

INSPECTION REPORT

MOSELEY SCHOOL A LANGUAGE COLLEGE

Moseley, West Midlands

LEA area: Birmingham

Unique reference number: 103519

Headteacher: Mr D. Peck

Lead inspector: Mr D. Driscoll

Dates of inspection: 22nd – 25th November 2004

Inspection number: 271841

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

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Terms used in this report

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

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Comprehensive

School category: Community

Age range of students: 11 – 18

Gender of students: Mixed

Number on roll: 1366

School address: College Road
Moseley
Birmingham
West Midlands

Postcode: B13 9LR

Telephone number: 0121 6786400

Fax number: 0121 6781299

Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr S. Moore

Date of previous inspection: 25th January 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Moseley is a specialist language college that is larger than most other secondary schools. The sixth form is of an average size. The school is popular with parents; there are more parents wishing to send their children to the school than there are places available. The school has a very rich mix of different faiths and cultures. The majority of students are of Asian-Pakistani background, but even this group accounts for only two thirds of students. The rest of the students come from a very wide range of ethnic backgrounds indeed. The proportion of students whose mother tongue is not English is very high, with a relatively large number who are learning English for the first time. There are many more boys than girls at the school.

Standards of attainment on entry to the school are very low, and considerably lower than when the school was last inspected. The results in the national tests taken in Year 6 were well below average for the students who joined the school in Year 7 this year, although the school does not have results for a relatively large proportion who are new to the school or even the country. Many more students leave or join the school each year than is usually the case; by Year 9 for example, around one quarter of all students have moved to be replaced by other students. Even in Year 7 the mobility rate is very high. This mobility is much greater than was the case at the last inspection. The school tests students on entry to the school; the results confirm that standards are very low. Standards on entry to the sixth form are also very low compared with other sixth forms. The proportion of students with special educational needs is above average; the proportion with a statement is well above average. Most students with special educational needs have moderate learning difficulties or have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Students come from very deprived areas of Birmingham. Socio-economic circumstances are very low. A relatively high proportion of students care for relatives at home. The school received a Charter Mark and achieved Investor in People status in 2001. In 2002 the school received Sportsmark

and Healthy Schools awards. In 2002 and 2003 the school received an Achievement Award and this year became an International School.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
11933	D. Driscoll	Lead inspector	
13395	J. Illingworth	Lay inspector	
33139	M. Wilson	Team inspector	Mathematics
19596	B. Treacy	Team inspector	English
4145	C. Harrison	Team inspector	Science
10297	D. Cox	Team inspector	Information and communication technology (ICT)
17868	E. Metcalfe	Team inspector	Art and design. English in the sixth form
30973	G. Hancock	Team inspector	Design and technology
31705	A. Briggs	Team inspector	Music
15462	C. Blakemore	Team inspector	Geography. Leisure and tourism in the sixth form
3793	B. Downes	Team inspector	Special educational needs
22411	A. Axon	Team inspector	Mathematics in the sixth form
12985	S. Jeffray	Team inspector	Physical education
2597	C. Jackson	Team inspector	Health and social care
32173	B. Brown	Team inspector	English as an additional language
15832	J. Vanstone	Team inspector	History. Business education in the sixth form
20124	J. Peach	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
30427	F. Shuffle-Botham	Team inspector	Religious education (RE)
22590	R. Castle	Team inspector	Citizenship. Work-related learning

The inspection contractor was:

Independent School Inspection Services (ISIS)

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a **very good school** that provides a **very good** quality of education and **good** value for money. Standards are below average by Year 11, which represents very good achievement.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Students achieve very well as a result of very good teaching, a high degree of parental backing and a wide range of other support structures.
- The outstanding leadership of the headteacher ensures that every child matters to all members of staff.
- Students' attitudes and behaviour improve significantly as they move through the school because of the very good help and advice they receive.
- Teaching is very good in geography and physical education, and is excellent in ICT in Years 10 and 11, but is unsatisfactory in design and technology in Years 7 to 9.
- Students with little or no English do not always get enough support.
- The school has changed the curriculum very well to meet the changing needs of its students.

