

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **KIDBROOKE SCHOOL**

Blackheath

LEA area: Greenwich

Unique reference number: 100185

Headteacher: Ms Trisha Jaffe

Lead inspector: Barbara Hilton

Dates of inspection: 11 - 15 October 2004

Inspection number: 269517

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

© Crown copyright 2004

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

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of students:	11-19
Gender of students:	Mixed
Number on roll:	1371
School address:	Corelli Road Shooter's Hill Road LONDON
Postcode:	SE3 8EP
Telephone number:	020 8516 7977
Fax number:	020 8516 7980
Appropriate authority:	Governors
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Dick Quibell
Date of previous inspection:	5 October 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Kidbrooke School is an 11-19 mixed comprehensive community school in Greenwich. The school is bigger than most, with a total of 1371 students, including 325 in the sixth form, and about equal numbers of boys and girls. The area is one of high challenge and the proportion of students eligible for free school meals is well above average. The student population is very mixed, reflecting local communities. About half is white and the rest come from a wide variety of backgrounds, of which the largest groups are of African or other white heritage backgrounds, and 70 are refugees or asylum seekers. The proportion of students whose first language is not English (35 per cent) is high and of these 66 are at an early stage of learning English; their home languages are very varied, including African, Asian and European. A well-above average proportion of students (37 per cent) has special educational needs, including those with statements, and about one half of these has social, emotional or behavioural difficulties and most of the rest have mild learning difficulties. The composition of the sixth form is broadly similar to that in the main school. Most of the sixth formers have progressed from Kidbrooke's own Year 11, but growing numbers join from elsewhere (in 2004 about 30) and a substantial number (about 60) enrol on provision for students whose first language is not English. The sixth form provides a good range of academic and vocational courses.

The school has successfully weathered a difficult period, numbers have grown, substantially in the sixth form, and it is now fully subscribed. Mobility has been high: 50 per cent of the students who took GCSE in 2004 had joined later than the usual time, but in younger years mobility is broadly in line with that nationally. The attainment of students on entry, while wide-ranging, is well below average, but fluctuates year by year and in some years (including Year 7 in 2004) there are fewer students of very low reading ability. In other ways the student community is similar to that at the last inspection. As in many inner city schools, the turnover and recruitment of staff are constant and a constraint. The school works closely with another local secondary school with whom it jointly has Arts College status. Commitment to its staff is reflected in the award it has gained of Investors

in People status. It has also received the DFES School Achievement Award, Sportsmark recognition and is a member of the Specialist Schools Most Improved Schools Club.

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM**

<b>Members of the inspection team</b>			<b>Subject responsibilities</b>
3228	Barbara Hilton	Lead inspector	
9561	Husain Akhtar	Lay inspector	
23588	Charanjit Ajitsingh	Team inspector	Religious education English as an additional language, including ESOL courses in the sixth form
31218	Tom Allen	Team inspector	Geography Leisure and tourism (sixth form)
15472	Paul Andrews	Team inspector	Music
8076	Terence Bendall	Team inspector	Design and technology Information and communication technology (main school) Engineering (sixth form)
23550	Marie Blewitt	Team inspector	French
17709	Alan Giles	Team inspector	Physical education
10060	David Gutmann	Team inspector	Business studies (sixth form) Information and communication technology (sixth form)
2597	Cheryl Jackson	Team inspector	Sociology
31772	Alan Kelly	Team inspector	History Work-related learning
20527	Brian King	Team inspector	Mathematics
13067	Alan Quinn	Team inspector	Science Biology (sixth form)
23030	Caroline Runyard	Team inspector	Physical education Dance
1795	Joyce Sanderson	Team inspector	Drama Special educational needs
1995	Kate Seager	Team inspector	Health and social care
8090	Frank Turns	Team inspector	Art and design Media and film studies (sixth form)
4486	Michael Weller	Team inspector	English

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education

Demeter House  
Station Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 2RS

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet *'Complaining about Ofsted Inspections'*, which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637833) or Ofsted's website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS</b>	
<b>STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS</b>	<b>11</b>
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
<b>QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL</b>	<b>16</b>
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
<b>LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>WORK-RELATED LEARNING</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4</b>	
<b>SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM</b>	
<b>PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS</b>	<b>61</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**Kidbrooke School is a good school with a good sixth form.** Leadership by the headteacher is very good and with support by senior managers has maintained a strongly inclusive climate for learning in which results are improving rapidly. Teaching is good. Most students achieve well, and more effectively in Years 10 to 13 than lower down the school. Students' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory in the main school and good in the sixth form. Value for money is satisfactory.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Students achieve very well in drama and well in English, art, design and technology, geography, history and religious education in the main school, because teaching and learning are good
- A good range of subjects and courses is provided which builds on students' strengths
- Achievement is too frequently unsatisfactory in lessons in Years 7 to 9
- Information on the progress of students, including those with special educational needs and the gifted and talented, is not used well enough in planning lessons to raise achievement
- Literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills are not developed well enough to aid learning across subjects
- In music leadership and management are very poor and teaching is unsatisfactory
- Language support for students at an early stage of learning English is good
- The unsatisfactory attendance and behaviour of some students hold back their progress
- Pastoral support is good and helps students from all backgrounds to feel valued
- Very effective use is made of partnership links and special initiatives to raise achievement

**The school has progressed well since the last inspection.** Key issues arising from the last inspection have been tackled, including improvement in ICT facilities, provision for religious education in the main school, support for students at an early stage of learning English, and building improvements. Standards are rising faster than nationally. Teaching is better overall, including in Years 7 to 9. Attendance, while still unsatisfactory, has improved. Through its Arts College status the school has enhanced its provision and generated a rich variety of arts projects enabling students of all backgrounds to contribute and succeed. The school has good capacity to improve further because of its strong leadership and management and commitment to students' success.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Performance compared with:		all schools			Similar schools
		2002	2003	2004	2004
Year 11	GCSE/GNVQ examinations	E	E	E	A
Year 13	A/AS level and VCE examinations	E	E	N/A	

*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 similarly at the end of Year 9.*

**Achievement is satisfactory across Years 7 to 9, and good in Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form.** Results in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 9 and overall at GCSE are well below national averages, but rising rapidly with marked improvement at GCSE in 2004. While most students achieve satisfactorily in lessons in Years 7 to 9, too many do not. Students' numeracy skills are low and language and literacy skills are very low on entry, and they are not promoted strongly enough to accelerate learning in all subjects. Students receive extra help before assessments and examinations. Students at an early stage of learning English achieve well. In 2004, GCSE results were improved in most subjects, including mathematics, science and English, in which results were only a little lower than recent national averages. The exception in this overall

good picture is music, in which standards are very low. Students with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily, as generally do the gifted and talented, but in some lessons the more able coast. The GCSE results of boys are a little better than those of girls some of whom, white girls particularly, do not sustain their interest up to examinations. **Sixth form results** in most subjects and courses match those nationally. However, most students do not take many GCE subjects, so aggregated results (the sum of all their subjects) are well below average.

**Overall, students' personal development, including their moral, social, cultural and spiritual development, is satisfactory.** Their attitudes, behaviour and relationships are all satisfactory in the main school and good in the sixth form. In the sixth form students' personalities are developed well. Attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory, despite the school's good efforts to improve them.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education is good. Teaching is good,** cultivating learning which is good overall and better in Years 10 and 11 than for younger students. Most, by Year 10, develop satisfactory study skills. Effective emphasis is placed on the three-part lesson and learning objectives to focus learning. Virtually all want to learn, but some find it hard to contain their behaviour and distract attention, especially if work does not interest them. Too frequently marking lacks rigour. Not enough use is made of assessment information in planning lessons to match the learning needs of students, including those with special educational needs. Students at an early stage of learning English are supported effectively and progress well. **The curriculum is good,** with strengths in the performing and visual arts reflecting the school's Arts College status. Vocational courses enable students to continue studying post-16. Work-related learning (WRL) has been introduced effectively but arrangements for citizenship do not meet requirements. Provision for music is poor. The school looks after the care and welfare of students well. Support and guidance are satisfactory in the main school and good in the sixth form. The use of targets to promote the progress of individuals is developing satisfactorily. Provision for partnership with parents is good. Many links with other schools and the community enrich the life of the school.

### **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Overall leadership and management are good,** and leadership by the headteacher is very good. Governors' influence is very positive on many developments, but they have not ensured requirements are met for daily worship, religious education in the sixth form, citizenship and for numeracy and ICT across the curriculum, thus governance overall is just satisfactory. Strategic planning is very good. Pastoral matters are well managed. The management of faculties is satisfactory, overall; staff turnover affects the consistency with which plans are implemented. Very good emphasis is placed on staff development which strengthens teamwork.

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

**Parents are well satisfied,** on the whole. In discussion at their meeting, parents said they were pleased about the curriculum, teaching and learning and that the school is very well led. In response to their questionnaire concerns were expressed on the progress of their children, extra-curricular activities and how the school takes account of parents' views. Students are positive about most aspects of school life and the opportunities it provides. While some are concerned about behaviour, they are overwhelmingly clear that their views are respected and that they count.

### **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Raise achievement in lessons in Years 7 to 9 by monitoring teaching more rigorously
- Make better use of information on the progress of students in planning and assessing their work, including those with special educational needs and the gifted and talented
- Improve students' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills across the curriculum
- Strengthen leadership, management and teaching in music

and, to meet statutory or national requirements, strengthen planning for numeracy and ICT across the curriculum and for citizenship, also arrangements for religious education in the sixth form, and provide a daily act of worship for all.

## THE SIXTH FORM AT KIDBROOKE SCHOOL

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**The sixth form is good. Students achieve well on their courses because teaching and learning are good.** The proportions of students passing and gaining high grades in advanced-level examinations are rising and are broadly average. Students on the English as a second or other language (ESOL) course have a high success rate. Most students achieve well in lessons but some limit their progress because they are too frequently absent. Bearing in mind the amount of money coming into the sixth form and the overall achievement of students its cost-effectiveness is satisfactory. Courses are planned effectively to provide continuing opportunities for students in the main school, including some at foundation and intermediate-levels. Many students study further after leaving school, with a good number of advanced-level students progressing to university. Good improvement has been made since the last inspection: numbers have grown and results are better.

The main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Examination results in English, sociology and most visual and performing arts subjects match or exceed those nationally
- Students do well on vocational courses: nearly all achieve their qualifications
- The ESOL course is popular and successful
- Students' absence adversely affects their learning in many curricular areas
- The climate for learning is good and students like being in the sixth form
- Teaching is not good enough in music and some aspects of health and social care
- Accommodation and resources for the sixth form are good

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

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

Curriculum area	Evaluation
English, languages and communication	Provision is <b>very good</b> in English literature, in which students achieve well because teaching and learning are very good. It is <b>good</b> in ESOL courses in which students at an early stage of learning English achieve well, in response to good teaching, guidance and support
Mathematics	Provision is <b>good</b> in mathematics: students learn and achieve well in response to good teaching
Science	Teaching and learning are good in biology lessons. Provision is <b>satisfactory</b> overall, matching students' achievement which is behind learning because marking and assessment do not give enough guidance on how to improve
Information and communication technology (ICT)	Provision is <b>good</b> in ICT in which good, often very good, teaching helps students to learn and achieve well
Humanities	Provision is <b>good</b> in both history and sociology: teaching and learning are good and students achieve well in both subjects
Engineering, technology and manufacturing	Provision is <b>satisfactory</b> in engineering: students learn and achieve well in lessons in response to good teaching, but the course does not meet the needs of all students, some of whom

expect more practical work

Visual and performing arts and media Provision is **very good** in art, drama, media and film studies. In these subjects students achieve highly in response to very good teaching and learning. Music is **very poor** because poor teaching limits students' learning and they achieve little in lessons

Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel Leisure and tourism/leisure and recreation provision is **good**. Teaching and learning are good and students achieve very well because they are highly motivated

### Curriculum area

### Evaluation

---

Business Provision is **good** in business: teaching and learning are good, most students achieve well and have good attitudes to work, but there are not enough links with businesses

Health and social care Provision is **unsatisfactory** in health and social care. While achievement in examinations has been average, because of temporary arrangements teaching and learning vary from very good to over a third poor quality lessons in which students underachieve

---

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

### ADVICE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

**Good:** the school pays good attention to the care and welfare of students. Support and guidance are good. Both subject and pastoral staff are very attentive to students' needs and guide their progress. Arrangements for tracking students' progress are effective in helping students to achieve well.

### LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SIXTH FORM

**Very good:** strategic leadership and management are very good. The range of subjects is popular with students and generally they are successful on their courses, reflecting generally good subject leadership and management, except in music, where they are poor. Governors have shown outstanding perception in supporting sixth form and Arts College initiatives. Requirements for collective worship and religious education are not met. Overall, governance is satisfactory. Commitment by governors, headteacher and senior staff to providing appropriate opportunities, coupled with very good planning and resource management, have enabled the school to develop Arts College status which benefits the sixth form particularly and is a strength of which all can be proud.

### STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM

**Students enjoy the sixth form and feel well supported.** They say the teaching is good and they know how they are getting on. They feel they are listened to and their views are taken seriously.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is above average by the end of Year 11. Results, while well below the national averages, are improving faster than nationally both at the end of Year 9 and GCSE. Students achieved very well in General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) examinations in 2004.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Performance in 2004 national tests for Year 9 indicates that students' achievement relative to the end of Year 6 has improved and matches that nationally in mathematics and exceeds this in science
- In lessons students make very gradual progress across Years 7 to 9: too frequently they underachieve, held back by weak literacy and numeracy skills
- GCSE results, while remaining well below average, improved substantially in 2004: students achieved very well, relative to their standards at the end of Year 9
- Specialist support for students with English as an additional language is effective: they achieve well
- In music achievement is well below average and standards are very low

#### Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	31.5 (29.6)	NA (33.4)
mathematics	30.7 (32.2)	35.5 (35.4)
science	29.0 (31.1)	33.1 (33.6)

*There were 207 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	35 (24)	53(52)
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	82 (77)	89 (91)
Percentage of students gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	92 (92)	97 (96)
Average point score per student (best eight subjects)	240.8 (23.5)	282.3 (34.7)

*There were 210 students in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year. A new calculation of point scores has been introduced in 2004.*

1. Students who took Year 9 tests in 2004 started Year 7 with low, and some very low, standards of attainment. While their Year 9 results remained well below average, they indicate achievement in line with that nationally in mathematics and better than this in science (national comparative data for English are not yet available). In other subjects, teacher assessments are below average at the end of Year 9. Results in 2004 continue the trend of improvement in standards which is better than that nationally. Results in 2003, while also well below average, represented only very gradual improvement for standards at the end of Year 6. The school has placed effective emphasis on learning in Years 7 to 9 (Key Stage 3) through participation at national level in developments in teaching. Very effective leadership is lifting standards in English and additional help is strengthening planning in science.
2. Students' language and literacy skills are very low on entry to the school and still below average at the end of Year 9. Numeracy skills are also low on entry and while they improve across Years 7 to 9 they remain below average by Year 9. Improvements are being made in literacy but literacy and numeracy are not promoted strongly enough across the curriculum to accelerate learning in all subjects. In lessons overall standards are below national expectations, which are met in about half the lessons and only in a few, notably in English and drama, are standards sometimes above average. Achievement in about one in five lessons across Years 7 to 9 is unsatisfactory, which is too many. Students are held back by inadequate basic skills, by instances of poor behaviour which distract attention, and also by absenteeism which interrupts their learning.
3. Students from homes where English is an additional language achieve well in relation to their earlier learning because of targeted support; most in mainstream classes keep up with others, particularly those at the higher stages of learning English. However, those who may otherwise be fluent sometimes mix up their verb tenses and their vocabulary is somewhat limited, which limits their performance in examinations. Students with special educational needs, including those with social and behavioural difficulties as well as those with learning difficulties, achieve satisfactorily. Variation occurs in the progress gifted and talented students make. In most lessons they learn effectively, but planning to challenge them is inconsistent and in some lessons they coast, as in geography and history.
4. The results of GCSE examinations were much improved in 2004: students achieved very well. The proportion of students gaining higher grades (A\*-C) increased substantially though it remained well below average. Too many students still do not gain any GCSE subjects, and absence contributes to this. Results were well above the national averages for recent years in design and technology, drama and media studies, and in line with recent averages in French and religious education, although below or well below average in other subjects. Results in English, mathematics and science all improved in 2004. In English, results were below those nationally, but represented very high achievement relative to standards at the end of Year 9. In mathematics and science, while results were well below national averages, achievement was well above average compared with students' attainments in Year 9.
5. Achievement is better in lessons in Years 10 and 11 than lower down the school and is generally good. Students are helped to do their best in examinations through revision and booster classes which benefit the most and least able, particularly: they achieve relatively well, overall. The basic skills acquired in Years 7 to 9 and the goal of GCSE examinations focus learning more productively among older students. In lessons, while standards overall are below expectations they more frequently match or exceed this among more able groups, and in information and communication technology (ICT), design and technology, drama and practical work in the physical education GCSE course. The exception to this overall good picture is music, where standards are very low and achievement is well below average. While few differences were observed in classes between the progress of boys and girls, and students of different backgrounds, in some classes the oral skills of boys were better developed than those of girls and they caught the attention of the teacher, enabling their learning needs to be directly addressed.

