains in their knowledge and understanding of the key historical events.
75. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers use their good subject knowledge well to plan lessons thoroughly. A range of challenging activities and resources are used very effectively to stimulate pupils' learning. However, the use of computers has yet to be developed fully as a resource. There is a strong emphasis in the teaching on developing literacy and independent enquiry. This promotes very good learning so that the pupils acquire good skills of research, extended writing and working by themselves. The very good working relationships with pupils, and teachers' strong concern for pupils of all abilities, also encourage very good learning, which is further enhanced by the pupils' very positive attitudes to work. Marking is very thorough and individual targets are clearly set so that pupils know how to improve.
76. Leadership is very good. The head of department provides a clear vision and strong direction. She is a good role-model, setting high standards of teaching and expectations of pupils. Management is good. Teachers work together well, guided by very thorough schemes of work. They share good practice through lesson observations and monitoring so that the quality of teaching has significantly improved. Careful analysis of examination results has led to effective changes in the GCSE curriculum and successful tracking of pupils' progress in Years 10 and 11, which is also being developed in Years 7 to 9. A wide range of successful visits has been introduced. Improvement since the previous inspection has therefore been good, except for the more regular use of computers by whole classes to promote historical enquiry.

Geography

Provision in geography is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers work well as a team and are very well led.
- Pupils learn very well as a result of challenging teaching.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The results of assessments are not used fully to plan for pupils' future learning.
- Pupils do not have sufficient access to ICT provision in classrooms.

Commentary

77. At the end of Year 9 in 2004, teachers' assessments were above average. Work seen during the inspection was also above expectations. This represents very good achievement for pupils whose work was well below average when they entered the school in Year 7. GCSE results were average in 2004 and current standards are as expected.
78. In Years 7 to 9, pupils achieve very well because teaching is very good. Teachers offer their own time to help pupils improve their understanding of the work. Any challenging behaviour is managed with great skill, and behaviour in lessons is very good. In GCSE, pupils achieve well because teachers create positive relationships and pupils' attitudes to work are very good. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their heritage language are very well supported by teachers and learning support assistants. Staff enable them to integrate very well into lessons and achieve very well.
79. Overall, teaching and learning are very good with some excellent teaching. The quiet but firm ethos created by teachers and the challenging questions and differentiated tasks encourage pupils to do their best. For example, in Year 11, pupils work with enthusiasm as they consider the wider aspects of the work of the National Trust. In Year 9, pupils are challenged by their teachers to illustrate their knowledge of Fair Trade and its effects on Third World countries. A teacher's assertion that, "I know you can do this," indicates challenge to all levels of ability. Future learning needs of pupils are not well identified through assessment and teachers do not always use the final part of the lesson for this purpose. The use of information and communication technology is restricted owing to the lack of facilities in every classroom, but planned improvements should greatly enhance the opportunities for all pupils and their teachers.
80. Leadership and management are very good. The head of department is an excellent role-model. Teachers are very well led and encouraged to demand the highest standards of effort and behaviour from pupils. Teachers work very effectively as a team and create a very positive atmosphere throughout the department. There are detailed and well-planned schemes of work and day-to-day lesson plans, but the use of assessment to inform the next stages of learning is underdeveloped. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Geography continues to be a strength of the school. Very effective teaching, learning and behaviour management strategies have consolidated the department's focus on raising standards and achievement for all pupils.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The lack of curriculum time for the subject in Years 10 and 11 means that the majority of pupils do not receive their proper entitlement.
- Teaching and learning are good in Years 7 to 9 and contribute well to pupils' achievement.
- The subject makes a good contribution to the moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