Progress since the last inspection has been **very good**. Results at GCSE level have improved at a similar rate to that seen nationally, despite lower standards on entry to the school. Achievement is now much better as a result of improved teaching and greater focus on the needs of different groups of students. All of the weaknesses identified in the previous report have been addressed successfully, with the exception of providing a daily act of collective worship.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*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 students attained similarly at the end of Year 9.*

Achievement is **very good**. Standards are well below average by the end of Year 9; students achieve well in Years 7 to 9. Standards are now below average by the end of Year 11, which is very good achievement given these students' very low standards when they were in Year 9. Achievement in the sixth form is very good; standards are below average. Standards of mathematics, speaking, reading and writing are below average by Year 11, but writing skills are now being improved much more quickly than reading skills. Skills in the use of ICT improve from very low to average over five years.

Students' personal qualities and their overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are **very good**. Students' attitudes and behaviour are very good, although better in Years 10 and 11 and the sixth form than they are lower down the school. Attendance is above average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a **very good** quality of education. Teaching is **very good**. Teaching and learning are very good in Years 10 and 11 and the sixth form; teaching is good in Years 7 to 9. The school targets its better teachers to the examination courses. Teaching is very good in geography and physical education, and excellent in ICT in Year 11. Teaching is unsatisfactory in Years 7 to 9 in design and technology. Teaching in the sixth form is very good in ICT and business studies.

The curriculum is very good; it is good in Years 7 to 9 and very good in Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form. There is a very good range of extra clubs and activities. The quality of guidance and support for students is very good and the school has a very good partnership with parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **very good**. The leadership of the school by the headteacher is outstanding, and by other senior staff and governors is very good. The school's management is good.

PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Comments are based on those students and parents who responded to the questionnaires or attended the parents' meeting. Parents are very happy with the education their children receive, especially the teaching, leadership, students' progress and pastoral care; they have some concerns about behaviour, often outside of the school day. Students are very happy with the school, especially the teachers and headteacher. Most of their criticisms relate to toilets and the colour scheme.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

To improve the school still further, the next things the senior managers and governors should do are:

- Improve the teaching in design and technology in Years 7 to 9.
- Ensure all students who have little or no English receive enough support.
- Place the same good emphasis on improving reading as there already is on improving writing.

And to meet statutory requirements:

- Provide a daily act of collective worship.

THE SIXTH FORM AT MOSELEY SCHOOL A LANGUAGE COLLEGE

OVERALL EVALUATION

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

The main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Students achieve very well as a result of very good teaching.
- The curriculum is very good; it meets the needs of students very well.
- Teaching in ICT and business studies is very 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 in English literature is good . Teaching and learning are good so students achieve well.
Mathematics	Provision in mathematics is satisfactory . Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject, but mark work too infrequently to raise achievement above a satisfactory level.
Information and communication technology	Provision in ICT is very good . Teaching is very good; students get very good help to allow them to achieve very well.
Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel	Provision in leisure and tourism is good . Teaching and learning are good so students achieve well.
Business	Provision in business studies is very good . Very good teaching produces challenging lessons that move at pace and lead to very good achievement.
Health and social care	Provision in health and social care is good . Students achieve well as a result of good teaching.

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

Sixth form students receive **very good** educational and personal support. Provision for their welfare, health and safety is good. There are good arrangements for consulting students and taking account of their views.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SIXTH FORM

Leadership and management are **very good**. The sixth form has changed what it offers and how it works very well to meet the changing needs of its students.

STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM

Students in the sixth form are very happy at the school and have no real complaints about their own education. The majority of them believe that the school and sixth form councils provide effective means of raising concerns with senior members of staff. They also feel that their teachers treat their opinions seriously. However, many students think that the school does not act on their views or explain why it cannot take action on what they want.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

Students arrive at the school with very low standards; many join the school after the start of Year 7 and a much higher proportion than usual have to learn English for the first time. By the end of Year 9, students have achieved well to reach well below average standards. By the end of Year 11, standards are currently below average; this is very good achievement for this group of students, whose standards when they were in Year 9 were very low.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve very well in their GCSE examinations given their results when they were in Year 9.
- The school works very hard to provide support for all groups of students.
- Achievement is very good in geography and physical education, and excellent in ICT in Years 10 and 11.
- There is not enough support in some lessons for students with little or no English in Years 7 to 9.
- Standards in reading are not improving as quickly as standards of writing.