6. The GCSE results of boys are relatively better than those of girls. The results of white European girls are not as good as the rest; in part this is linked to patterns of absence. Otherwise, the performance at GCSE by students from different ethnic backgrounds varies year by year showing no clear trend. Use is made of targets to raise results: the gap between the school's GCSE results and national results has narrowed in recent years. In 2004 the challenging GCSE target set by the local authority was met. Targets set for Arts College subjects were handsomely exceeded in drama, broadly met in dance and art, but fell well short of expectations in music.

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of entries gaining A-E grades	92.1 (73.5)	NA (89.4)
Percentage of entries gaining A-B grades	28.4 (13.3)	NA (32.6)
Average point score per student	158.0 (135.8)	NA (258.2)

*There were 103 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

### **Sixth form**

In lessons, standards are in line with expectations; students achieve well. The proportions of students passing and gaining high grades in advanced level examinations are rising and are broadly average: they reflect good added-value. However, most students do not take many GCE subjects, so aggregated results (the sum of results for each student) at advanced level are well below average.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Examination results in English, sociology and most visual and performing arts subjects match or exceed those nationally most years
- Students achieve well on advanced vocational courses: nearly all gain their qualifications
- Recent examination results have been low in biology, dance and music
- The ESOL (English as a second or other language) provision is successful

### **Commentary**

7. Many of the sixth form students embark on their courses with modest Year 11 results. A significant minority of students has English as an additional language and some of these have spent time learning English, at Kidbrooke or elsewhere, so they are older than usual in a sixth form. When account is taken of their starting points and results, they achieve well. Their creditable performance is not fully represented in results tables. Those included later in this report are for 2003 because no national average results are available for 2004, yet the school's results are much better in 2004, and for larger numbers of students. The numbers of students shown in 2003 are lower than actual numbers because a significant minority of students was just above the age to be officially recorded in the sixth form.
8. Examinations in a range of subjects and courses are taken at advanced level in the General Certificate of Education (GCE AS and A-2 levels) and in the Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (AVCE), and intermediate and foundation-levels for General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQ). Results are in line with national averages on A2-level courses in English and sociology, a little above average in art and drama, clearly above average in media studies, and recent results in film studies (for the first students who took this subject) have been above average. The English as a second or other language (ESOL) courses are successful: students achieve above average results.
9. Results are in line with national averages in advanced level vocational courses in business and leisure and recreation (in 2004) and in courses at intermediate and foundation-levels in health and social care, and leisure and tourism. The results of other vocational courses in business, engineering and in ICT have been below average, but represent good achievement for most students, who start with levels of attainment below expectations for their courses. Examination results in mathematics have also been below average, in biology and dance they have been low, and in music very low.



10. In 2004, results at AS-level are in line with recent national averages and much better than in 2003. Students who individually take examinations in their home languages achieve well: their results match those nationally, at both AS and A2-levels. With the exception of music, in which achievement is poor, students generally achieve well. Many, especially on foundation and intermediate-level vocational courses, have only basic proficiency in literacy and numeracy, which holds back their learning. Classes in basic skills are helping students to improve their competences. Literacy and numeracy skills are satisfactory among students on advanced level courses.
11. In lessons, standards match national expectations in English, mathematics, business, history, and leisure and tourism/recreation and on ESOL courses. Above average standards prevail in art, drama, media and film studies, and sociology. In other lessons standards, while below average, reflect achievement which is at least satisfactory and often good by students.
12. In lessons no differences were apparent in the relative achievements of males and females and of different ethnic groups. Results do not show any particular differences because the composition of classes, which are often small, vary year by year. The overall trend is of improvement in results of GCE subjects and in vocational courses. Students who are at an early stage of learning English achieve well on the whole, in part because of targeted support and also because of general help by subject teachers and other students. Students with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily, overall. While sixth formers are keen to learn, some find the discipline of continuing in education hard to sustain, and some have responsibilities at home. Absence interrupts learning and lowers achievement in some classes.

### **Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

The school focuses well on students' moral, social and cultural development and spiritual development is satisfactory. In the main school students' attitudes to learning, and behaviour and relationships are all satisfactory. Attendance has improved but it is still unsatisfactory, despite the school's good efforts to improve it. In the sixth form students' personalities are developed well; all groups are well behaved and have good attitudes to their studies.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Most students show good levels of interest and participation in lessons, which helps their learning
- Students' moral and social development is well supported
- A significant minority of younger students behaves immaturely and, at times, disturbs the learning of others
- Sixth formers like being in the sixth form and all groups work together harmoniously
- Too many students do not attend the school regularly or promptly

### **Commentary**

13. Students are positive about school life and the opportunities offered to them. Most show good interest in extra-curricular activities, including sports activities. These, as well as their involvement in work-related learning activities, extend their experience and help them to become independent and self-reliant. Through the curriculum, students learn social skills and about moral choices and are encouraged to see the rewards for their efforts and consequences of their wrong doings. Students learn how to react when frustrated or angry through the well-developed Behaviour Improvement Programme and the work of mentors in the school. In the school council, students are developing their understanding of democratic processes and their responsibilities. Many students demonstrate responsibility by working as monitors, helping younger students and representing the school in competitive events.

14. Students have good understanding of the difference between right and wrong but a significant minority does not act accordingly. In class, most students are willing to do their best especially when the work suits their ability and interest, resulting in good learning. However, at times students are inattentive, less motivated and cause disruptions which slow down learning. These mostly occur when the work is less stimulating and teachers are less confident in managing students' behaviour. Students with special educational needs work well with the support staff. On the whole, students at an early stage of learning English respond very well, eagerly and readily as they gain confidence and feel secure. They collaborate very well with each other as diverse multi-cultural and multi-lingual groups and they are happy to share their experiences and learning with each other. Outside lessons, students play together and socialise in common areas, but boisterousness and immaturity are evident, particularly among younger students and in the corridors, where noise levels can be high. Any persistent anti-social behaviour, like ongoing bullying, is not a problem since the school closely monitors students' personal development and has several approaches to supporting good behaviour.
15. Opportunities for reflection on universal issues arise in religious education and in some assemblies, which also focus on moral concerns and the sense of belonging to the school community. In other areas of the curriculum opportunities for reflection can occur but they are not planned systematically. Performing arts and visits to a variety of places of interest support students' cultural development as do specific events like the Black History week. Some subjects, like art, music, history and geography, by the nature of their content, raise students' awareness of cultural diversity.
16. Permanent exclusions have decreased since the last inspection, but fixed term exclusions have increased. Both are used appropriately and as a last resort when students' behaviour is unacceptable. The school carefully monitors the actions it takes and uses a number of means to improve behaviour and discipline, including supportive work by mentors, the Behaviour Improvement Project and by celebrating achievement. The school tries hard to accommodate young people from disturbed backgrounds and with behavioural problems. A system of warnings and internal exclusions precedes exclusion from school. Repeated exclusion of a few students results in increase in the numbers reported. Authorised absence, mostly due to illness, has reduced. Unauthorised absence has increased, despite the school being proactive in addressing the problem, mainly because of the school refusers, truancy and little co-operation by some parents. Absences have significant impact on the learning of the students concerned, for example, in the GCSE results of a number of girls whose attendance was low. Punctuality is unsatisfactory: many students arrive late to school and lessons, sometimes drifting in without an apology.
17. At the last inspection students' attitudes to work were good and behaviour was mostly good. These attributes remain true of many students but the attitudes and behaviour of a minority detract from the overall picture.

### ***Sixth form***

18. Sixth formers value the opportunities and flexible curriculum offered to them, which enable them to continue their education. The number completing their courses in the sixth form is good. Students are particularly positive about the strong relationships that they have with their teachers and with each other, which help them to feel well supported and happy to come to school. Males, females, students of all backgrounds and abilities work together harmoniously. They show commitment to the school environment; for example, they have helped with decoration. Most students are keen to do well, concentrate well in lessons and try their best. Students' behaviour is good but they have little visibility as role models to the rest of the school. They show initiative, represent the school at cultural events in London and nationally and go on overseas visits to enrich their learning. While most attend regularly, too

many have low attendance which limits their learning and achievement, more so in arts subjects, ICT and on vocational courses.

## Attendance

### *Absence in the latest complete reporting year (%)*

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.7	School data	3.5
National data	7.2	National data	1.1

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

## Exclusions

### *Ethnic background of students*

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of students on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	689	152	3
White – Irish	14	3	0
White – any other White background	99	9	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	44	6	0
Mixed – White and Black African	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	8	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	44	15	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	47	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	8	2	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	5	2	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	7	1	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	44	13	0
Black or Black British – African	199	17	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	8	5	0
Chinese	29	1	0
Any other ethnic group	49	7	0
No ethnic group recorded	4	0	0

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

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good overall because teaching, learning, the curriculum and the care, guidance and support provided are all good. Partnership with parents is good and links with other schools and the community are very good.

## Teaching and learning

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 203 lessons*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6 (3)	51 (26)	72 (35)	57 (28)	12 (6)	5 (2)	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.*

Overall, teaching is good. Most students learn well, and more effectively in Years 10 and 11 and the sixth form than lower down the school, where learning is just satisfactory. Many students take time to develop learning skills. There are inconsistencies in assessment arrangements, both within and across subjects in the main school. Assessment is effective in the sixth form.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching helps students to learn rapidly in drama throughout and in sixth form English, art and media and film studies
- Effective use is made in many lessons of approaches developed for Years 7 to 9
- Too frequently marking lacks rigour and not enough use is made of assessment information in planning lessons to match the learning needs of students
- Many younger students have poor literacy, numeracy and ICT skills and take time to catch up in their learning
- Specialist support for students at an early stage of learning English is good and promotes their learning effectively
- Students learn little in music because of weaknesses in teaching, and in aspects of health and social care in the sixth form
- Absence and poor punctuality detract from learning by too many students
- Unsatisfactory behaviour interrupts learning in too many lessons, especially among younger classes
- Not enough support staff are provided in lessons for students with additional educational needs to accelerate their learning

### Commentary

19. Much of the teaching is good: teachers are subject specialists and examples of good teaching were seen in virtually all subjects, with very good or excellent teaching being more frequently seen in English and drama, as well as sometimes in other subjects. The school is participating at national level in developing approaches to teaching in Years 7 to 9 (the Key Stage 3 Strategy) and applies such approaches, especially the three-part lesson and use of learning objectives, across all subjects and years. Very good examples were seen, for example, in English, media studies, mathematics, art, geography, history and religious education. This systematic approach is generally effective, especially so when timing is well-judged and learning progresses at a good pace, but at times the consolidation of learning at the end is rushed and thus impact is lost.
20. Most students are willing to learn but many of the younger ones lack effective learning skills; their reading and writing are below expectations for their age and concentration is also low. Learning is satisfactory, rather than good, in Years 7 to 9. When classroom activities involve all in learning purposefully and students are helped with their literacy, or the lesson depends less on reading and writing, they learn and achieve well. For example, in a lower ability Year

7 drama class, learning was very good because students learned new words and phrases orally, activities (based on the toyshop in *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*) were planned for different levels of ability, and they had appropriate classroom support. As they progress in drama they learn to evaluate their work, which helps them to improve further. While literacy is very well planned and structured in English and often in history, generally not enough emphasis is placed on the development of basic skills which holds back students in their learning. Similarly, opportunities are missed to strengthen learning through systematic approaches to numeracy and ICT.

21. Even though students are grouped broadly by ability, which assists teachers in planning activities, in many classes students represent a wide range of ability, interest and application. Most classes include students with special educational and language needs. Regular use of learning objectives is an effective tool for focusing students' attention. However, if there is not enough focus on how the objectives can be met, they lose their impact, as observed occasionally in science and too often in music. Planning for the range of ability aids learning in many lessons, as observed, for example, in English, art, drama, design and technology and in ICT. However, this is not always the case and too often lessons fail to capture students' attention because work is not well matched to their individual needs.
22. Overall, students with special educational needs and the gifted and talented learn satisfactorily. Specialist teaching for students with special educational needs is good and well adapted to their needs by ensuring that activities are varied, never relying solely on reading and writing. Vocabulary is always explained and then applied to sentences. Learning development assistants offer effective support in lessons but learning would be improved further, particularly in English, mathematics, design and technology and modern foreign languages, if more lessons could be so supported. Subject teachers are expected to use students' Individual Education Plans and base-line test information to plan support in lessons for them. In general teachers do this but, too often, the targets in students' plans are broad and not directed to the learning need. Teachers can obtain further information but not conveniently.
23. Specialist teaching and support staff for students at an early stage of learning English have a good command of the subject and understand individual needs well, but they can only directly support the most needy (88 out of 454 listed). Good quality partnership teaching extends support in subjects like English and humanities and enables students to prepare for GCSE examinations, as seen in religious education; learning gains are good and understanding is deepened. However, more is needed. The assessment of students at an early stage of learning English is well managed. Initial assessments when students enter the school are regularly updated to identify areas of concern.
24. While work is regularly marked, the frequency of this varies, and spelling and grammar are sometimes not corrected. The involvement of students in assessing their own progress is well developed in design and technology and raises their awareness of how to improve. The marking system relates to lesson objectives, and to GCSE grades in Years 10 and 11. Targets are set for improvement, but teachers do not consistently refer to National Curriculum levels lower down the school, so students do not always know how to improve relative to the national assessment system. Special attention is paid to those with learning or language needs and the gifted and talented, through assistance in lessons and extra activities. Opportunities are missed to involve others in improving their standards by sharing assessment information with them.
25. Students' learning overall is good and more rapid in Years 10 and 11 than lower down the school. Students in all years say work is hard enough and homework consistently set. By the time they have reached Year 10 most have developed learning habits and skills, including a better grasp of literacy and numeracy. Absence and poor punctuality limit learning for some

in lessons. Virtually all want to learn, but at times some cannot contain their behaviour, distract attention and limit learning. Generally, relationships are good. Staff are patient and understanding with all groups of students and the climate for learning enables classes to progress with their work. However, some classes are challenging. Senior managers have involved teachers in developing varied approaches to learning. In French, a lesson with Year 7 students who were learning to say their age, started spectacularly with singing of a rap song on personal information. Involvement in activities beyond the classroom, such as planning changes in the school environment and the dining room, capture their interest and raise their awareness of citizenship and work-related learning. Nonetheless, behaviour too frequently detracts from learning, particularly in Years 7 to 9, and this limits students' achievement.

26. Teaching and learning have improved significantly since the last inspection and are now good. As at the last inspection, teaching and learning are better in Years 10 and 11 than lower down the school. Approaches developed for Years 7 to 9 have had significant beneficial impact.

## ***Sixth form***

27. Overall, teaching and learning in the sixth form are good, as at the last inspection. Relationships are very good. Students are treated as adults. Most are keen, diligent and participate constructively in lessons in subjects they have chosen. Lesson planning and organisation often incorporate approaches used in the main school, including clear objectives and help with the organisation of written work. For example, in a very good Year 13 English lesson, having made the learning objectives clear, the teacher explained how to take notes systematically on characters in books they were reading, and gave them a model to follow.
28. Lesson planning is generally good, and sometimes highly effective, as in drama. Lessons are adapted appropriately to the needs of students, as observed in Year 12 biology lesson which included students with little scientific background who were learning about biological molecules; they made good progress. Similarly, lessons are very effectively structured in history. However, learning is not systematically organised in music and consequently little learning occurs. Very good use is made of resources for practical activities. Often teachers are working to their strengths and their specialist knowledge fosters interest as well as accuracy, as observed in a drama lesson where the focus was on the use of language. Students also enjoy drawing on their experience and general knowledge as in business studies, sociology and politics; as a result, they develop good understanding of fundamental concepts. This is true also in some health and social care lessons, but too many teachers are involved in delivering this one-year course, which constrains continuity. In most subjects students readily discuss and exchange ideas and they learn skills of criticism and evaluation, for example, in arts and humanities.
29. Assessment is used effectively to assist students' progress, including well-focused questions which enable the teacher to gauge knowledge and understanding, as in leisure and tourism, and the best lessons in health and social care. Very appropriate short term targets help students to progress systematically, and at speed, in engineering. Sixth form lessons include students with special educational and language needs. They generally cope well. As lower down the school, absence interrupts the learning of some and teachers give of their own time to help students catch up.