Commentary

81. By Year 9, standards are below average in relation to the locally agreed syllabus. Given pupils' well below average standards on entry to the school, this represents good achievement. Pupils make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of different religions. They link their knowledge of religion well with their everyday experiences. Standards in the GCSE short course in 2004 were average. This represents very good achievement. Unfortunately, standards in Years 10 and 11 overall are unsatisfactory because the subject is not currently taught in these years to all pupils. The school has been unsuccessful in its considerable efforts to recruit a subject specialist. Pupils do not receive their proper entitlement and statutory requirements are not met. However, provision for those pupils who do receive their full entitlement by following a GCSE course is good and they achieve well.
82. Teaching and learning are good. Despite the lack of subject specialisation, pupils benefit from good teaching. Teachers' good use of discussion and questioning enables pupils to express their opinions and form clear judgements about religious and moral issues. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good because pupils are provided with good support and work that matches their needs. Pupils with English as an additional language make equally good progress because their individual needs are well catered for through well-chosen materials. The use of key words and subject-specific language enable pupils to improve their speaking and listening skills. The teachers' use of effective teaching methods, coupled with clear expectations and challenge, enables all pupils to make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of religious and moral issues. Assessment of knowledge and understanding is satisfactory. Books are marked on a regular basis with many supportive comments. However, assessment is not sufficiently used to plan new work and the assessment of pupils' attitudes, values and spiritual development is not established.
83. Pupils' moral, social and cultural awareness is good. There are plenty of opportunities in the curriculum to develop these aspects of pupils' personal development and these are exploited well. Pupils demonstrate a clear respect for the views, faiths and traditions of each other.
84. The school's current arrangements for the leadership and management of the subject are just satisfactory. The subject is currently led by a teacher who is not a subject specialist and the extent of her other responsibilities do not currently allow her to tackle the many issues currently facing the subject's development, especially in assessment for learning. However, she is committed to improving the subject and planning for Years 7 to 9 is good. Not enough is done to monitor the work of teachers and pupils. Since the last inspection, there have been several factors that have caused significant changes in provision, the main one being the difficulty of appointing specialist staff and the lack of provision in Years 10 and 11. Consequently, improvement in the subject is unsatisfactory.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Enthusiastic, energetic leadership is improving the curriculum and raising the profile of the subject.
- The development of ICT skills enables pupils to present their ideas in a very professional manner with a range of computer-aided design and manufacturing equipment.
- The progress of pupils with special educational needs is very good because the practical tasks motivate and sustain learning.
- Pupils are given many opportunities to use a range of materials, which promote interest, motivation and pride in the development of their own ideas.
- Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour contribute to the effective teaching.

Commentary

85. Teachers' assessments at the end of Year 9 in 2004 were above average and were over-generous. Current standards seen in Years 7 to 9 are below average, but represent very good achievement. Pupils arrive in Year 7 with low standards and make rapid progress in Years 7 to 9. GCSE results at grades A* to C were below average in 2004. Standards seen in Years 10 and 11 show below average standards, but represent good sustained achievement. This sustained progress is made possible by well-focused teaching and good assessment and target setting. In all areas, pupils make particularly good progress as a result of the good teaching linked to clear objectives in the GCSE or the National Curriculum programmes of study.
86. Teaching and learning are good in all years. Pupils' capability in ICT is very good and they are all competent users of designing software which in turn enables them to be knowledgeable users of the very good computer-aided designing and manufacturing facilities within the department. Many pupils are creative and confident users of these specialist facilities.
87. A range of materials and techniques are taught through a series of well-thought-out projects that enable very good achievement in Years 7 to 9. Opportunities are created for pupils to develop their designing and making skills and this in turn generates motivation and concentration and promotes higher standards. The innovative tasks and teacher-designed support materials help to motivate pupils with special educational needs and sustain their progress. These pupils very often find success and added confidence by using computer-aided designing to expand their ideas. Many pupils in Year 11 are presently behind schedule with their coursework and this may well have an effect on the standards they reach in their GCSE examinations. Teachers have very good subject knowledge with awareness of industrial processes and products. They share their expertise with other local schools and particularly primary school pupils. Pupils enjoy the large practical element of the courses and also appreciate the warm teacher-pupil relationship that exists. Pupils' very good attitudes and the very good behaviour add to the atmosphere of mutual self-respect.
88. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The head of department provides visionary, enthusiastic leadership with an innovative curriculum and a great deal of support. Some relatively new teachers benefit from the example of the very good leadership. The shared ambition, direction and energy of all the staff in establishing the subject as a major influence in the school are very positive features of the department. Improvement since the previous inspection has been good. A redesigned curriculum with less emphasis on writing now exists. The subject is very well placed for future development and further success.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Drama was sampled during the inspection. Other subjects were inspected in depth. Two drama lessons were seen. In an excellent Year 9 lesson, the teacher effectively combined the development of dramatic techniques with the consolidation of study of Macbeth for external tests. The lesson was very well planned with a very good literacy focus for low-ability pupils. Pupils' attitudes were very positive. A very good Year 10 GCSE lesson was seen in which pupils responded very well to the text of a television play used as a stimulus for improvisation. They worked well together to create a piece of well-planned drama with engaging characters.