Commentary

1. Results from the national tests in 2003 were very low in English and science, and well below average in mathematics. However, 2004 saw big improvements in results, particularly in English and science. Despite this improvement in 2004, results have risen at a slower rate than that seen nationally over recent years, owing to the changing nature of the intake. The biggest change has been in the proportion of students arriving at the school after the start of Year 7. This makes tracking students' achievements from their results in Year 6 extremely difficult; many simply did not start an education in this country until they started at Moseley. However, the data that the school holds on individual students, and the work in their books, show that students do well in their first few years at the school.
2. Some students do better than others. Those with special educational needs achieve very well in Years 7 to 9. The learning support department place great emphasis on improving basic skills for these students as soon as they arrive at the school; their reading and spelling, in particular, improve in leaps and bounds. Other students who arrive after the start of Year 7, but do not have special educational needs, have extra classes to enable them to catch up work they have missed. The vast majority of students speak English as an additional language; their good achievement is reflected in the overall good achievement in Years 7 to 9. However, those who are at an early stage of learning English form a distinct group; their achievement is satisfactory. When being taught on a one-to-one or small group basis, such students progress well. However, when they go out into lessons their progress is much more variable. In some lessons, they receive good quality support, particularly when this comes from the head of the English as an Additional Language department. In other lessons, they receive support from support assistants, some of whom have difficulties with English themselves so they fail to give accurate advice on spelling, for example. In other lessons, there is no support and here the progress that individuals make relies upon the teacher or having a friend to translate; in some cases they get lost in the lesson and so learn little.

3. Students achieve well in almost all their subjects in Years 7 to 9, and very well in geography. Achievement is satisfactory in art and design, design and technology, ICT and music.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.0 (26.7)	33.4 (33.3)
Mathematics	30.9 (29.3)	35.4 (34.7)
Science	28.1 (27.1)	33.6 (33.3)

There were 240 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. Students achieve very well in Years 10 and 11. Results in the GCSE examinations in 2003 were well below average overall. These results were much better than would usually be expected from the students' results in the national tests at the end of Year 9. However, results were even better in 2004. It must also be remembered that the great majority of students are boys, who nationally do not do as well as girls, so this skews the results downwards when comparing with national averages. Results have been improving at a similar rate to that seen nationally, despite results at the end of Year 9 rising at a slower rate than nationally. Year after year, the school's data shows that students do much better at Moseley in Years 10 and 11 than is usually the case in other schools. Students achieve at least well in all their subjects, except for health and social care where achievement is satisfactory. However, students' achievement is very good in geography and physical education, and excellent in ICT.

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	34 (26)	52 (50)
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	84 (82)	91 (91)
Percentage of students gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	97 (91)	96 (96)
Average point score per student (best eight subjects)	27.5 (25.1)	34.7 (34.8)

There were 238 students in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

5. The reasons for the difference between the good achievement in Years 7 to 9 and the very good achievement in Years 10 and 11 are several. There is much less movement of students, leaving and joining the school, in Years 10 and 11, so students get the full benefit of the very good education provided by the school. The very good work carried out lower down the school to improve students' behaviour and attitudes means they are ready to work hard for their examinations by the start of Year 10. Students who had little or no English, have mostly gained sufficient language for them to be able to cope on their own, or with reduced support, so they can concentrate on their subjects more easily. More distinct groups of students are targeted in Years 10 and 11 for special support, so the great majority receive extra help in one form or another. The biggest influence, however, is the very good teaching in Years 10 and 11, especially the focus that is placed on coursework.