## **The curriculum**

The curriculum is good overall and improved since the last inspection. Staffing, accommodation and resources are satisfactory in the main school and good in the sixth form.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum provides a good range of interesting courses with strengths in arts subjects and vocational areas
- Curricular planning for literacy is developing satisfactorily but that for numeracy and ICT is not rigorous enough
- Special opportunities are provided for gifted and talented students but planning in lessons often does not always take account of their needs, which holds back their learning
- Not enough teaching assistants are provided to support the learning of students with additional educational needs
- The music curriculum is unsatisfactory and students have little choice in modern foreign languages
- Planning for citizenship does not yet meet National Curriculum requirements
- The ESOL courses effectively enable students to learn English and to progress
- Valuable extra-curricular opportunities enhance several areas, including drama and humanities subjects

- Religious education is not covered in sufficient depth in the sixth form to meet the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus
- Good improvements have been made in the curriculum, accommodation and ICT facilities since the last inspection

### **Commentary**

30. The curriculum for students in Years 7 to 9 is good overall. Induction procedures for students arriving in Year 7 are good. Students and parents value this. The school takes care in assessing new students' needs and places them carefully. Arrangements for those most in need of help, in a separate class with fewer students, enable them to make a good start and they join the usual timetable in Year 8. The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 is also good, especially in subjects related to the arts and humanities. Students choose from a good range of GCSE options and an appropriate choice of vocational GCSEs is on offer. Drama, taught as an additional subject, makes a positive impact on students' personal and social education. However, the music curriculum is unsatisfactory and the only language provision is French at present. The school encourages students who are competent in a language other than English to prepare for examinations in their mother tongue. Pre-vocational courses are arranged for a small number of students who have difficulty coping with a full range of GCSEs. These provide well for the students, raise their self-esteem and students' progress is tracked effectively. Good account has been taken of work-related initiatives and the curriculum provides good opportunities to continue learning in the sixth form.
31. Across all years, support for literacy is developing but inconsistent and no cross-curricular planning for the development of numeracy is evident. The timetabled provision for ICT is much improved since the last inspection but relatively little use is made of ICT in other subjects, which is a requirement. Students at an early stage of learning English are placed according to their ability and then given additional support for their language difficulty which is effective: they learn well. The main support offered to students with learning needs is by classroom assistants or withdrawal to small groups to improve reading and writing. Students in these two categories make the most progress. Those whose difficulties spring from emotional and behavioural problems, are helped through a variety of programmes, a better provision than usual. Provision for the gifted and talented is satisfactory. Some very good additional activities are provided, for example, in drama, and astronomy classes (in conjunction with the Greenwich Observatory) which lead to GCSE, but curricular planning to meet their needs is variable across subjects.
32. The provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory, covering all the required topics. There has been careful planning for sex, drugs and alcohol education and a range of visiting speakers and drama groups contribute depth and specialist approaches. A large number of teachers are involved in teaching this programme and the quality, due to limited training, is of uneven standard, but mostly good. Opportunities are missed, however, to extend learning in early morning form times. National Curriculum citizenship is included in the personal, social and health education programme, but is not yet effectively planned and monitored. Careers education is good. Students receive much information about the optional subjects and the careers advice programme is well planned. Work experience for Year 10 students makes good use of local businesses and is carefully monitored.
33. The provision of extra-curricular activities is good overall with strengths in drama, dance, sport, geography, art and French. The school's joint Arts College status is having a positive impact, for example, the drama department stages very popular productions which involve a large number of students from all groups within the school. They perform locally in theatres and at other schools within their partnership groups. In addition, there are many dance clubs and a good emphasis on encouraging both boys and girls. The students are successful in local competitions, activities such as football and athletics and there is a good range of clubs. Foreign language trips are popular. Fieldwork extends students' learning in geography. A

good range of visits to theatres and galleries supports learning in English, drama and art. However, opportunities are missed for enrichment in music. A number of subjects offer extra classes which are effective in providing additional support before assessments and examinations.

34. Staffing is adequate. Teachers are specialists in their subjects but not enough learning assistants are available in lessons to support students who have learning and language difficulties. Temporary arrangements for the co-ordination of special educational needs are adequate but the development of this substantial area has been restricted. Parents and students are proud of their spacious, generally well-maintained school. Most classrooms are of adequate size to teach the curriculum effectively. Specialist accommodation is of mixed quality. Two well designed and equipped ICT rooms are exceptionally good for computer work. However, design and technology accommodation is unsatisfactory for the resistant material and graphic work and some science laboratories need refurbishment. Rooms used by learning development are split across floors, which is inconvenient. Some furniture has graffiti. Resources are good in several respects. Facilities for ICT have improved considerably since the last inspection. The management of textbooks, however, remains problematic. Parents express concern about arrangements which do not allow all students to have books. Library provision is satisfactory. The library is well used by classes of younger students who improve their reading skills. The stock is not extensive enough in some subjects to support learning in the sixth form and the room is in need of repair.
35. Regular review of the curriculum by senior managers has initiated improvements since the last inspection, especially through improvements in ICT, religious education and support for students at an early stage of learning English, all of which were weaknesses at that time. A good start has been made in developing literacy but, as at the last inspection, not enough emphasis is placed on numeracy across the curriculum. While arrangements for collective worship still do not meet requirements because they are not daily, assemblies give time for reflection, acknowledge diversity of faith and are worthwhile corporate occasions which give opportunity for celebration of all groups within the school. The accommodation has been much improved in several respects. Repair is generally satisfactory and many areas are brightly decorated. Toilets, however, still need attention and students remark on this. Subjects are now well resourced and the improvement in ICT facilities is dramatic. Staffing levels are satisfactory, except for the numbers of classroom assistants which are too low to support the large number of students with special educational needs.

### ***Sixth form***

36. The school has been forward-looking in providing courses which interest students and enable them to achieve success. The range of General Certificate of Education (GCE) A-level and vocational courses offered at foundation, intermediate and advanced levels is good. A particularly good range is offered in ICT. Strengths include English, art and drama, as lower down the school, and also media and film studies: students learn very well in all of these. Students appreciate opportunities to study subjects which are new to many at this level, for instance sociology and politics. Progression routes are available from Year 11 courses in most subjects, except for modern languages, where none is provided this year, although in the past classes have been timetabled. Students are encouraged to take examinations in their home languages, and usually do well, as in Russian in 2004. Personal, social and health education is regularly provided in a programme which is suitable in all respects except that religious education, while provided, is not extensive enough to meet the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus.
37. The ESOL courses motivate and enable students to learn English. The courses include elements of other subjects so that students of many backgrounds broaden their experience

and progress, which most do, onto other post-16 courses at Kidbrooke, or elsewhere. This innovative provision is a very good response to the needs of the local community and students on the course mix and socialise with the rest of the sixth form. The ESOL course students also participate in their own extra-curricular activities, which help them, for example, to appreciate opportunities locally and in London.

38. Very good extra-curricular activities are provided in arts subjects, especially in drama, but not in music. In physical education arrangements are haphazard. Recent successful performances at the Edinburgh Festival have raised confidence and expectations among drama students. Subjects, including politics and history, arrange visits, some of which are abroad, to deepen students' understanding.
39. Accommodation and resources for sixth form use are good. The large common room is well used by them for study and quiet relaxation. A library annexe with computers is also available, but they make relatively little use of this for independent study.

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

Provision to ensure students' care, welfare, health and safety is good. The advice and guidance for them to improve their performance are satisfactory in the main school and good in the sixth form: students are well supported through a number of well-targeted initiatives. The involvement of students through seeking, valuing and acting on their views is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pastoral care is very good: students of all backgrounds are valued
- Students and parents appreciate the support provided which guides students' progress satisfactorily in the main school and well in the sixth form
- The guidance on, and monitoring of, health and safety are good

### **Commentary**

40. Admission arrangements are effective and students appreciate how well staff have helped them to settle in, as do their parents. The pastoral support system, including the work of the Behaviour Improvement Project and mentors, is well organised. Students' needs are promptly identified and their personal development is well supported and monitored. Multi-disciplinary meetings involving a range of support agencies, are highly significant in this respect. Students say that staff care for them, are easy to speak to and take time to explain things that they do not understand. A primary health care centre on site is a valuable resource to support students' well-being. Students are provided with good advice and guidance about matters related to their health and welfare and when making choices about future careers or deciding on appropriate sixth form education. Innovative approaches to planning school lunches involving a TV chef have improved standards of nutrition.
41. Awareness of procedures for child protection and for supporting students in public care is good. Procedures to ensure the safety and security of students and staff are in place. The school uses outside welfare agencies effectively to extend the support for students, many of whom have diverse social and educational needs. A local police officer actively supports students' welfare.
42. Every student new to the school is assessed and their learning needs identified. Information on their progress is monitored on academic tutoring days. The use of tracking data to set targets for individuals against which to monitor their progress is developing satisfactorily. The system of logging concerns and sanctions provides a deterrent for any oppressive behaviour like bullying. Vulnerable students are well supported and their progress is well monitored. Students with special educational and language needs are known well by teachers and support staff who are concerned with their welfare. Relationships are good with many agencies that provide specialist advice. The school works closely with the local authority adviser for special educational needs.

43. Students are regularly asked for their views and opinions on the school's work, through questionnaires, audit of the TeenTalk@Kidbrooke and the school council, for example. As a result, students feel valued. Students are clear that their views are respected and heard and that staff listen to them well. Students are positive about most aspects of school life. Some are concerned about bullying but say that the school deals effectively with this, and inspectors agree. Care for students was a strength of the school at the time of the last inspection; this still is the case in many respects.

### ***Sixth form***

44. Students enjoy the sixth form and feel well supported. They appreciate most aspects of school life, especially their good relationships with staff, who treat them as adults. They are known well individually. Both subject and pastoral staff are very attentive to their needs and guide their progress. Arrangements for tracking their progress are similar to the main school. Because numbers are smaller and students are well motivated the arrangements are effective in helping students to achieve well. Procedures for ensuring students' health and safety are good, as in the main school. Students know how to seek help if they need it and make effective use of support staff including counsellors and the TeenTalk@Kidbrooke project.
45. About two-thirds of students in the sixth form have progressed from Year 11, and the rest join from elsewhere (the majority of whom enroll on the ESOL course). The programme of welcome and introduction to the sixth form is brief. Compared with many schools little time is spent explaining the privileges and responsibilities of learning at this level. The school is aware this is an area for development. The substantial minority of newcomers goes some way to explaining the distinct nature in the sixth form, which has little interaction with the main school. Opportunities are missed to give sixth formers responsibility and leadership roles and to serve as role models for younger students. However, they feel they are listened to and their views are taken seriously. They are known well individually by subject and form tutors, senior staff and the administrator based in the sixth form area. Students receive good advice on their futures, from school staff and Connexions. This school has good records of students' progress to employment, further and higher education, to where increasing numbers of students progress.

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

The provision for partnership with parents is good and with other schools and the community it is very good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- While the school works hard to communicate with parents, many are reluctant to respond and do not support the regular and prompt attendance of their children
- Links with the community and with other schools are very good and enrich provision, in drama especially

### **Commentary**

46. The school works hard to communicate with parents, through newsletters, the prospectus, curriculum guides and the student planner, which enables parents to monitor what their children are doing. In addition, a website has been created and open days for parents occur every Wednesday. The school makes many efforts to communicate with parents who can be difficult to reach and liaises effectively with community outreach workers for parents who are not fluent in English. While some parents are reluctant to respond to staff, many more support their children through homework, at performances and on outings. Too many,

however, do not support the regular attendance of their children. The parents of students with special educational needs are invited to review meetings, which many attend.

47. The numbers of parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting (22) and responded to their questionnaire (28) were low for a school with 1371 students, but better than at the last inspection. The views expressed were mostly favourable. At the meeting parents were pleased about the curriculum, teaching and learning and said the school was very well led. They like the school because it is child-centred. Their only concern was about extra-curricular sports activities which they felt did not capitalise on the enthusiasm of Year 7 students because they did not start promptly at the beginning of term, and this is justified. Parents' responses to the questionnaire were more mixed, with concerns about information on the progress of their children, extra-curricular activities, bullying and how the school takes account of parents' views and suggestions. On other matters the views were more in line with those expressed by parents at their meeting. Inspectors looked at the reports sent home termly at half terms and agree that they communicate briefly. Subjects report with a single grade. Information is supplemented at parents' meetings, by targets in students' planners and curriculum guides. Special event extra-curricular activities are a strength and regular weekly provision of clubs and extra classes is satisfactory. Instances of bullying occur, but parents and students agree that they are dealt with well.
48. The school has been very effective in forging collaborative links with its diverse, multi-ethnic community. Two initiatives in particular contribute to this. The school's Arts College status, held in partnership with Thomas Tallis School, has generated a rich variety of inclusive community arts projects, undertaken in co-operation with external organisations. With sponsorship from a national creative arts project, the school hosted a 'Brazilian Day' that attracted young people of all ages and backgrounds. The Behaviour Improvement Project, Government-funded, has made a major impact on school, students and parents. This is because it is concerned with prevention as much as with cure. Funding has been used to establish a number of community links officers to work with minority ethnic parents and ethnic support groups, as well as setting up facilities in school for resolving problems encountered by the most vulnerable students, which reflects well on the school's inclusion policy.
49. The success of the Arts College depends to a large degree on the effectiveness of relationships between the partner institutions, which are very good. The Arts College manager co-ordinates activities, which include the funding of arts projects. Links with feeder primary schools are good, including primary school lessons taught by Kidbrooke teachers, further visits to observe literacy lessons and an initiative is planned for a joint reading project for Years 6 and 7 at Kidbrooke. Transfer arrangements are handled with similar effectiveness. Both parents and a group of Year 7 students were unanimous in praise of the arrangements made.
50. Partnership with parents is about the same as at the last inspection. Effective links with other groups and organisations continue to thrive.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management are good overall and very good in the sixth form. Governance is satisfactory both in the main school and the sixth form.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher leads very strongly, with enthusiasm, skill and systematic planning for improvement, which is good since the last inspection
- The sixth form is very well led and managed: students achieve well

- The monitoring of assessment arrangements is not rigorous, so that information is not used effectively enough in lessons to challenge students and move them on in their learning.
- Record-keeping for students with special educational needs is not streamlined enough to provide progress information for teachers
- While staff recruitment and retention affect the consistency with which plans are implemented very good emphasis is placed on staff development to improve teaching
- Very effective use is made of initiatives, such as Arts College status and the Key Stage 3 Strategy, to raise standards and implement the very good inclusion policy
- Governors contribute very positively to many school developments but have not ensured requirements are met for daily worship, citizenship, music and for the use of ICT and development of numeracy in all subjects, and for religious education in the sixth form
- Pastoral matters are very well managed

### **Commentary**

51. The boundless energy, commitment, enthusiasm and strong leadership of the headteacher motivate staff and students. A particular strength has been the strategic planning and vision to lead the school forward. Innovative posts of responsibility have been created within the leadership team, with some high calibre appointments at middle management level. The headteacher is an excellent role model for staff, is a strong presence around the school and has the confidence of the school community. Teamwork is very much in evidence. Inclusion is promoted strongly. There is commitment to the success of all students and to identifying strategies for improvement. Standards are improving faster than nationally and in 2004 GCSE results represent very good achievement.
52. Governors are dedicated, perceptive and work closely with the school. They are committed to Kidbrooke as an inclusive school which is enjoyed by students and helps them to be successful. They have supported development as an Arts College, vocational initiatives and improvements since the last inspection; in many ways governorship is very good. Through their curriculum committee they have been aware that planning and monitoring of the curriculum are not rigorous enough to be satisfied that all students receive their National Curriculum entitlement. Developments are intended through new staffing arrangements (as for citizenship) and school improvement planning but are not yet in place and tend to be eroded through staff turnover (as for ICT and numeracy across the curriculum). More emphasis is needed on such developments. Students attend assemblies twice weekly and these provide opportunities for worship. Unusually, the school has a fine hall, but the site is so expansive that staff rightly judge that movement across it is not justified on every morning. Many staff feel unable to lead worship during early morning form time.
53. The team of senior managers co-ordinates and oversees the daily life of the school very effectively. This is a taxing responsibility with large numbers of students in the extensive buildings and site. They are aided by courteous receptionists who deal both with visitors and also many queries from individual students. Senior managers have linked responsibilities with faculties, pastoral teams and external projects. On the whole pastoral matters and external projects are managed very well: arrangements promote high standards. The performance management of faculties is more varied. While results overall are rising faster than nationally, they remain well below average. Several very good appointments have been made in the last few years. Review procedures are in place and much information is gathered on results. The interrogation and use of this to raise standards further are areas of development; an examinations officer has recently been appointed, who will assist in this.
54. The leadership and management of faculties and subjects are satisfactory overall with examples of very effective leadership, as in English, drama, ICT and design and technology. Provision for students with English as an additional language is well led and managed and much better than at the last inspection. Leadership and management in mathematics and

science are satisfactory. In both, teachers are supported in overall lesson planning and results are analysed but not enough use is made of information to devise ways of raising the performance of groups of students. Temporary arrangements in health and social care, however, are not satisfactory and arrangements in music are very poor. Staff turnover affects the consistency with which policies and plans are implemented and reviewed and this has affected the development of literacy, numeracy, provision for special educational needs and opportunities for gifted and talented students across the curriculum. Very good emphasis is placed on staff development. The school has correctly identified the need to provide training for middle managers. The school copes well with the large turnover of staff, characteristic of many London schools. Among its new appointments are able, young graduates and more experienced people who bring to teaching a breadth of knowledge and understanding. Their professionalism is nurtured through courses, support and mentoring. Newly qualified teachers are well supported.