Art and design

The provision for art and design is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good leadership and management are raising standards and increasing the number of pupils choosing art and design for examination.
- The challenging lessons set high expectations for pupils to do their best work.
- Teaching and learning give pupils a very broad range of high-quality experiences.
- Lessons are conducted in an atmosphere of mutual respect and trust.

Commentary

89. In 2004, teachers' assessments show pupils reach average standards. This represents excellent achievement because pupils' attainment was very low when they entered the school. Standards of work seen are in line with expectations. GCSE results in 2004 were well above average and the subject was one of the highest performing in the school. Current work shows these very high standards are being maintained, which is excellent achievement from the standards at the end of Year 9. Design work is well researched and reflects a deep understanding of the works of a broad range of artists, especially contemporary ones. Drawing skills and technical confidence are very good. Pupils with special educational needs and those deemed talented in art and design achieve as well as other pupils.
90. Teaching and learning are excellent. The extremely high level of mutual respect teachers and pupils have for one another contributes significantly to the high-quality relationships and the standards achieved. Lessons are very interesting so pupils enjoy art and design and speak confidently, knowledgeably and with pride about their sketchbooks and ongoing work. In written work, they know and understand a broad range of art terms. Very well-planned lessons build pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills with clear targets to assess learning. Teachers have very high expectations that challenge all pupils to evaluate and improve their work. Excellent teaching materials and high-quality work of other pupils are used very well to broaden thinking and show what can be achieved. Teachers have very good organisational skills, especially over the use of time and pacing the rate of teaching and learning to suit pupils' needs. Individual advice and support, sensitively given, help younger pupils to gain confidence to develop and raise the standard of their ongoing work. Teachers use assessment very well, giving pupils a very good understanding of what they need to do to improve and develop their work. The cramped conditions in the temporary classrooms limit pupils' opportunities to make decisions and choices about their learning.
91. Leadership and management are very good and are having a very big impact on the subject's profile in the school. The head of department and his team of highly qualified and exciting teachers are having a very big impact on pupils' achievements. Standards have risen considerably since the last inspection. The number of pupils taking the subject and continuing to study the subject post-16 and in higher education is increasing. Improvements to the curriculum are having a big impact on standards and achievement. The very well-attended art clubs give very good opportunities for pupils to build on work done in lessons. There has been an excellent improvement since the last inspection.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well because of good teaching.
- Relationships between pupils of diverse cultures are very positive and support learning.
- GCSE results have been above average for the past three years.
- The quality of accommodation and resources restricts development of the curriculum.