6. In all years, there are few differences between the achievements of different groups of students. Boys do as well as girls, for example, in GCSE examinations. However, this has not always been the case. Concerns were previously raised about the achievement of African Caribbean students. The school acted to put on specific activities and support for such students and now they achieve as well as any other group. Students who are carers – that is, students who care for relatives at home – receive impressive support to allow them to juggle the twin roles of carer and learner. Overall, the school supports any group or individual that needs extra help very well; staff back up the message of ‘can do’ with the support to allow the students to ‘do’.
7. Standards in the basic skills of language, literacy and mathematics are well below average by the end of Year 9, but improve to below average by the end of Year 11. This represents good achievement in all years. However, the development of writing is better than that of reading. The current system of setting targets for improving writing in all subjects has been particularly effective in raising teachers’ awareness of how they can help to improve standards. However, the same push is not as evident in terms of improving standards of reading, because the targets do not refer to reading. Standards of skills in ICT remain very low throughout Years 7 to 9, partly because students’ achievement is hindered by their relatively poor reading and writing, but also because subjects find it difficult to book computer rooms as they are already heavily used by examination classes. However, in Years 10 and 11, students make excellent progress in developing such skills, as a result of improved basic literacy and outstanding teaching in ICT.
8. Achievement has improved significantly since the previous inspection.

Sixth form

Standards are below average and students are achieving very well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve very well in business and ICT, which almost all study.

Commentary

9. Standards on entry to the sixth form are very low in comparison with other sixth forms; only one student currently in Year 12 joined the sixth form with an average of a grade B at GCSE. The majority of students study for GCSE and vocational courses at a level below advanced level. For many of these courses, there are no national statistics with which to compare the school’s results, but standards are generally below those seen nationally on such courses.
10. Results in the 2003 A-level examinations were well below average, but improved in 2004. Results for both male and female students were well below average. Nevertheless, this represents very good achievement for these students given their GCSE results. Results at this level are generally improving in line with the national trend.

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

	School results	National results
Percentage of entries gaining A-E grades	67.1 (74.9)	89.4 (92.6)
Percentage of entries gaining A-B grades	9.2 (13.3)	32.6 (35.5)
Average point score per student	145.3 (148.1)	258.2 (263.3)

There were 58 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

11. Almost all students in the sixth form study ICT to examination level, and many study business studies. In both these subjects students achieve very well. In health and social care, another subject with many students, achievement is good, as it is in English and leisure and tourism. In mathematics, most students are retaking their GCSE and achieving as well as expected.
12. As in the main school, the sixth form students benefit from very good support mechanisms that help them to achieve very well. Students with special educational needs, who form a significant minority, continue to receive good support and high levels of help from their teachers so they can achieve as well as their peers. There are no significant differences between the achievements of any other group of students.

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

Students have very positive attitudes to learning, which is one of the reasons for their very good achievement. Their behaviour is very good, and they grow increasingly mature and responsible as a result of the school's very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students take great pride in their school and enjoy attending it.
- Students are keen to participate in school activities and have very good attitudes to learning.
- Students are very friendly and helpful, and have very good relations with adults and with one another.
- Attendance is good and is very effectively promoted by the school.
- The school makes very good provision for students' moral development and has very good procedures for raising standards of behaviour.
- There is very little bullying or oppressive behaviour.
- Provision for social development is very good and helps students to become increasingly mature and responsible.
- There is some restless and distracting behaviour in a minority of lessons.

Commentary

13. Students are proud of their school and are very loyal to it. They are very keen to draw visitors' attention to its unique features, such as the fine nineteenth century buildings on the west site. Overall, students have very positive attitudes. They want to make progress and to succeed, and they value the opportunities for learning that the school provides. The level of involvement in voluntary activities, such as clubs and extra classes, is very high. In lessons students show interest in the subject, sustain their concentration, and work well, especially when the teaching is good. However, attitudes are usually at least satisfactory even in lessons that are uninspiring. A minority of students have little natural inclination to settle and concentrate, and only the strenuous efforts of their teachers keep them on task. In general, older students are more focused on their learning than younger students, who are more likely to be restless in lessons. Attitudes are good overall in Years 7 to 9, but very good in Years 10 and 11. The difference is in part a reflection of the different quality of teaching the students receive, but, more importantly, it also reflects the impact of the school's procedures. Students' self-discipline and application to task improve substantially as they become accustomed to school routines and to teachers' expectations. The system of rewards, which recognises and celebrates students' achievements, is another positive influence. It improves attitudes to learning by raising students' self-esteem and promoting the 'can do' outlook that is characteristic of the school.
14. Behaviour and relationships are very good throughout the school. Students are polite and friendly, and very keen to be helpful. They have very good relations with adults in the school. They respect members of staff, and are orderly and co-operative in class. There is some noisy and distracting behaviour, but only on the part of a minority of students in a small number of lessons. Students of all ages and ethnic groups mix very amicably with one another during breaks and lunch times. As a result there are few