55. Well qualified senior staff, with the support of the local education authority, have managed the co-ordination of special educational needs through a difficult period of staff absence. Immediately after the inspection a new co-ordinator started in post. Interim arrangements have been satisfactory. The training of teachers and classroom assistants has continued and their deployment is rational, but more classroom assistance is needed. The record-keeping, including provision of statements, annual reviews and issuing of students' Individual Education Plans have all continued systematically and are satisfactory. The size of the Record of special educational needs is well above average and is supplemented by a list of those needing help with the English language and also other needs identified by the school. Altogether 60 per cent of the students are listed. The intention is to ensure that no difficulties are overlooked and that all provision can be tracked and progress checked. The quantity and complexity of needs identified make overall tracking of progress difficult: much information is held in teams. Regular multi-disciplinary meetings are held to compile cumulative records. Teachers can obtain information but not conveniently.
56. Leadership focus on teaching and learning brings attention to the core business of the school, which is extremely valuable in the context of many initiatives and a wide variety of needs. Since the inception of Arts College status links with Thomas Tallis School and arts organisations have grown and flourished to provide a very good range of opportunities for students. These build on the strengths of students of all ages, abilities and backgrounds and create a school strength of which all can be proud. Arts College targets have been broadly met in art and dance, well exceeded in drama, but substantially underachieved in music. The leadership and management in music have not been effective in redressing a decline. The Behaviour Improvement Project effectively supports vulnerable students in staying at school. The school's involvement in the Key Stage 3 Strategy has raised awareness of the variety of students' learning preferences and how teachers can respond to them. The school-wide implementation of the three-part lesson and use of learning objectives is generally effective.
57. School resources, including its large and complex budget, are well handled. Considerable sums earmarked for specific purposes, such as the Behaviour Improvement Project and community links, are spent appropriately. Financial control is good. Two thirds of the large balance carried forward at the end of the last financial year (March 2004) was committed expenditure. This has been spent on new technology, building improvements, staff training and links with primary schools. Governors and managers have a good sense of best value, judging expenditure in terms of value for money and impact on the quality of school life. Bearing in mind the amount of money spent on each student, which is well above average, the complex range of learning needs of many students, and the standards they reach, value for money is satisfactory.
58. Leadership and management have improved since the last inspection. The work of senior managers has developed well and supported the headteacher, whose very strong leadership

has had very positive impact on the school. Those issues for action, identified at the last inspection, which have been directly under the control of the school, have been tackled - notably improvement in ICT facilities, provision for religious education, support for students at an early stage of learning English, and improvements in the building. Standards are rising faster than nationally and have done so significantly at GCSE in 2004. Teaching is better overall, including in Years 7 to 9, but at this stage too many students still do not make the progress expected in lessons. Attendance, while still unsatisfactory, is better than in 1998. Bearing in mind the very strong overall leadership and management and commitment to students' success, the potential for further improvement is good.

## Financial information

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

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	6,561,291	Balance from previous year	355,376
Total expenditure	6,186,303	Balance carried forward to the next	730,364
Expenditure per student	4,512		

### **Sixth Form**

59. Strategic leadership and management are very effective: student numbers have grown substantially since the last inspection; students are well satisfied with the wide course offer; their results reflect good added-value, relative to their GCSE scores. Commitment by governors, headteacher and senior staff to providing opportunities appropriate and interesting to all students, coupled with very good planning and resource management, have enabled the school to develop Arts College status including a vibrant sixth form. The numerous links with externally-funded projects and outside organisations raise expectations and broaden students' horizons. Effective planning is in place to support developments. Regular evaluation of the breadth of the curriculum based on monitoring by subject and support teams identifies areas for future improvement. Leadership and management in music is an exception to the generally good picture and is having negative impact on students' achievements. Weaknesses are also evident in arrangements to cover a temporary absence in the one-year health and social care course.
60. Governors have taken keen interest in the sixth form and are well informed. Financial control is good. Results obtained are considerably better than officially reported statistics indicate (see the section on standards achieved by students). Cost-effectiveness is satisfactory. Statutory requirements are met, except for the provision of collective worship and for religious education, which is provided in tutorial time, but not in the depth expected by the locally Agreed Syllabus. Taking account of these shortcomings, governorship is satisfactory overall.

## **WORK-RELATED LEARNING**

Provision for work-related learning (WRL) in the school is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- WRL is well led and well managed
- Very effective links exist with Greenwich Education Business Partnership
- In the context of 14-19 curriculum planning, a raft of well-planned applied GCSE courses has been launched this year, that will link with existing GNVQ, AVCE and BTEC courses Post-16
- All Year 10 students go on well-planned and supervised work placements
- WRL delivered through curricular subjects is variable in quality

### **Commentary**

61. All students in Years 10 and 11 benefit from opportunities to learn about work, learn through work and to develop appropriate skills. A significant feature of WRL in Year 10 has been the introduction of two option blocks containing a raft of applied GCSE courses, designed to provide progression into the post-16 vocational offer. This builds on established very good

links with the local education business partnership (which shares the school site) and many links with professional arts organisations. All Year 10 students participate in a well-planned and supervised work experience programme and all in Year 11 benefit from individual interviews with the Connexions careers advice service. Year 11 students speak highly of both experiences, whilst letters from employers and students testify to the effectiveness of work placements. Finally, there are well-planned enrichment opportunities - for example, a project enabling Year 11 students to carry out research in restaurant design in order to recommend improvements to the school cafeteria.

62. The quality of teaching and learning in most of the new applied GCSE courses is good. Students respond well to teamwork and problem-solving activities and are achieving well. At this early stage of implementation, coverage of work-related elements also occurs in some, but not all, subject areas - for example, in mathematics, science, geography, history and in personal, social and health education. A particularly successful adjunct of the vocational programme is Skill Force, which is directed at equipping students, who do not engage well with traditional subjects, with knowledge and life skills that will improve their employability, as well as enabling them to acquire accreditation in various fields. The Skill Force programme is well taught, well resourced and very well received by the 25 students who participate.
63. Work-related learning is well co-ordinated and very well managed. Two curricular audits have been carried out to measure compliance with government guidelines for WRL in both traditional and new subject areas and a monitoring system is built into the new provision. A suitable policy is in place and a realistic implementation programme is on schedule. The introduction of WRL has been an impressively managed response to the need to think strategically about the 14-19 curriculum. The Greenwich Education Business Partnership has been a great help in the planning of new courses and in guiding bids for government funding to support work-related learning initiatives, as well as in sustaining good links with local businesses.

### ***Sixth form***

64. Aspects of work-related learning, in the form of vocational courses, have had a major impact on student achievement in the sixth form. Last year pass rates were in line with those nationally. Achievement was good at all levels and among students who studied in intermediate and foundation-level courses achievement was considerable: many had few, or very low, GCSE grades. These courses are well taught overall and popular with students. The school has built up good links with local business and industry. As lower down the school, students benefit from good careers guidance and the many links fostered with support by the Greenwich Education Business Partnership.

# **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

## **SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4**

### **ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

#### **English**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Good teaching and learning are raising achievement by the end of Years 9 and 11
- Management of the subject is good; leadership is very good
- Standards are improving but remain below average, particularly in writing
- Opportunities for students to use ICT in English lessons are not frequent and varied enough

#### **Commentary**

65. Students' standards when they join the school, particularly in writing, are very low. Their attainment in national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2003 was well below average compared with all schools nationally. In 2004 results improved markedly. Standards seen confirm this improvement, especially in Year 9. Although most students speak confidently and read with growing understanding, the writing skills of all but the highest attaining are well below average. Results in GCSE English and English literature have been well below average, but improved markedly in 2004. While still below average, they represented very high achievement from standards at the end of Year 9. Standards seen reflect this improvement, but students' writing still lags behind their speaking, listening and reading.
66. Students' achievement is good by the end of Year 9. Progress is satisfactory in Years 7 and 8, where firm foundations for literacy are laid. Their progress accelerates in Years 9, 10 and 11. Boys achieved particularly well in Year 9 tests in 2004. At GCSE, girls perform better than boys. Achievement by high attaining students who are fulfilling their potential is very good. The achievement of students with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good. The biggest barrier to progress is absence from lessons.
67. Teaching and learning are good across the years with some examples of very good and excellent teaching. Where teaching is most effective the lessons are very well planned and structured. Teachers often start with a brief, lively activity that focuses the students' attention quickly and involves them all. Teachers employ an appropriate range of teaching styles that appeal to the students' differing needs and abilities. Visual stimuli are used effectively, particularly the interactive whiteboards which are used by both teachers and students to present and reinforce ideas. These enhance the learning of all, and especially students with special educational needs and those at early stages of learning English. All students are expected to participate and they are made to feel that their contributions are valued. The best lessons are challenging and enjoyable with teachers conveying infectious enthusiasm for the subject. A strong feature of the majority of lessons is the way that teachers share the learning objectives. They clearly explain how students can be successful, and involve students in evaluating one another to understand what progress they have made. Teachers also clearly demonstrate ways of reading, writing, planning and note-making. In the few lessons where learning is less satisfactory, mainly in Years 7 and 8, there are occasionally negative attitudes among some students, especially a reluctance to write. Sometimes the teacher is not aware enough of students' previous knowledge and understanding, the pace is slow and there is not enough planning to meet students' differing needs. In some lessons the class teacher would benefit from additional support.

68. The English curriculum is good: particular strengths include the support for the literacy development of low attaining students, the range of options in Years 10 and 11 and the opportunities for enrichment. An area for improvement is in the use of ICT in English. Although interactive whiteboards are used well, opportunities to use a range of applications have not been identified in schemes of work for each year. Curricular leadership is very good and management is good. The head of faculty is an excellent classroom practitioner and sets a high example. An appropriate development plan is based on a clear analysis of needs. The quality of teaching and learning is checked regularly and the tracking of students' progress is improving. He leads a strong team of mainly experienced specialist teachers.
69. Because standards are improving, there is a rising trend in examination results, and the quality of teaching and learning has been maintained: improvement since the last inspection is good.

### **Literacy across the curriculum**

70. Students' literacy and language skills are still well below average by Year 9 and below average in Year 11. Standards of writing are particularly weak. The school has a number of effective strategies to develop students' literacy including the use of literacy progress units and small reading groups. Most subjects reinforce the key vocabulary of their subject, but systematic planning for literacy development within different subjects varies and is not checked consistently. Support is good or very good in some subjects such as English, drama, design and technology, geography, history, media studies and religious education. In others opportunities for discussion, oral presentation and extended writing are limited and errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar are not corrected.

### **Modern foreign languages: French**

The provision of modern foreign languages is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very effective leadership is raising standards
- Well planned and sequenced lessons help students to achieve
- Teachers do not use spoken French often enough in lessons
- Not enough support is available with learning or language needs
- The curriculum is enriched because of staff commitment and teamwork

### **Commentary**

71. GCSE results in French have been well below the national average for a number of years, but results are improving. In 2004, there has been a tremendous improvement, with some students attaining the highest (A\*, A) grades and overall results are close to the national average in recent years. At the end of Year 9, teacher assessments of National Curriculum levels are well below average. Strategies are in place to remedy this. In lessons in Years 7 to 9, achievement is satisfactory and students are working in line with national expectations. Students understand spoken French and are able to pick out essential information for answers. While there is much emphasis on good pronunciation and whole class repetition is enjoyed, students are hesitant to communicate in French; teachers do not use spoken French often enough in lessons. Grammar is taught in context, with opportunities to practise and students are interested in how the language is structured. Well structured lessons and the use of learning objectives are beginning to raise standards. Worksheets, many produced by teachers, enable students of all abilities to progress. In Years 10 and 11 achievement is good.

Much emphasis is placed on examination techniques. Teachers have produced high quality revision booklets and worksheets to focus learning. These provide step-by-step stages to build up preparation for the oral and written examinations. The residential visit to France has enthused those who participated, although many students still lack the confidence to speak readily in French.

72. Teaching and learning are improving because of very effective leadership. Much of the teaching is good and some very good and excellent lessons were seen. For example, teaching in a Year 7 lower ability class was magical. It was breathtaking and enjoyable from start to finish. The tasks were a challenge and the excellent learning was driven by dynamic, enthusiastic teaching. Lessons are generally well planned so students learn systematically. Overall, learning is satisfactory among younger classes and good in Years 10 and 11. Rapport with the students is good and boys and girls participate fully. In the weaker lessons, behaviour by a minority impedes learning. Support is well used when available. Classes with large numbers of students with special educational needs or at an early stage of learning English do not always have enough classroom support. Curricular time is minimal in Years 7 to 9, and teachers give freely of their time in helping students. Relevant homework is set and marking is consistent with encouraging and diagnostic comments.
73. Leadership and management are good. Staffing is now stable after a period of problems. Where classes are shared there is lack of continuity. In a relatively short time the new curriculum leader has gained the respect of the students and raised the profile of French, so that language lessons are enjoyed and standards are rising. It is planned to introduce a second modern foreign language. Textbooks and resources have been purchased to suit all needs and schemes of work compiled but little use is made of ICT. Monitoring procedures are in place for teaching and marking. Teachers have regular curriculum meetings and leadership and management are having positive impact. Overall progress since the last inspection is satisfactory and standards have improved markedly in the last twelve months.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards are improving though they remain well below national expectations
- Students achieve very well at GCSE, relative to their attainment at the end of Year 9
- Data on student performance are good, but their use in monitoring needs improving
- Use of ICT is increasing but is still not enough
- The mental recall of basic arithmetic by many students is weak

### **Commentary**

74. The mathematics standards of students on entry to Year 7 have varied each year but many start from low or very low levels. Results of Year 9 national tests in 2004, while well below the national average represented satisfactory achievement because students' standards on entry had been low. GCSE results, while well below the national average, represented very good achievement in 2004 from the standards that year group of students had reached at the end of Year 9. Results are improving and in 2004 were much better than in 2003 when students' results in mathematics were lower than in their other subjects. The performance of boys tends to be better than that of girls but recently girls' results have improved significantly.
75. Work and lessons observed indicate improvement is continuing: standards were often below, rather than well below, average. More students are being trained for higher-tier mathematics

papers, and higher-attaining students are progressing more rapidly than others. Some lower-attainers receive very good support but teachers' awareness of the needs of all students who have special educational needs or English as an additional language is inconsistent, which benefits some more than others. Approaches to homework have improved, as has marking, but too often comments are more related to presentation (for example, inserting margins or underlining) than to providing help on how students can improve their mathematics. Where effective target-setting occurs it is helpful to students. Mental recall of many students is slow and inhibits their mathematical development. An extra-curricular course in statistics is again operating for students identified as gifted and talented.

76. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, though learning lags behind. A few lessons were very good. The three part lesson is used but reinforcement of material is inconsistent. Clear notes are often not supplied so, while a lesson aim may have been realised by the teacher, students have not recorded concrete evidence themselves and their learning is restricted. Overhead projector transparencies are often difficult to read. Question and answer sessions, while good with some teachers, are not focused well enough. Too often the assumption is made that because one student provides a correct answer, the whole class understands. In the better lessons there is good pace, a variety of activities, good awareness of individual needs, and patience and gentleness in dealing with difficulties that emerge, both learning and behavioural. Homework is rigorously set, and is recorded on charts in classrooms. In coursework investigations for GCSE more time is sometimes spent in seeking to improve presentation than in developing mathematical content. Many students are identified as needing support, which is provided on a scheduled programme. Teachers have Individual Education Plans for some of these students but limited account is taken in the teaching of such needs. Whole-class teaching predominates. Some students have disruptive tendencies and are well-controlled by some teachers, less so by others. Quality work is being done with a small group of very low-attaining students following an alternative curriculum.
77. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The department is forward-looking in terms of raising standards of higher attainers, including after-school sessions and mathematical challenges. More regard to the needs of middle-to-low attainers, especially in Years 7 to 9, is desirable to strengthen their basic skills and raise standards through higher expectations. Analysis of student performance is good, including by gender and ethnicity, but there is little evidence of implementation of strategies as a result of this analysis. Students are given target grades but relatively little advice on specific ways they can improve their work, so tracking and monitoring are only moderately effective. Interactive whiteboards are effectively used in some rooms, as are a set of laptop computers, but class management of these needs strengthening; overall use of ICT is inconsistent and only a little better than at the last inspection. Most mathematics rooms are spacious, but some furniture is poorly maintained. Rooms and corridors contain a good range of display material.
78. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Standards have improved but remain well below national expectations. Both the quality of teaching and students' listening skills are better. The collection of assessment data is good and now needs to focus on how improvements in learning can be made.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

79. With low arithmetic skills at entry many students beneficially cover transition units, but recall of number facts remains sketchy. Even by Year 9 a substantial proportion of students has difficulty, for instance, with addition of three-digit numbers unless using a calculator. Not enough emphasis is placed on mental arithmetic to raise standards. Many students are still repeating work on areas and perimeters in later years instead of moving forwards because firm understanding has not been grasped.