Commentary

92. Standards on entry are below average with some pupils well below this. Because of good teaching, pupils achieve well and reach average standards at the end of Year 9. In 2004, teachers' assessments for pupils at the end of Year 9 were above average and were too generous. GCSE results for the past three years have been above average, although numbers have been small. In Year 11, pupils' confidence and self-esteem grows through very good teaching so that high standards are reached and all achieve very well. This has led to a significant increase in the number of pupils who have chosen music in Year 10.
93. In Years 7 to 9, teaching and learning are good overall. There is a balance of practical and written work in the best lessons with clear objectives and challenging work. Less successful lessons run over time and leave no opportunity for summing up to reinforce learning. Because Year 7 boys have no inhibitions about singing, they eagerly perform rounds to a high standard. Year 9 pupils confidently use technical language and collaborate well together, developing their musical ideas in group improvisations. As lessons are well-managed and pupils of diverse cultural backgrounds collaborate well together, attitudes and behaviour are positive. National Curriculum assessment levels are used well by pupils when they appraise each other's work.
94. Very good teaching in Years 10 and 11 ensures high-quality learning. Lessons have a balance of practical and written work with clear objectives set out so that pupils know what they have to do. To reinforce learning, there is a summing up at the end of each lesson. Well-led discussions about musical styles and structures help pupils build up a very sound musical background. Because of the confident teaching, more talented pupils develop musical ideas effectively and compose impressively. Weaker pupils, including some with special educational needs, find composing difficult and get much good support, guidance and examination practice to raise their standards further. Regular assessment also allows pupils to focus on what needs to be improved. Although there are only three computers, the eight Year 11 pupils use music software well. However, access to ICT becomes more difficult in Year 10 where numbers are much larger. Although the music rooms are cramped, unheated and airless and there is a shortage of classroom instruments, both teachers work hard to overcome these restrictions. Their enthusiasm is having a positive affect on boys' attitudes to music and many willingly take part in concerts during the year.
95. The department is well led and there is a clear vision about how to raise pupils' confidence and self-esteem so that standards keep improving. Good management has enabled the schemes of work to be revised. Both teachers share management responsibilities well and work together for the good of the pupils. There has been a good improvement since the previous inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Support for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- ICT is used very effectively to support pupils' GCSE theory work.
- Teachers provide pupils with very good opportunities to acquire and apply skills.
- Pupils are very well motivated and behaviour is excellent.
- The leadership and management of the subject are very good.

Commentary

96. By the end of Year 9, standards are above average and pupils in Years 7, 8 and 9 achieve very well. By the end of Year 11, standards are average and pupils in Years 10 and 11 also achieve very well. In 2004, GCSE examination results were below average. This was due mainly to the number of pupils with low levels of literacy who chose to take the GCSE examination. The school's policy is to enable pupils of all abilities to take the examination.

Those pupils who were expected to gain higher than average grades did so. Many lower-attaining pupils also gained good grades for their ability. Teachers work very effectively to ensure that all pupils achieve well. The support provided for lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs is excellent. Close attention is paid to helping pupils develop good vocabulary and literacy skills and very effective guidance is provided in using ICT to help pupils with their theory work.

97. Teaching and learning are very good. Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent and ensure that pupils are consistently well motivated and work hard. Pupils' behaviour is excellent. Teachers ensure that pupils progressively acquire, apply and develop skills and achieve very well. Arrangements to assess pupils' attainment and progress are also very good. Teachers are very skilful at enabling pupils to assess their own progress and to identify what they need to do to improve. This approach does much to ensure that pupils understand the work they are doing and prepares them well for their examination courses.
98. Leadership and management are very good. Teachers work together very effectively to ensure that high expectations are applied consistently. Arrangements to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning and to respond to any identified needs for improvement are very good. The school provides a good programme of extra-curricular activities and a very successful Community Sports Leader Award course for post-16 pupils. Improvement since the time of the last inspection is good.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

Business studies

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The department benefits from excellent management and very good leadership.
- Teachers' very good subject knowledge makes a significant contribution to the very good teaching and learning.
- Assessment is used very effectively and achievement is very good.
- There has been very good improvement since the previous inspection.

Commentary

99. Pupils start the course in Year 10 with no prior knowledge of business studies. The profile of pupils, based on prior attainment in English, mathematics and science, is below average. GCSE results for 2004 were above average compared to boys nationally. Those boys working towards the GNVQ full award produce work that is above average. Higher-attaining pupils taking the GCSE show a good understanding of business studies theory. They apply their knowledge well in a range of business studies contexts. Because teachers have a thorough understanding of which pupils have special educational needs, these pupils receive good additional support that enables them to complete units to a good standard. The department welcomes and caters for pupils of all abilities and ensures that all pupils achieve very well. Over the two years of the course, pupils build their business knowledge and apply themselves very well to the coursework. Pupils studying for a GNVQ demonstrate hard work and respond well to their teacher's guidance.
100. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers have a very good command of their subject which, coupled with knowing their groups very well, ensures success. Their very good knowledge means that the work is very well matched to individual student's needs, resulting in very good learning. Teachers provide all groups of pupils with the chance to improve their grades by putting on additional sessions after school. Pupils are keen to attend these sessions, appreciating the interest teachers take in their progress. Lessons are well planned and expectations are very high. Pupils are always challenged. On occasions, an over-

enthusiasm for the subject on the part of teachers results in them dominating the lesson. When this happens, some boys do not concentrate fully. However, the strengths in the teaching far outweigh the weaknesses. Boys have very good attitudes towards the subject and behave very well.

101. Leadership of the subject is very good and has a major impact on the work within the department. The teaching team is very effective and even the more recent appointments contribute considerably to the cohesiveness in the department. Management is excellent and provides exceptionally well for staff and pupils. Monitoring and evaluation systems are very well established and inform development planning. Very strong management has led to a very good curriculum that meets the needs of all groups of pupils. The wide cultural diversity of pupils benefits from the diversity of backgrounds and multi-faith make up of the teaching staff. Pupils are given many opportunities to use the very good computer facility available in the department. Well-developed assessment systems ensure that all pupils know how well they are progressing and exactly what to do to improve. Since the previous inspection, there have been advances in all areas of the department's work. Improvement has been very good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

102. The personal, social and health education programme supports pupils' personal and social development. It is taught within the citizenship programme by form tutors, but, because there is greater emphasis on citizenship, there are areas of personal development that cannot be taught because of a lack of time. Issues such as sex education are tackled well and the knowledge and understanding that pupils gain ensure that they are well informed. Not enough is done to ensure that pupils receive effective drugs awareness because the provision is not currently planned across all years. Teachers' approach to the topics enables pupils to feel confident in expressing their own views in an atmosphere of trust. The good contribution that the subject makes to the moral and social development of pupils results from this approach. However, a significant variation in the quality of teaching has a negative effect on the achievement of some pupils.

Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The citizenship course is well planned and includes all the required elements of such a course.
- Pupils achieve well in Years 7 to 9.
- Not enough is done to assess pupils' achievement and progress.
- Not enough is done to monitor the teaching of the subject.

Commentary

103. By Year 9, standards are below average in relation to what is expected. Given pupils' well below average standards on entry to the school, this represents good achievement. Pupils are making gains in their knowledge and understanding of responsible citizenship. By Year 11, standards are also below average. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of concepts such as rights and responsibilities, the working of the European Union and the importance of the United Nations. Their achievement is satisfactory.

104. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, but there is great variation in practice. When teachers challenge pupils to develop their attitudes towards citizenship, pupils learn and achieve well. In some of the lessons observed, teachers' knowledge and confidence enabled pupils to develop important citizenship skills. The good use of questions and range of styles enables pupils to think about their own responses to issues. However, in some lessons, teaching relies

too much on worksheets and little attention is given to helping pupils to express their own thoughts and feelings. Not enough has been done to assess and record pupils' achievement and progress in all years.

105. Leadership is satisfactory. The new subject leaders are making progress in developing the subject. They have a clear vision and are enthusiastic and committed. They recognise the contribution that the subject makes to pupils' personal development. Management is satisfactory. There are a number of tasks yet to be completed. Monitoring of the work of the subject is not developed enough to ensure consistency in the teaching of the subject.
106. The school has developed a full programme of citizenship education and sees it as important for pupils. Citizenship education is taught alongside the personal, social and health development programme by form tutors. There is clear identification of the subject and pupils are well aware that they are studying citizenship. Not enough opportunities are currently provided within the wider community for pupils to participate fully in active citizenship, although some initiatives such as the commitment to charities are now beginning to have an effect. Satisfactory progress is being made in the development of citizenship and this provides a firm base for further success.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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