80. Numeracy is mentioned in the school's curriculum statement. New teachers are given advice, and student planners contain several useful pages of advice on numeracy. A successful joint project last summer between the mathematics and art departments led to much display material on patterns, tessellations and the printing of them. Graphical work in subjects is basic, rarely proceeding beyond bar, line and pie graphs and tally charts. Some good graphical work was seen in geography, and also in science, religious education and history. Overall, however, opportunities for the development of number skills are missed or avoided, and co-ordination of this area is unsatisfactory.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Recent GCSE results are much improved
- Achievement at the end of Year 9 and at GCSE in 2004 was good and very good, respectively
- Standards remain well below national averages despite recent improvements
- The organisation and use of resources, including ICT, are good
- The marking and assessment of students' work do not give enough guidance on how to improve
- The management of students' behaviour in some lessons is unsatisfactory

### Commentary

81. Results of Year 9 national tests in 2004, while well below the national average, represented good achievement relative to students' attainment in Year 7. The results are part of an improving trend over recent years, which is stronger than nationally. The attainment of students on entry in Year 7 has varied each year and has been weaker among older students. GCSE results improved considerably in 2004. While still well below the overall national average they also indicated well above average improvement across Years 10 and 11.
82. The standard of work seen in Years 7 to 9 was well below average, with some examples which were better than this, and progress in lessons was generally satisfactory. A wider range in the standard of work was seen in Years 10 and 11, from being very low to being in line with expectations, but was below average overall, and broadly comparable to recent GCSE results. However, progress observed in lessons was too frequently unsatisfactory in Years 10 and 11. Students' conceptual understanding is weak and some find it hard to apply their knowledge of basic scientific facts. Their learning has been interrupted by frequent changes in staff. While many students are willing learners, effective learning and achievement are hampered in some lessons through students' inappropriate attitudes and behaviour. Nonetheless, some students show satisfactory gains in understanding when applying knowledge to problems, experimental work and investigations. No significant difference was observed in achievement between boys and girls and different ethnic groups.
83. While teaching overall was satisfactory, it varied widely, with examples of good lessons and also poor practice seen. The generally satisfactory teaching does not account for the recent improvement in results. However, last year effective use was made of outside consultants to supplement teaching for some students and also for staff development. Good features were seen in lessons observed. Teachers generally state lesson objectives so students know what they are expected to learn. They demonstrate their good knowledge of the subject in effective lesson planning and handle students' misunderstandings confidently and sympathetically. The organisation and use of resources, including the use of ICT, are generally good. Experimental work is enjoyed by the students and used appropriately to develop the understanding of concepts, especially where literacy levels are below average. However, the setting of learning objectives is not matched well enough to the marking and assessment of students' work so they do not always know what they have to do to improve. Often planning does not take enough account of the full range of ability within classes. In most lessons the summary of key points does not adequately reinforce learning: this usually happens because the lesson has not been well timed.
84. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The faculty has suffered considerable turmoil in recent years in trying to stabilise its staffing and developing a sense of purpose. Although a lot of work has gone into reorganisation over the last year and standards are improving, issues remain to be tackled. Assessment information is used well to track the progress of

individual students and to set long-term grade targets but not for helping them to more immediate targets for improving knowledge and understanding. Assessment data are not used well enough in tracking the progress of different groups, including those students with special educational needs. Necessary policies are now mostly in place but accompanying strategies are not fully developed, for example, in promoting literacy and numeracy through science. The quality of teaching and learning is not adequately monitored at present. Improvement in the quality and standards since the last inspection is satisfactory. The head of faculty, recently appointed, has made significant improvements and laid the foundation for raising attainment and achievement further.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards of attainment are improving in all years and are now close to those nationally
- Good planning and use of a range of teaching styles help to raise standards for students of all abilities
- The turnover of teachers impedes progress in the subject
- Teachers are well qualified, committed to raising standards and are well led
- Lack of support by technicians and classroom assistants impedes progress in some lessons
- The use of ICT in other subjects is too limited and therefore unsatisfactory

### **Commentary**

85. Results in the 2003 GCSE examinations were better than in previous years, but were below average for all schools nationally. Provisional results for 2004 show a significant improvement, and are close to the national average in recent years. In the 2003 teacher assessments at the end of Year 9, results were below average, and in 2004 they were lower still, in part because the year group was of lower ability and also because of significant teacher shortages. Inspection evidence is that standards in Year 9 are in line to be close to those nationally by the end of the year. Students come into the school with limited previous experience of the subject; attainment at the end of Year 9 represents good achievement. The standard of work in Years 10 and 11 is now well in line with national expectations; achievement from Years 9 to 11 is satisfactory for all groups of students.
86. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall but range from unsatisfactory to good. The quality of teaching and learning tends to be better in Years 10 and 11 than with younger age groups, where poor behaviour by a few students distracts from their learning and the lesson. A strength of the teaching is planning for students of different ability and the range of teaching styles used, including presentation by teachers and tasks which require students to explain and evaluate their learning. Very full and detailed assessment has been carried out of the work done by Year 11 students on the analysis of database preparation, including helpful comments which give students clear guidelines to develop the next stage of their work. Teachers are committed, knowledgeable and work very hard to help students to be successful. Good use has been made of materials developed for Key Stage 3 and staff have also adapted some of these to ensure that they are suited to the needs of the students. Some classes where there are lower ability students do not have enough learning support.
87. The leadership and management of ICT are very good. The subject leader and his deputy work well together as a team and have created a good department handbook and scheme of work which support the continuity of students' learning in spite of frequent changes of staff. The lack of time given to the subject in Year 9 reduces the progress which students make.

While there is good technician support, this is not directly controlled by the head of faculty and, as a result, there is not enough in some classes.

88. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good. Standards have risen significantly both in examinations and work seen in classes. The quality of teaching and learning, and teaching materials, have much improved, as a result of the hard work of staff. The quality of the curriculum is now much better, and work is targeted effectively towards the ability of the students. Very good improvement has been made in the provision of hardware, although timetabling imposes constraints on its use in Years 10 and 11.

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

89. Students' competence in ICT is satisfactory, but its use across the curriculum is too patchy and thus unsatisfactory. It is used effectively by teachers as an aid for teaching, especially interactive whiteboards which are used well in many subjects by staff and students. Students make limited use of other applications; few examples were seen in work sampled by inspectors. Some exceptions occur, as in physical education and geography. Most departments have access to hardware either in departments or shared between areas but technical difficulties often mean that these resources are only used infrequently.

## **HUMANITIES**

### **Geography**

Provision in geography is **good**.

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

- Achievement is good overall because teaching and learning are good
- Teachers are specialists with good subject knowledge
- The subject contributes very well to students' personal development
- Use of ICT in learning is underdeveloped
- No fieldwork is provided for Years 8 and 9
- Good leadership and management have enabled good improvement since the last inspection

#### **Commentary**

90. Teacher assessment of the attainment of students at the end of Year 9 is below national expectations. While results of boys and girls are close, girls do a little better than boys. Bearing in mind the standards of students on entry in Year 7, which are low, students achieve well by the end of Year 9. GCSE results in 2003 were well below the national average but improved significantly in 2004 though they are likely still to be below average. Girls achieved better than boys. The recent results reflect continuing good achievement across Years 10 and 11. Results have improved over the last three years for all groups of students.
91. Work seen and lesson observations indicate that by the end of Year 9 standards are below national expectations. The students' ability to express ideas in written form is less well developed than oral presentation. Arrangements for teaching humanities subjects in Years 7 and 8 reduce the coverage of geography and thereby limit the acquisition of geographical knowledge and understanding. The students are introduced to topics of world-wide concern such as global warming and its impact on the environment. Moral and cultural issues are examined in the study of rainforest exploitation in Brazil and the changing way of life affected by tourism in different parts of the world. The geography of football increases the interest of boys, in particular. The standard of work produced by students at the end of Year 11 is below average. Students begin to understand the management of the urban environment through their investigation of the feasibility of housing development in Wrotham. They gather data and present in graphs and diagrams but the analytical aspect of the work is less well developed.

92. Most teaching observed was good or better. The good subject knowledge of the teachers is used effectively to develop the students' thinking skills. The incorporation of a variety of teaching and learning strategies is a strength of the department. The work is well planned with a range of activities matched to students' abilities. However gifted and talented students are not so well catered for as yet. A wide range of resources is well used to bring lessons to life, as for example, the video report on hurricane Isabel. The very good relationship with students creates a good atmosphere for learning and contributes to their desire to learn. Teachers make good use of multimedia presentations and other forms of information technology in their teaching.
93. Leadership and management are good. There is a clear vision for development with determination to raise standards. The department functions well with good planning, good provision of resources and very good support for students. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is carefully planned into the schemes of work and very effectively emphasised in lessons. Good improvements have been made since the last inspection. Standards of attainment have improved by the end of both Years 9 and 11. Schemes of work have been revised and two new units have been introduced. The geography of tourism and the geography of sport cater for the needs and interests of the students and are helping to improve boys' GCSE standards. New texts have been purchased for all year groups and assessment procedures have been put into place. Although ICT resources have been increased the absence of networking has hindered the use of computers in the classroom. While fieldwork is provided in Years 7 and 10 there are no opportunities in Years 8 and 9, but there are plans to increase provision. Assessment procedures are in place including analysis of data which are used effectively to set targets for each student.

## History

Provision in history is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The overall quality of teaching is good
- The achievement of most students, especially those of average and lower ability is good
- The ablest students in Years 7 to 9 are not always challenged to do better
- The attitudes of students to their learning are good
- The development of literacy skills in Years 7 to 9 is effective

### Commentary

94. In the 2003 GCSE examination, results were well below the national average. However, more recent results show considerable improvement, coinciding with the appointment of a new head of department and other key staff over the last two years. Performance is improving. Standards achieved by students on entry to the school are well below average. By the end of Year 9, the standard of work seen is barely in line with national norms, and the teacher assessments of most students are below those obtained nationally. However, this represents good achievement by students across Years 7 to 9. Average and lower ability students, including those with special educational needs, make particularly good progress. This is made possible by well-structured lessons, activities which are planned appropriately for students' different abilities and the strong focus on literacy skills. Students learn to use 'connecting words' (such as 'because') to give reasoned answers and good use is made of the interactive whiteboard highlighter facility to enable Year 9 students to 'censor' text in letters from battle front in World War I. The ablest students also do well, but not as well as might be expected. This is because they are rarely required to demonstrate higher-order reasoning, for example,

evaluation of sources. By the end of Year 11, the standard of work seen is more clearly in line with national expectations, which reflects good achievement and the success of literacy strategies. Students with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress; one Year 10 student, for example, was able to provide a detailed account of the effect of the fall of Rome on developments in medicine.

95. The quality of teaching and of learning is good throughout. Teaching is invariably well informed and innovative in terms of its concern to develop students' thinking and writing skills. For example, skilful use of the painting, *Gassed*, by John Sargent, allowed students of differing ability to make critical use of the same visual source and to identify changes in contemporary attitudes towards the First World War. Similarly, students in Year 11 made good use of a card sort to create three paragraphs for a short essay dealing with the effect of the Wall Street Crash on the German economy. Methods of assessment are satisfactory, but tasks need to focus more closely on how particular assessment objectives can be met.
96. The department is well led and managed. The dominant vision, of the head of subject and shared by all, is of inclusiveness – reflected in a determination to do the best possible for all students – and this is responsible more than anything else for the rapid improvements in standards that are being achieved at all levels. Management is informal and collaborative. Teamwork is strong, for example, in the sharing of resources and expertise. Planning is satisfactory, but the scheme of work needs to indicate more clearly how continuity and progression in history can be delivered in a modular humanities context. Overall improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory, assisted by recent very good improvement.

## Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students' achievement is good and they reach national standards in the short course GCSE
- Religious education contributes well to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Marking and assessments are inconsistent in Years 7 to 9
- The time allocated to the teaching of religious education is below recommendations
- Not enough links are established with local religious communities to enhance opportunities for students to deepen their understanding of world faiths and raise standards

## Commentary

97. Standards in Year 9 meet the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus and a small number of students exceed this, though their writing quality holds them back. Results in the GCSE religious studies short course taken in 2004 for the first time, and by most students, were in line with the national average and better than results in many other subjects. All students, including those with special educational needs, achieve well, throughout. Religious education contributes well to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, citizenship, literacy and numeracy skills. In lessons seen in Years 7 to 9 students gain a good understanding of beliefs, practices and insights of religions, though the low standard of their written work holds them back. Year 9 students appreciate and explain the different hand symbols, the mudras, of the Buddha. Some of the more able identify accurately the Buddhist words such as dana (charity), dhyana (meditation) and dharmachakraparivartana (turning the wheel of dharma). Students relate well to and are very interested in fundamental concepts such as good and evil. Standards of oral work are good. For example, Year 11 students discussed with each other the difference between natural and moral evil, analysed different points of view and prioritised what they agreed with most. The more able ones justified their own viewpoint. In the lesson the religious education specialist and the teacher supporting students learning English as an additional language worked in partnership to

enable all students to gain a deeper understanding of the difficult choices to be made, especially where there may be different religious perspectives.

98. The quality of teaching is good overall, though some very good as well as sound teaching was observed. High expectations of behaviour coupled with the teachers' good relationships with students are enabling students to learn and achieve well. In classes it was evident that the teachers try to develop the skills both of learning from and about religion in an effective way and they plan their lessons well based on approaches used nationally for Key Stage 3, with resources such as books, worksheets and videos to match. Good use is made of the interactive whiteboard. Though religious education contributes to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, not enough explicit links are made. Teachers help students to learn to respect the feelings and beliefs of each other and to have opportunities for personal development. An analysis of students' work shows that marking and assessments are not always consistent in Years 7 to 9, for example, some errors about non-Christian religions are not identified.
99. Leadership and management are good. The subject is taught mainly by experienced and specialist teachers and the scheme of work is closely linked with the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus. However literacy, numeracy and citizenship links are not sufficiently explicit. Since the last inspection there has been good improvement in provision for Years 7 to 11 and the short course in religious education is a success. However, less time is allocated to religious education in the main school, which restricts opportunities for links and visits to local religious communities.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

### **Design and technology**

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

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

- Design and technology is one of the best performing subjects in the school
- Planning for literacy and to meet the different abilities of students is very good
- Teachers are well qualified, they use a range of teaching styles and are committed to raising standards
- The management of the department is very good
- Not enough use is made of ICT in the department
- In Years 7 to 8, there is not enough emphasis on making in resistant materials and electronics

#### **Commentary**

100. In 2003 GCSE results continued a rising trend, but were below average for all schools nationally. Results for 2004 (not yet confirmed) show a significant improvement with over two thirds of those entered gaining higher grades (A\* - C). Design and technology is one of the best performing subjects in the school. In 2003 teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 were well above average, but they have dipped in 2004, to some extent as a result of teacher shortages. At the end of Year 9, standards in lessons are close to national expectations. The quality of work is similar in all of the specialist material areas. Students come into the school with very varied previous experience of the subject, many having done very little so students' achievement by the end of Year 9 is good among all groups. In a Year 9 resistant materials lesson students worked hard to develop their woodworking skills and concentrated well. Standards of work in Years 10 and 11 are close to national expectations. In all year groups there are a few students who show a negative attitude to the subject and

whose progress is impeded as a result. Overall achievement across Years 10 and 11 is good among all groups.

101. Teaching and learning are good overall; some is very good, with a greater amount of good teaching seen in Years 10 and 11. In a Year 11 food technology lesson very good teaching and learning was seen. Students had been set the task of taking apart a range of food products in order to see the type and quantities of the various ingredients. All worked very productively and concentrated well. Teachers use a wide range of different styles of teaching, and there is very good planning of work to suit the wide range of ability of the students. Many lessons include a range of different learning activities and these help students to learn effectively. Teachers have worked very hard to develop the use of technical words and writing frames, which have been very successful in helping to raise standards. In Years 7 to 9, some resistant materials and electronics units of work spend too much time on theory, at the expense of making. Not enough use is made of ICT, including computer-aided designing and making, and no use is made of computer control. The range of materials used in resistant materials is limited and this restricts students' knowledge.
102. Leadership and management are very good. Teachers are well qualified, hardworking and work well as a team. Systems for planning and assessing students' work are good and effective. Although planning is good overall, more emphasis could be given to open-ended designing and making in resistant materials. Progress in meeting the points made at the last inspection has been good. Standards and students' progress have improved as has the quality of teaching and learning; there is now no unsatisfactory teaching. Results in resistant materials and graphics are now much better. Lesson planning has much improved as has the planning of work to meet the varying needs of the students. The food and textiles rooms are adequate but those used for resistant materials and graphics are shabby and in urgent need of upgrading to meet current requirements. There are not enough workshops to meet curriculum demand. The amount of technician help for food and textiles is inadequate and impedes progress in some lessons.

## **VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS**

Art, music, drama and dance were inspected in detail. Media studies was sampled and teaching and learning were very good. GCSE results and standards are above the national average.

### **Art**

Provision in art is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- GCSE examination results are improving significantly
- The quality of teaching is good
- The achievement of students of all abilities is good.
- Teacher assessments carried out in Year 9 are unreliable
- Not enough use is made of ICT

### **Commentary**

103. Standards at the end of Year 9 are below those nationally, with boys and girls performing equally well. In GCSE examinations, results have improved significantly over the last few years but are still below the national average. Although boys are not doing as well as girls at GCSE, the gap is similar to that found nationally. The achievement of students of all abilities is good as a result of teaching that uses different levels of work to meet the individual needs of students and regular individual support. The classroom assistant attached to some groups provides effective support for targeted students. Work seen in Year 9 indicates that standards

are just below the national average. General standards of drawing, however, are in line with the national average: students use their knowledge of tone, texture and colour to produce effective pieces of finished artwork. Work seen in Year 11 shows that standards have continued to improve. Drawing, particularly from observation, is good. Students also gain artistic skill in a wide variety of media and use sketchbooks well. They carry out in-depth research into the work of other artists. Finished artwork shows a high level of individuality and personal expression. However, students are not gaining enough experience of using ICT for creative purposes, although many use the Internet for research and collecting visual material relevant to their classroom work. Students' ability to discuss and evaluate their work is hampered by having a limited art vocabulary.

104. The quality of teaching is good. No lesson was judged to be less than satisfactory with some very good teaching seen. All lessons have clear objectives, structure and variety of activity, and are taught with enthusiasm and energy. Teachers have good subject knowledge and generally communicate well so students understand what is expected. The working atmosphere is good. Resources are well prepared. In some lessons, however, less able students were unclear of what they were expected to do. On occasion their attention drifted which led to inappropriate behaviour and noise levels rose. These lessons were too reliant on verbal instruction and would have benefited from more teacher demonstration and additional printed resources.
105. Leadership and management are good. The head of subject is hardworking and committed to doing her best for the students with whom she has a high regard and affinity. She knows how she would like to improve overall provision and these ambitions are clearly articulated in well-produced action plans. The department is also aware of whole school priorities and is making a significant contribution to improving levels of literacy but some lessons miss opportunities to enhance numeracy. Carefully planned schemes of work ensure good coverage of the National Curriculum. Teacher assessments in Year 9, however, are not based on accurate assessment criteria. Developments in the vocational curriculum are providing opportunities for a greater range of students. The quality of teaching is monitored regularly. The subject helpfully contributes to and benefits from teacher training. Students benefit from enrichment classes after school, interaction with practising artist and regular visits to the major London art galleries. Improvement since last inspection has been good, with improvements in standards, results and the quality of teaching and learning.

## **Music**

Provision in music is **poor**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards and results are too low
- In too many lessons teaching is ineffective and students gain little benefit
- Leadership and management have failed to halt decline in standards
- Many students are enthusiastic about music and would like to do well in this subject
- Over 100 students have the opportunity to take instrumental lessons
- Very few opportunities are provided for extra-curricular activities

### **Commentary**

106. Standards are very low and many students make little or no progress as they move through the school. Although students who enter the school with obvious musical talent are able to sing tunefully, expressively and with enjoyment, achievement is well below average, overall. Many gain little benefit from their music lessons. A Year 11 GCSE student could not recall the name of a single composer of music. A younger boy who had attended 30 guitar lessons over two years could not play a simple A major chord. Year 9 students were unfamiliar with simple

musical terms. None of the students taking instrumental lessons had progressed beyond beginner or near-beginner level.

107. GCSE examination results in 2004 are lower than in 2003, when they were poor in comparison with national averages. Results are very low in comparison with individual students' predicted grades and in comparison with their results in other subjects. The proportion achieving a high grade (A\*-C) is far below the school's Arts College target (58%) for music. Achievement is well below average.
108. The students' low achievement is a consequence of unsatisfactory teaching and learning. Far too often, teachers fail to engage and make an impact upon students. Lessons are poorly planned, learning objectives are vague, tasks lack challenge or are ill-judged, work is not marked and some teachers do not radiate a sense of firm, musically confident classroom presence. As a result, students do not approach lessons with appropriate seriousness, their behaviour can be trying and their expectations of themselves are low. Year 11 students remarked that many do not regard music as a serious subject, hoping simply to "have fun" without any real commitment to learning.
109. Not all students underachieve, however. Where there is stronger, more determined teaching, students respond well and achieve some striking successes. A Year 7 class gave a zesty, bright rendition of "Consider yourself", inspired by the infectious enthusiasm and high expectations of a recently qualified teacher. Two Year 9 boys composed and performed a particularly fluent and well-constructed 12-tone note-row during a lesson focusing on the atonal musical language of *Pierrot Lunaire*. For these students, their music lessons were transforming, offering them insights into a new world of possibilities and introducing them to previously unrecognised capabilities.
110. The department is in crisis. While there is awareness of the need for improvement there is no clear view of the way ahead. Leadership and management are very poor, have failed to halt the decline and to make significant impact upon most students' musical development.

## **Drama**

Provision in drama is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Leadership and management are very good: standards in drama are among the best in the school
- Very good teaching inspires students and challenges them effectively, they achieve very well
- In 2004, results in GCSE higher grades improved
- Assessment is used both to inform and motivate students, especially in Year 11
- Weaknesses in writing constrain the attainment of some students

### **Commentary**

111. Standards are above average by Year 11, and achievement is very good. Many Year 7 students have limited writing skills and little experience of drama. By the end of Year 9, they have above average performance skills and their written work, such as scripting and evaluation, is broadly in line with expectations: they have achieved very well. GCSE results have been about average for some years but rose in 2004. The proportion of the very highest grades (A\*, A) is average.
112. The quality of teaching motivates Year 11 students and their attendance is therefore very regular. The schemes of work introduce all students to the essential techniques within an

imaginative and appealing framework, for example, low attaining Year 7 students enjoyed and succeeded in acting as toys in a toyshop display. Both students with special educational needs and those beginning to speak English participated fully. Students learn technical terms in every lesson. Gifted and talented students from Years 8 to 11 produced an effective video of Hamlet. By the end of Year 9, students are well grounded in response and development, performance and collaboration that form the basis of assessment. Students build on this foundation in Years 10 and 11 where the texts and ideas studied are much more demanding. Teachers continue to check their understanding of words such as *heresy* so all can respond. Teachers explain clearly how marks are awarded so students know what to do to improve. Students evaluate their work well in discussion, but some find this hard in writing. Learning is effectively extended through homework in all years.

113. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. From the first lesson, teachers create a purposeful atmosphere and students react by concentrating and co-operating. Students learn independently through their own research and decisions and in Year 9 can create a whole class tableau without direction from the teacher. Students know that they are regularly assessed and in Year 11 benefit from seeing their marks in the studio.
114. Leadership and management are very good. Students enjoy their lessons and achieve better in drama than in any of their other subjects. The head of department, helped by stable staffing, has developed a hardworking and effective team. Team teaching is a regular feature of Year 11; the larger class widens the opportunities available. Relationships with the students are very good. There are many extra-curricular activities and the Arts College status has increased them further. These often include collaboration with other schools and participation in festivals. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. High standards have been maintained and the quality of teaching and learning has improved.

## Dance

Provision in dance is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching leads to students' very good achievement in practical work
- Theoretical aspects are not taught in sufficient depth.

### Commentary

115. Students can choose to follow a GCSE course in dance in Years 10 and 11. Results have taken a significant dip since the last inspection but are now on a rising trend and, while still below the national average, students often attain better grades than in their other subjects. Overall, achievement is satisfactory but strengths in practical work are not matched by theoretical understanding, which is below average.
116. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The teachers from the performing arts faculty have devised an effective range of supportive strategies that have enabled some girls to achieve exceptionally well in practical work. They gel as a group, are supportive of each other and strive for their best performance. They dance with flair, showing a range of different dynamics and are sensitive to change of feeling and mood with each other in their dances. They are able to use video of their performance to highlight points to improve. They receive and give constructive criticism well. The weakness is in their theoretical knowledge. Notes are not completed in sufficient depth and they lack the confidence to use technical language when writing. Low literacy levels hinder students' ability to answer questions accurately. The structure of this part of the course is not well organised. Assessment data are not used

accurately enough to set targets effectively. Students' knowledge of dance analysis is better than composition and anatomical aspects.

117. Leadership and management of dance, while satisfactory, have not ensured theory is taught with sufficient rigour. Arts College status is having a positive impact in creating a stimulating environment. The new mirrored dance studio, video and audio equipment are assets and the students enjoy working in this environment. Many respond to opportunities in dance much more positively than in their other subjects. Overall improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching methods for developing skills to the final activity are good
- Assessment is not used well enough to raise standards
- Too little lesson time is allowed for students on the GCSE course

### **Commentary**

118. GCSE results have fluctuated since the last inspection. Results in 2003 were well below the national average and students did not achieve well. In 2004 results improved, and while still low they were in line with the school average. Students achieved as well as in their other subjects. Students' standards on entry in Year 7 are below those nationally. By Year 9 they are broadly average and achieving well, overall. However, a significant number of girls are below the national average, but this is not shown in teacher assessments, which place girls higher than the boys. In tennis, girls are achieving well relative to their ability. Although still below the national average, they are able to rally using backhand and forehand strokes. The boys have good ball skills and are able to adapt their play to attacking and defending situations. Students with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily. While teachers mostly know which students need help, they are not always aware of their specific needs. The use of demonstration and careful explanation often ensures that they make the same progress as their peers.
119. In Years 10 and 11, all students follow a core course in physical education and some opt to take GCSE. However, GCSE is taught at the same time as core lessons which means that GCSE students are not able to have access to their normal physical education, and they miss learning opportunities. No core lessons were observed during the inspection and it is not possible to reach a judgement on standards. On the GCSE course standards are below average in theoretical aspects but average in practical performance. Students are achieving satisfactorily relative to the time given to the course but underachieving relative to their ability. The highest-attaining students are confident in their use of technical vocabulary and their coursework is of average standard. They use number well to record their results and measure performance, and make good use of computers to present their work. In practical work, students have average trampolining skills but lack the confidence to coach each other using technical vocabulary. Teachers use predicted grades well in Year 11 but not before this point.
120. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the best lessons students work well to refine their skills and evaluate their own performance. This is followed up well in core lessons by setting targets in the students' planners. Assessment is well focused on recording students' standards but is not used effectively to highlight and identify different groups of students and how well they are achieving relative to their peers. Teachers logically sequence tasks to the final

activity and there is good use of question and answer to consolidate knowledge, as well as digital photography and video to analyse performance. In some lessons a minority of students is not self-disciplined, and underachieve. Further support and strategies to maintain the expected code of conduct are needed in these lessons. Opportunities are lost to reinforce theoretical aspects in GCSE practical lessons.

121. Leadership and management are satisfactory with strengths in leadership. Satisfactory progress has been maintained since the last inspection. The curriculum is better balanced giving students more opportunities to participate in gymnastics and dance. They now follow a course in the Junior Sports Leaders Award and progress accelerates at a steady rate from Year 7 to 9. GCSE results have fluctuated. Health related fitness education factors are not sufficiently integrated into lessons.

## **BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES**

### **Business studies**

Provision in business studies is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Much teaching is good: teachers have good relationships with students
- Most students have good attitudes to work and behave well
- ICT is not used enough in lessons, as computers are not readily available in some classrooms
- Links with local business and industry are not developed well enough

## Commentary

122. Students' GCSE examination grades in 2003 were slightly below the national average. Most students achieved satisfactorily in relation to their attainment at the start of Year 10. The attainment of girls and boys was similar. In 2004, however, while boys' results matched those of 2003 and they achieved satisfactorily, girls' results were significantly lower, mainly due to a group of disaffected girls whose progress was unsatisfactory. In lessons and work seen, standards of attainment met national expectations, and girls and boys achieved satisfactorily overall. Girls' achievement has improved, and matches that of boys. Year 10 students are beginning to understand essential differences between sole traders and partnerships. Year 11 students clearly understood the purpose of financial ratios, and applied them effectively to calculate firms' profitability. In coursework projects, students use ICT effectively to draw graphs based on market research questionnaires on new business proposals. Most find it difficult to interpret break-even graphs studied. Students from different ethnic groups mix well, and show good attitudes overall. Some lose concentration when tasks are not related to real businesses, and some disruptive behaviour occurs, which interrupts learning and lowers the standard of written work and homework.
123. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, with several good features. In sampled lessons, teachers had good relationships with students, and their good subject expertise helped students, including those at an early stage of learning English, to understand business concepts such as fixed costs. Homework is set fairly regularly but not enough tasks are given to higher-attaining students to develop their written evaluative skills. Teachers do not always match tasks to the needs of individual students and this, combined with the unsuitable nature of some rooms used for lessons, sometimes leads to disruptive behaviour. Students' work is usually marked consistently, so students know how they are progressing. Not enough computers are readily available in some lessons, which holds back students' understanding of some business concepts, and the development of literacy.
124. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Schemes of work are good, and the faculty plans to develop links with local businesses, which are currently insufficient. The subject, not inspected previously, has a good capacity to develop further, given some better accommodation and availability of ICT.

## PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

125. Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is taught through separately timetabled lessons and augmented by topics covered in early morning form times and assemblies, which were all sampled during the inspection. Citizenship is covered, in part, in PSHE lessons.
126. A weekly personal, social and health education (PSHE) lesson is provided for all students, supplemented by early morning form-times. The quality of teaching varies, because all form tutors are involved. Overall the teaching and learning seen in PSHE lessons was good but in a few students' discussion was curtailed because teachers lacked the knowledge or skills to pursue topics. Provision is satisfactory, standards and achievement are in line with expectations. Students participate well in activities which enable them to consider issues and form a view. In general, younger students are more open-minded than those who are older but older students readily state their views and are prepared to discuss if the teachers frame questions appropriately. A suitable range of topics is covered and requirements in health, sex and drugs education are met. Provision in early morning form time is much more variable in quality. Generally younger students are usefully engaged in reading or review of activities. In form times sampled in older years students' planners were checked but too often, except for registration, little use was made of the time. Leadership and management arrangements for PSHE are satisfactory, but not enough thought has been given to the use of this time to provide citizenship systematically for all students.



## Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **unsatisfactory** overall, notwithstanding some very good features.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Opportunities for some students to participate and take responsible action are very good
- The Year 7 Travel Plan module is excellent
- The school's formal curricular provision for citizenship is emergent and does not at present meet National Curriculum requirements

### Commentary

127. Although the ethos of the school embraces the values of citizenship and the school is successfully and impressively welcoming to all, curricular provision for citizenship is patchy at present. The school has yet to develop, for all students, a clearly defined programme of citizenship knowledge and skills. Students' progress is not formally assessed. The weekly citizenship lesson is subsumed, with a degree of confusion, with personal, social and health education and taught by form tutors, and the quality of teaching is too variable, from excellent to unsatisfactory. There is therefore a high level of inconsistency in provision; some students are receiving parts, at least, of an excellent citizenship education, achieving well and attaining high standards, but others are not, and this is not satisfactory.

128. The excellent Year 7 Travel Plan module is into its third year and has already brought about improvements to the quality of life of the school community. Working with Greenwich Council and other local agencies, and with the enthusiastic leadership of an assistant headteacher and the support of the school council, Year 7 students have made several significant changes to the school environment and drawn up a five-point action plan for further improvements.

### Example of outstanding practice

**Students respond very well to opportunities to make improvements in the school environment.** Students were preparing a persuasive letter to the local council on safety hazards in the area outside the school. They used the interactive whiteboard to record their findings from the previous week and were then encouraged to rehearse their arguments using appropriate language and expression while being filmed. Every individual student participated including students at an early stage of learning English. By chance they were given an ideal opportunity to put their skills of communication into operation when a group of visiting parents joined the lesson. One parent asked whether the students thought it fair that she had received a parking ticket for parking outside the school. Politely but forcefully the students argued precisely why they thought such parking was a hazard and why the ticket was justified.

129. Other promising initiatives include the introduction of the Year 11 monitor programme, the training of certain students in Years 8 to 11 as peer mentor-listeners and the development of a school council process that is intended to involve all students. In planned citizenship activities, standards were in line with expectations and achievement at least satisfactory.

130. Leadership of citizenship by senior staff is very good; they have nurtured the ideals and principles by which the subject could flourish, and they have modelled excellent practice in their own work at the school. As yet, though, the subject has not flourished because of weaknesses in management and inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. The newly appointed citizenship co-ordinator has recognised the need to build on the existing strengths in the school, to formalise the curriculum both in discrete citizenship lessons and in other

subjects and extra-curricular activities, and to monitor its delivery in order to ensure that every student receives his or her entitlement.

## SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM

In the inspection, 15 subjects and courses were inspected and are reported on in detail. Work in other subjects and courses was sampled and contributed to the overall picture of teaching and learning in the school.

The table below shows entry and performance information for courses completed by Year 13 (and Year 14 students retaking examinations) in 2003, the latest year for which results are available nationally

### *Level 3 GCE AS level courses*

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Art and design	6	68	80	0	24	20	30
Biology	1	0	65	0	11	0	21
Chemistry	1	100	73	0	14	30	24
Communication studies	6	33	86	0	24	10	32
Drama	1	100	87	100	20	50	31
English	1	0	83	0	18	0	29
English literature	5	80	86	0	19	20	30
General studies	10	20	74	10	18	8	26
History	2	0	81	0	20	0	29
Mathematics	8	38	62	0	17	10	22
Other languages	12	83	83	50	43	41	36
Other social studies	4	75	70	25	24	28	24
Sociology	2	100	72	0	18	30	25

subjects, in different courses and by different groups of students such as ability, culture, gender.

### *Level 3 GCE A level and VCE courses*

Subject	Number entered	% gaining grades A-E		% gaining grades A-B		Average point score	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Art and design	6	100	99	17	50	77	86
Communication studies	6	100	99	0	38	67	82
English literature	6	100	100	17	47	63	87
Information technology	8	88	96	13	25	50	70
Mathematics	1	100	97	100	56	120	89
Physics	1	100	97	100	45	100	82
Sociology	3	100	98	33	44	87	84
Business	16	94	65	0	15	65	60
Performing arts	1	0	87	0	42	0	78
Leisure and tourism	6	100	63	0	10	70	56

### ***Level 2 vocational qualifications***

Qualification	No in final year	% gaining qualification		% gaining merit		% gaining distinction	
		School	England	School	England	School	England
Business	9	56	NA	22	NA	0	NA
Health and social care	8	87	NA	38	NA	0	NA
Performing arts	6	83	NA	0	NA	0	NA
Leisure and tourism	8	25	NA	25	NA	0	NA

### **ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION**

English literature is provided at AS and A2-levels and was inspected in detail. A range of English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL) classes is also provided and separately was inspected in detail. In some years French is provided but none was available at the inspection. Recent results, for small numbers of students, have been in line with the national average.

#### **English**

Provision in English is **very good**.

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

- Standards in AS and A2-level English literature are improving
- Very good teaching is leading to very good learning
- Student achievement is good

#### **Commentary**

131. Standards in AS and A2-level English literature are average. Results vary from year to year and in some years very few students have entered. In 2002 and 2003, results were well below the national average. In 2004 there was a marked improvement and attainment at A2-level was close to recent national averages while attainment at AS-level was better than this. Standards seen bear out this improvement. Student achievement based on prior attainment is good; students with English as an additional language achieve very well. Male and female students achieve equally well.
132. Teaching and learning are very good. Teaching is challenging, and students learn to take responsibility for their own learning, prepare and present their ideas to the rest of the group. Lessons are tightly structured, purposeful and move at a demanding pace when appropriate. Tasks are closely related to examination assessment objectives and all students are invited to evaluate their own progress against clear criteria. Teachers effectively demonstrate note-making and how to read critically highlighting quotations and references to support judgements. Students respond well to challenge and they are given good guidance on how to improve, receiving individual tuition when necessary.
133. Leadership and management of the sixth form courses are good. The curriculum caters for a wide range of student choices and need. There are good opportunities for students to widen their learning and appreciation beyond lessons through visits to workshops, theatre performances and lectures. Students feel that they would also benefit from an increase in the number of books available to them in the departmental library for reading around the subject. Improvement since the last inspection is good.

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

134. Students' literacy and language skills are average in the sixth form among students on advanced level courses . Discussion and oral presentation skills are well developed; accuracy of writing less so. Most teachers support and develop students' writing skills well but, in some subjects, errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar are not corrected. Students with continuing literacy needs and students with English as an additional language are very well supported in key skills (communication) lessons where they achieve well.

## **English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL) courses**

Provision in ESOL is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teaching is good overall with some being very effective
- Pass rates in the ESOL examinations are high
- Leadership is very good
- Guidance and support are strong and retention rates are good
- Writing skills are lower than reading which is also lower than speaking and listening

### **Commentary**

135. Since the last inspection this innovative provision has expanded because the school has responded to local community needs. Students who wish to continue, but have English language needs because they speak other languages, are supported and gain accreditation through external examinations, as well as access to mainstream courses.
136. Most students achieve well over the duration of the courses and standards obtained in external examinations are above average. Male and female students perform equally well, though the females tend to have the edge in learning in some of the classes observed. Students join in classroom activities, work in a focused manner and usually make good progress. Standards seen were in line with expectations for students at early stages of their courses. More advanced students have a sound grasp of language structures and a wide vocabulary. In a lesson observed, they demonstrated that they listen well to taped conversations, and use simple past tense and phrases to express time accurately. In the beginners' class, they sequenced well the weekly activities of a school girl. However, students' written work varies in quality, whereas their oral skills are improving fast. Teachers work hard at fostering study skills systematically but students sometimes find organisation of their own learning difficult.
137. Teaching and learning are good overall and some lessons observed were very good. Students enjoy the well planned and varied activities and progress well. Assessment is ongoing and good. Students have very good support with their learning as well as with personal, financial and other difficulties. Good resources and accommodation provide a welcoming and conducive environment for enhancing learning.
138. Leadership is very good and both full and part-time staff work very well as a team in planning, evaluating and sharing good practice. Management is good, including collaboration with the support services and other agencies to improve learning opportunities. Enrichment activities are a strength, including drama workshops with the Greenwich Young People's Theatre and making of a video 'Birthday Boy'.

## MATHEMATICS

The inspection covered A2 and AS-level courses in mathematics, and modules of further mathematics. Key skills provision and mathematics for ESOL students were also sampled. Teaching in the key skills course was satisfactory, but attendance was unsatisfactory, detracting from students' learning. However, very effective work is done with students in the ESOL course, strengthening their command of English, of mathematical words and of basic arithmetic. Good provision is made for students retaking GCSE.

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement on advanced level courses is good
- On occasion not enough attention is given to the difficulties individual students find with mathematics
- A wide range of courses is available to cater for different abilities
- More students are pursuing both A2 and AS-level courses this year

### Commentary

139. Results in A-level examinations, while below national averages in some years, represent good achievement relative to students' GCSE grades. Nearly all students pass, some with the highest grades (A, B). Attainment in pure mathematics is better than in mechanics and statistics. Work seen indicates sound standards, with the more enthusiastic and diligent students capable of reaching higher grades. Some students repeat years to improve grades, or to proceed to A2-level having progressed from moderate GCSE grades, and support is provided beyond lessons.
140. Teaching and learning are good. On both A2 and AS-level courses there are more students this year, and two students are also taking modules in further mathematics. Teaching is knowledgeable and proceeds at a good pace. However, there is inadequate appreciation of students' individual needs and teaching tends to be directed at the more involved and vocal students. Students in Year 12 show capability in determining the mean of a grouped distribution but their work on cumulative frequency reveals errors in understanding; they cope with initial work on surds but find development difficult; a wide range of both skill and weakness is evident in factorising quadratic equations. Year 13 students can successfully expand binomial series and sketch curves of  $\sec x$  and  $\operatorname{cosec} x$ . AS-level decision mathematics for the further mathematicians is being taught at speed and the students are coping well.
141. Leadership and management are good. The range of courses offered has increased, with determination to raise the profile of post-16 mathematics. Improvement since the last inspection is good. Competing demands to be managed include the development of further mathematics and of fast-tracking some students towards advanced courses, versus raising standards lower down the school.

### Mathematics across the curriculum

142. Students' competence in mathematics is adequate to cover their work in other subjects, and receives support through the teaching material used in lessons. Students can calculate body mass index in health and social care, convert between binary and decimal in ICT and apply to logical operations, deal with budgeting and with supply and demand relationships in business education, and appreciate tolerance and precision in engineering. Graphical work is satisfactory and evident in several areas. More advanced work using chi-squared testing was seen in biology for analysis of feeding visits by birds to sites.



## SCIENCE

A2 and AS-level courses are provided in biology and were inspected in detail. This year AS-level chemistry is provided and was sampled. Teaching and learning were good with standards in line with expectations at this stage of the course. While few students have taken A-level chemistry examinations in recent years, results have been broadly average.

### Biology

Provision in biology is **satisfactory**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers use their subject knowledge well: the teaching is good
- The students' application enhances their achievement
- Assessment and marking do not give enough guidance to students on how to improve

#### Commentary

143. Results of recent A2 and AS-level examinations have either been low or so few students have taken the examinations that valid comparisons cannot be made. The school's entry policy for the AS-level course allows students of widely differing abilities to start the course and their results reflect reasonable achievement. No trend is discernible in results. Similarly, achievement of students taking the A2-level course at this stage of the term is satisfactory, relative to their well-below average results at AS-level in 2004. The work seen in Year 12 shows standards to be below expectations at this stage of the course. In a lesson on biological molecules students had difficulty in recalling earlier work but once aware of the relevant facts most could apply them successfully to some of the complexities of the DNA molecule. The students report finding the chemistry element in the course more difficult than others because relatively little is included in their GCSE course. They do not yet have enough knowledge and understanding of some essential concepts. Progress in lessons, however, is satisfactory. In Year 13 the standard of work remains below average overall but students were working at expected levels in a lesson on statistical methods applied to biology. Students are well motivated and work hard in researching and compiling notes in their own time but in lessons they rely too heavily on the teachers' instruction. They enquire too little and pose few questions, particularly in Year 12.
144. Teaching and learning are good, but teaching strategies do not fully encompass the range of ability in Year 12. Teachers demonstrate their expertise in the subject by the detailed information and explanation given on each topic which at times overloads students. Limited use is made of practical investigations. However, when a variety of techniques is used, including ICT and practical tasks, then learning is reinforced and progress is good. Year 13 students are more confident and participate well in class discussion. In Year 13 effective learning took place through a mixture of instruction, going through worked examples and then applying the concepts to new situations. Regular assessment, including marking and the checking of files, as a means of guiding students in the short-term is not used effectively enough in setting targets for improvement.
145. Leadership and management are satisfactory. Neither of the two teachers teaching biology has specific responsibility for the subject as a whole which is in the science faculty. Nonetheless the teachers work closely together to review and evaluate their work for future planning. The assessment data-base is not sufficiently rigorous for tracking and analysing students' progress. Biology was not reported separately at the last inspection so no comparison can be made.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

A variety of computer-based courses meets needs of all students, particularly those who are learning to speak English as an additional language. The main focus of the inspection was on vocational courses at foundation, intermediate and advanced levels but other courses, including computer studies at AS and A2-levels, were also sampled.

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good and often very good teaching helps students to develop very good attitudes to work and to achieve well
- A good choice of courses is provided at various levels and they are well managed
- Students have a good grasp of basic theory and generally apply it effectively
- Standards are below average overall, and several students do not complete courses they start, particularly GNVQ

### Commentary

146. Standards overall are below the national average but most students achieve well when results are related to their performance at GCSE. In 2003, the eight students taking computer studies at AS and A2-levels attained well-below average grades, but their achievement was satisfactory. In 2004, results improved and students achieved well. In the first advanced vocational examination in 2003, results for the 13 students completing the course were below average overall, with no high A or B grades; these students achieved well relative to their earlier GCSE results. In 2004, foundation-level students, most of whom were learning to speak English, obtained significantly better results than in 2003, with several achieving very well from very low starting points at the end of Year 11. In lessons and work seen, students were achieving well at this early stage of the school year. Standards are near expected levels on all courses inspected. Year 12 students on the advanced vocational course produced a teacher's mark-book using spreadsheet functions effectively to assign macros. Foundation-level students, most of whom were learning to speak English, found the language of business documents difficult, but made good progress. Year 13 computer studies students consolidated their understanding of binary functions well and made a good start on assembly code, absorbing several complicated new concepts well. Students' written notes and evaluations on all courses were well below average, but good improvement occurred when literacy skills were addressed in lessons.
147. Teaching and learning are good overall, with some very good features. In all of the sampled lessons, teachers' very good subject expertise helped to reinforce theory rapidly, for example, on assembly code and spreadsheet design, and helped students to learn and apply routines appropriately. Teachers planned lessons well, assessed coursework projects thoroughly, and encouraged students to feed back ideas in lessons. Teachers made homework deadlines very clear, and monitored individual's progress regularly, setting students useful project targets. Students were very well motivated because they knew exactly what they had achieved and how they could improve. On lower-level courses, several students do not attend regularly enough, despite the school's efforts, and too many drop out of courses early.
148. Information technology lessons are well led and managed. Students can choose from a wide range of courses to suit their needs, although this makes some courses with small numbers uneconomical. The committed teaching team has clear vision and sensible plans for improvement, including more links with local businesses. A computerised record of students' progress is used to monitor achievement well. It is not possible to gauge improvement since

the last inspection because the subject was not reported then, but it has good potential for further improvement.

### **Information and communication technology (ICT) across the curriculum**

149. ICT is used competently by students in some, but not all, sixth form subjects though mostly for homework research from the Internet and presenting coursework. Most students have gained an ICT qualification in Year 10 or 11. Students make good use of ICT in business, but do not have enough planned opportunities in most subjects to use the full range of software, including spreadsheets, to analyse data. In a few instances, for example in health and social care, students are not encouraged enough to use word processing equipment and spell-check facilities to enhance the accuracy of their work. ICT resources are not always easily available in some subjects.

## **HUMANITIES**

A-level geography, history, sociology and politics are provided. History and sociology were inspected in detail. In a politics lesson visited students were learning well; no recent results are available. A-level courses in geography were not sampled; recent results have been broadly in line with those nationally.

### **History**

Provision in history is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Well-informed teaching challenges students of different abilities and develops their capacity to take responsibility for their own learning
- Students' ability to make critical use of source material and to produce well structured essays is developed well
- Students' written work does not show enough development of higher-level skills.

### **Commentary**

150. Standards achieved in external examinations have been uneven but the current trend is clearly upward. The subject is in the process of recovery from the low point of 2003 inherited by the current head of department. Recent results, while below the national average, show that students achieve well relative to their GCSE scores, and gain moderate pass grades. Standards seen in Years 12 and 13 are broadly in line with national expectations and all students make good progress. Students in both year groups produce well-structured essays. These show clear understanding of paragraph construction as a means of developing an argument but fail to reach higher order levels of analysis – for example, students are unable to demonstrate the relative importance of causal factors in an explanation. Similarly, students can make sound, critical use of source material but do not always consider contextual factors when doing so.
151. Teaching and learning are good. Teaching is well informed, innovative and provocative. For example, one teacher uses examples of British policy towards Germany in the 1920s to enable a Year 13 student to question interpretations of so-called Appeasement in the 1930s; another used a card sort to enable Year 12 students to identify first and then explain successive federal government policies towards Native Americans in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. In feedback from this group activity, students expressed their views with confidence, drawing upon sound contextual knowledge.

152. The subject is well led and well managed. The decision to change the A-level syllabus two years ago, opting for one that would allow all three teachers to teach to their strengths, has made a major contribution to improvement in results. The quality of management can be seen in the strong team-working ethos that pervades this and other areas of the work of the department. Very good improvement has been made since the last inspection.

## **Sociology**

Provision in sociology is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Assessment is well used to help students improve
- Relationships are excellent, giving students the confidence to express freely their opinions
- Students enjoy their learning but activities do not always challenge the more able students
- Independent learning and students' ownership of their own learning are not emphasised enough

### **Commentary**

153. Results are broadly in line with the national average; students achieve well, they always meet and often exceed their target grades. In 2004 AS and A2-level examinations a reasonable proportion of students achieved the highest (A, B) grades. However, because sociology is a conceptual subject, the limited literacy skills of some impact on the standards they reach because they find it difficult to express ideas in writing. Standards are rising. In Year 12, students are already beginning to demonstrate a secure understanding of key sociological terms and concepts and an understanding of how social structures and processes relate to one another. They are already able to refer to up-to-date research, and are beginning to apply concepts and theories to real situations. All Year 12 and 13 students have an understanding of the methodology of the subject and are able to examine the strengths and limitations of different research techniques.

154. Teaching and learning are good. Students benefit from dynamic teaching by teachers who have very good subject knowledge. Lesson objectives are always clear. Teachers use a range of activities to meet students' different individual needs and enable them to learn effectively. Teachers are highly sensitive to students' particular needs. Their manner and approach are ones which encourage students to express their opinions openly. When class discussions take place, they are skilfully led in order to ensure that contributions of all are encouraged and valued. Students' attitudes towards the subject are very positive and they really enjoy their work. More able students, however, are not challenged enough with extension activities to help them to achieve the highest grades, for example, by sharp focus on particular contexts. Assessment of students' work is good. Students are clear about the assessment criteria that teachers use to evaluate their work, about how much progress they are making and what they need to do to improve.

155. The new head of department leads her department in a conscientious manner and manages it well. She is committed to enabling the department to fulfil its vision and strategic objectives. She is well informed and perceptive. She is committed to inclusion and has a concern for the needs of individual students. Good progress has been made since the time of the last inspection. Students are now keen to enter into discussions and results have continually improved. The course is growing in popularity and this is largely attributable to the new teaching team, which has both enthusiasm and talent.

## **ENGINEERING, TECHNOLOGY AND MANUFACTURING**

The school provides a vocational course in engineering at intermediate and advanced levels and this was inspected in detail.

### **Engineering**

Provision in engineering is **satisfactory**.

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

- Attainment is below average
- All students show very positive attitudes to the course: achievement is good
- The course does not meet the needs of the students who expect more practical work

#### **Commentary**

156. Achievement is good overall, with many students of limited earlier attainment achieving results which are below average but good for them. Students join the course with a variety of previous experiences, and modest GCSE results. A significant number require support with their skills in English. Many students find the concepts and mathematical aspects of the course difficult. Standards of work seen were below average. Students on the intermediate course understood information they received on the use of hand tools in writing, and could explain what they were doing at a basic level. Students on the advanced level course, having made a steam engine, could explain how to evaluate a proposal to improve it but were held back by their limited understanding of engineering concepts.
157. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall with some satisfactory teaching. Planning is good. In some lessons a wide range of teaching styles is used which help students to achieve a degree of success. In one Year 12 lesson, students had been set the task of devising tests to check various properties of a range of different materials. They had all devised appropriate testing methods which had the potential to be successful. Students speak positively about the course and about the sixth form in general. However, the course has a high theory content which students find difficult.
158. Leadership and management of the course are good. Staff are appropriately qualified and have a wide range of expertise to offer to the students. A number of teachers contribute to this, and co-ordination is efficient. The course was provided at the time of the last inspection with better success in examinations, but at that time the ability of students covered a wider range and included some who were more able. Provision is about the same as at the last inspection but is not well matched to students' capabilities.

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

AS and A2-level courses in art, music, drama, media and film studies are provided and were inspected in detail. AS and A2-level dance and a vocational course in performing arts at intermediate and advanced-levels are also provided and were sampled. Teaching and learning on both the dance and performing arts courses were generally good, but practical work is better than theory which is challenging to some. Recent results have been below average on A-level dance courses. Results in the performing arts course are in line with those nationally.

## Art and design

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and achievement of students of all abilities are very good
- Standards of work and results are improving
- The subject is contributing significantly to students' personal development and self-esteem
- Limited use is made of ICT for creative purposes in art
- Both vocational and traditional courses are provided

### Commentary

159. Over the last few years results at AS and A2-levels have been generally in line with the national averages. However the 2004 AS-level results represented a significant breakthrough with a high percentage of students achieving at this high level. Boys usually perform better than girls. Standards of work seen on all courses are in line with the national average and confirm the results being achieved. Finished work shows high levels of individuality and personal expression. Students develop ideas in a range of two and three-dimensional media and work is strengthened by good technical standards of drawing. Sketchbooks are well used and levels of research and critical analysis of the work of other artists is good. In general the level of written work is just below the national average and suffers from a limited use of art vocabulary.
160. Teaching and learning are very good. Lesson objectives are clear and shared with students. All teachers show high levels of subject knowledge and expertise in whole class demonstrations and individual tutorial support. Relationships are very good and students develop skills and grow in self-esteem within a hardworking studio atmosphere. The achievement of students of all abilities is very good as lessons provide challenge and individual support enabling all students to make very good progress and work to the best of their ability.
161. Leadership and management are good. The subject leader leads an effective and hardworking team who have a wide range of complementary areas of expertise in both two and three-dimensional art. The subject is becoming a more popular partly due to the improved vocational option in graphical design. However not many girls choose to study the subject. Teaching is monitored regularly. Students of all abilities are made aware of examination assessment criteria and are given regular feedback on how their work can be improved. The department operates an open door policy allowing students to continue their work after lessons. Students also benefit from interaction with practising artists and regular visits to the major London art galleries. Work is well displayed around the school. Little was said about the subject in the last report, but standards are improving.

## Music

Provision in music is **very poor**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are very low and achievement poor
- Few students opt for this subject
- Some students have a poor attitude to attendance and punctuality
- Though there is some determined, intelligent teaching, some teaching is poor

## Commentary

162. A2 and AS-level results in 2004 were very low. Five of eight A-level candidates failed to obtain a grade; other students passed. This year there is no A2-level class; one of last year's AS-level students left the school to take music A-level at another school and another is re-taking the AS-level course this year. There are eight students in the Year 12 AS-level class. No music-making of any quality was seen during the inspection. Standards in the Year 12 class are exceptionally low. In one lesson observed, students arrived up to a half an hour late, ill-equipped and unprepared. Most were unable to identify simple intervals correctly and unable to recall basic musical words such as "unison". In the listening exercise that followed the teacher worked hard to support them as they listened first to a movement from Messiaen's *Quartet for the End of Time*, and then to two different interpretations of Bach's *Magnificat*. In spite of the teacher's prompting and helpfully leading questions, students were unable to make analytical comments about these pieces because they entirely lacked the essential background musical knowledge; they have learned little. One could not use the word "pitch" correctly, none could identify the musical periods to which the pieces belonged, none recognised the semitone pitch-change between two versions of the *Magnificat*.
163. Achievement is poor because students' learning is poor. They face an enormous challenge if they are to reach the standards required for AS and A2-level because they are starting the course without the background knowledge that would normally be taken for granted, and because they have not developed a sufficiently serious attitude to the study of this subject. Their progress is inhibited by some poor teaching in the department – in one composition lesson observed most of the time was wasted because of very poor preparation and planning - and by the lack of opportunities for high quality music-making in the school. Although there is some promising teaching by a recently qualified teacher in this department, the poor teaching and very low standards are indicative of very poor leadership and management. Little reference was made to sixth form music in the last inspection report. Standards recently have declined and the department is failing to contribute adequately to the arts college vision.

## Drama

Provision for drama is **very good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership and management are very good and have expanded the range of courses
- Teachers foster independence of learning
- A2 and AS-level results are broadly average
- Arts College status has widened the opportunities available to students

## Commentary

164. Achievement is very good. Results in A-level examinations, while average overall, include a slightly greater proportion of the highest (A, B) grades than nationally. Performance in drama A-levels is among the highest in the school. The numbers taking these examinations is still small because they were introduced only three years ago, and the advanced vocational course this year. Students develop analytical skills well. While in Year 12 students describe the plot, in Year 13 they identify, compare and consider the impact of plot and structure. Year 13 students have good performance skills and use them well to create dramatic stage effects. Their written work has improved; understanding and explanation are clear but weaknesses in grammar and spelling adversely affect some writing. Students are admitted on the course with GCSE results which may be low in other subjects and some have difficulties with written work. Students' use of technical terms is good, however. They are enthusiastic, co-operative and work very hard in lessons.

165. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers have a very good subject knowledge and are able to demonstrate acting and performance skills very effectively. The wide range of concepts, texts and productions challenges students, who learn successfully as a result. Students with special educational needs receive good support in lessons and with written work. Opportunities for independent work are many and students develop confidence in their own judgements. Students appreciate support and guidance on university entrance and also work in the professional theatre.
166. Very good leadership and management have expanded the course offer and developed a strongly positive ethos. Drama contributes successfully to the school's Arts College status which has increased co-operation with other schools. Sixth formers have benefited greatly from the recent very successful participation in the Edinburgh Festival. Improvement since the last inspection has been good as drama has become a discrete subject and standards have been maintained.

### **Media and film studies**

Provision for media and film studies is **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The standard of teaching is very good
- The achievement of students of all abilities is very good
- Standards and examination results are above average, in some cases well above average

### **Commentary**

167. Examination results in both AS and A2-level media studies are above the national average and improving each year. Students were entered for AS-level film studies for the first time in 2004; in a group of 24 the results were good with a third achieving top grades. Work seen on all courses confirmed the high standards being achieved. The level and sophistication of discussion and analysis of media products were above the national average although students only have an average range of media vocabulary. Practical production work demonstrated that students had good grasp of the conventions and techniques used across a range of media. They are able to translate their personal ideas into effective media production involving the moving image, with appropriate use of sound. Supporting planning work and storyboards are produced to standards which facilitate the production process. The achievement of students of all abilities and backgrounds is very good, particularly for those who start at lower levels and who benefit from the effective group work that characterises much of both the teaching and practical work.
168. Teaching and learning are very good on all courses and some excellent teaching was seen in film studies. Teachers have a high level of subject knowledge and expertise and transmit their enthusiasm for the subject to the students. Lessons are characterised by structured and lively discussion which is energetically and expertly facilitated by the teacher. Students clearly enjoy the lessons and the opportunity to express themselves. They learn well in response to the challenge that this style of teaching provides. They display particularly mature attitudes in lessons in response to the adult manner in which they are treated by teachers.
169. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The subject leader is very committed and hard working. Colleagues share her enthusiasm for the subject. There are clear principles underlining how the subject should be taught which uses the students' own experience and natural interest in the media. Schemes of work are changed in light of regular review of student responses to the work. All abilities are catered for by work that can have

different levels of outcome and by a style of teaching that provides teacher and peer support to individual students. Formal assessments and regular informal discussion give students regular feedback about their work. The addition of film has attracted, and met the needs of, a wide group of students. Media and film are increasingly popular subjects. There are regular meetings of the subject team and good links with senior management. Teaching is regularly monitored and newly qualified teachers are well supported. All staff benefit from regular professional development. A high percentage of students progress onto media-related higher education courses and links are developing with outside bodies and media professionals. Gifted and talented students enter for a national film making competition.

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

Physical education was not sampled. It is offered at various times during the week to students who are interested and a Community Sports Leaders Award course commences later in the year. Leisure and tourism is provided at foundation and intermediate levels with leisure and recreation at advanced level; these are reported on in detail.

### **Leisure and tourism/Leisure and recreation**

Provision in leisure and tourism/leisure and recreation is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The well established courses are run by experienced staff
- Good resources are well used
- Staff and students are enthusiastic: teaching and learning are good
- Achievement by the students is very good
- Good work-related learning and experience are provided

### **Commentary**

170. Examination results over the past three years have been good. Success rate has been 100 per cent at foundation and at advanced levels and at intermediate level in 2004. In 2003 intermediate level results fell to well below average, due mainly to staffing difficulties. The standard of work seen during the inspection is in line with course expectations. The students develop good skills of collecting, analysing, presenting and evaluating data in relation to the tourism industry.
171. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall with some examples of very good teaching. The enthusiasm of the students results in high productivity in lessons as well as in homework activities. The very good relationship between staff and students creates a very good atmosphere in which students enjoy their work. Their high motivation overcomes some of the difficulties which result from low attainment on entry. Consequently achievement is very good by the end of the course. A good supply of resources enables the students to make very good progress and ICT is well used to enhance teaching and learning.
172. Leadership and management are good. The inspired leadership of the course leader has created a dedicated team committed to ensuring success for the students. Good provision is made for work experience in the tourist industry enhanced by a wide range of fieldwork experience such as visits to the Tate Modern, London Eye, Firepower Museum, National Maritime Museum and Chislehurst Caves. The work is well planned and organised with good resources readily available for the staff and students. All staff give very good support to the students from very varied backgrounds. Satisfactory improvements have been made since the last inspection. New resources have been added, standards have been maintained and the

level of staffing has improved. The provision and use of ICT has been increased and, as a result, the quality of presentation of students' work has improved.

## **BUSINESS**

Vocational courses in business are provided at foundation, intermediate and advanced levels and were inspected in detail.

### **Business**

Provision in business studies is **good**.

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

- Teaching and learning are good, and students achieve well
- Courses are well managed, but there are not enough links with local businesses
- Students have very good attitudes, and most use ICT well to present their work
- Some students underachieve because they do not attend regularly

#### **Commentary**

173. Standards in the advanced business course are average overall, and students generally achieve well in relation to their GCSE results on entry. In 2003, the seven advanced double award students gained results in line with the national average, a considerable improvement from 2002. Results in 2004 were lower than in 2003 and reflect satisfactory achievement relative to students' GCSE results on entry. Results for the six students on the combined foundation and intermediate course were below the national average in 2003. Students achieved well, though four gained pass rather than merit grades. The 2004 results showed good achievement for foundation students, but only satisfactory achievement for intermediate students. Several had dropped out of the course early or failed to attend regularly.
174. Current students at all levels achieve well in lessons and work seen, and reach standards in line with expectations for their courses at this early stage of the school year. Year 12 advanced students wrote neat ledger accounts to consolidate their understanding of debit and credit, and Year 13 advanced students showed above-average numeracy skills when correlating external factors to changes in demand curves. In coursework assignments, all students used ICT well to present proposals for new products, using PowerPoint slides, and some incorporated relevant information from part-time jobs and work placements.
175. Teaching and learning are good overall. Lessons seen featured teachers' very good subject expertise, often based on experience in industry, and very good, supportive relationships with students. Teachers' high expectations and accurate assessment of progress helped students to improve their work, and gain very good attitudes. Students of different ethnic groups, male and female, co-operated well, although not all participated fully in discussion during the first part of lessons. Students were generally keen and co-operative, even when lessons were over-theoretical; sometimes opportunities were missed to bring in real business examples. The progress of students with English as an additional language matched that of others due to teachers' continual reinforcement of key terms.
176. Sixth form business courses are well led and managed within the faculty, to which new staff have recently been appointed. The enthusiastic, hardworking staff team tracks students' progress well. Links with local businesses, whilst satisfactory, do not enrich business studies lessons enough. Most students use work placements effectively. The subject was not inspected in detail previously but has good capacity to improve further.

## **HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE**

A vocational course in health and social care is provided at intermediate and foundation levels, and is reported on in detail. An advanced level National Diploma in early years is also offered but was not sampled as the students were on work experience.

### **Health and social care**

Provision in health and social care is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Students who finish the courses reach at least their target grade
- Many are held back by poor literacy and unsatisfactory attendance
- An inconsistent quality of teaching results in some underachievement
- Students' learning benefits from visits to work places and work experience

### **Commentary**

177. The 2003 results at both intermediate and foundation levels were broadly in line with the national average. Results were similar in 2004. Courses attract few boys. Almost all who complete reach their target and a few do better, but about a quarter, all irregular attenders, drop out or are ungraded. Achievement observed was so variable that it was unsatisfactory. Standards observed were broadly average, but a few poor attenders were already falling behind. Students use and understand a good range of specialist vocabulary. Writing is below or well below average. Students do not draft work regularly on the computer or use 'spellcheck' facilities enough. Achievement in samples of the first assessed assignment was broadly in line with that found in an early stage of this course, but is uneven across assignments and lessons. Students' understanding of care services and the benefits of healthy eating are better than other topics. In a third of lessons students did not learn or achieve enough, especially the more able students on the intermediate course; this is linked with instances of poor teaching. The achievement of students with special educational needs is satisfactory. Students at an early stage of learning English achieve well with support from teachers and peers.

178. Teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall because they vary from very good to poor; a third of lessons, too many, were poor. Students enjoyed the very good lesson seen, responded well and their knowledge and understanding increased. They learn well from practical activities outside the classroom. Poor lessons feature low expectations, slow pace, unclear explanations and similar work for all students which leads to boredom and underachievement, especially of the more able at intermediate level. Too few teachers correct spelling and grammatical errors to help improve weak writing skills.

179. The subject is without a leader for at least this term. Her absence contributes to unsatisfactory teaching arrangements. The teaching of three topics by five different teachers confuses several students, which is evident in their work and in lessons. Administrative systems are in place for satisfactory day-to-day management. Some teachers are generous with out-of-class support. Students benefit from good opportunities to visit work places, two weeks of relevant work experience and a first aid course. The last inspection did not report on health and social care.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Sixth form grade</i>	<i>School grade</i>
<b>The overall effectiveness of the sixth form and the school</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is		3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3	3
Cost effectiveness of the sixth form / value for money provided by the school	4	4
<b>Overall standards achieved</b>		<b>5</b>
Students' achievement	3	3
<b>Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>		<b>4</b>
Attendance	5	5
Attitudes	3	4
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3	4
Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development		3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>		<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3	3
How well students learn	3	3
The quality of assessment	3	4
How well the curriculum meets students needs	3	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities		3
Accommodation and resources	3	4
Students' care, welfare, health and safety		3
Support, advice and guidance for students	3	4
How well the school seeks and acts on students' views	3	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents		3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2	2
<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>		<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	4	4
The leadership of the headteacher		2
The leadership of other key staff	3	3

The effectiveness of management	3	4
---------------------------------	---	---

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