concerns about bullying or any other forms of oppressive behaviour. The school has very successful procedures for raising standards of conduct and ensuring that its own code of conduct, promoting courtesy, co-operation and respect, is adhered to. It deals promptly and effectively with instances of poor behaviour, such as fighting and disruption. Where necessary, students are excluded from school for fixed periods. The number of temporary exclusions is in line with the national average, but the number of permanent exclusions is low. The school's use of this sanction is very effective. There are very few 'repeat offenders'; only small numbers of students are excluded more than once. The school deals sympathetically and constructively with individuals who have serious behavioural and emotional problems. It gives support that meets their needs and assists them to improve their learning and social skills. In particular, the learning support department is very successful in helping students who are at risk of being excluded, so that they remain in school and do not get behind with their work.

15. A high proportion of students have special educational needs relating to behaviour. The good support they receive from specialist staff, together with the school's very good ways of improving the behaviour of all students, ensures that these students make very good progress in changing their attitudes and behaviour in Years 7 to 9; by the time they are in Year 10 they have far fewer difficulties and can concentrate on their studies to a greater extent.

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	44	8	1
White – Irish	1		
White – any other White background	11		
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	20		
Mixed – White and Black African	7	1	
Mixed – White and Asian	13	1	
Mixed – any other mixed background	14		
Asian or Asian British – Indian	51	1	
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	900	50	4
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	42	1	
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	25		
Black or Black British – Caribbean	42	4	
Black or Black British – African	72		
Black or Black British – any other Black background	4		
Chinese	1		
Any other ethnic group	79	2	
Parent/student preferred not to say	9		
Information not obtained	31		

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

16. Provision for the spiritual development of the students is good. Provision for their social, moral and cultural development is very good. The school has a very positive atmosphere that enables students to gain confidence and self-esteem. The wide range of visitors to the school brings the students into

contact with a variety of people, and they make the most of their opportunities to talk to them. Muslim students have very good opportunities to observe the duties of their religion and to share these experiences with their fellow students. Two prayer rooms provide places of quiet reflection at lunch times. In religious education students have the opportunity to reflect on the impact of belief on the believer and to consider their own beliefs and values.

17. Students are encouraged to think about the needs of others, and the 'Disability Awareness Day' that takes place annually for all Year 7 students ensures that all the school have experienced the problems of the disabled. The very good work linked to this through English lessons provides good opportunities for reflection. The response of the students through their charity fundraising demonstrates its success. Students are made aware of the needs of others in a variety of ways and the school's support for UNICEF illustrates its commitment to the needs of the wider world as well as its local charities.

Example of outstanding practice

Changing attitudes to disability

All students in Year 7 take part in a wide range of activities on 'Disability Awareness Day', which improves their understanding of what it is like to be disabled. However, some students are taken much further. The school has an English teacher who uses a wheelchair. Not only is she an excellent role model for students of what can be achieved, reinforcing the 'can do' ethos of the school, but more importantly she changes significantly the way that students behave towards people with a disability. All her Year 7 students get to use a wheelchair, are photographed in it and then write about their experiences. This writing is very moving and makes it clear that the experience has had a very real impact upon their outlook. However, the most impressive aspect of the activity comes through when the students talk to you and they explain that "I realise that they're not different really" or "I go and talk to people in wheelchairs now; before I was frightened really".

18. The school ensures that students have a range of experiences and the Year 8 visit to the school's own cottage in South Wales is a very good opportunity for the development of their social skills and independence. The school's student communicators are a valuable source of help and advice for younger students, as well as providing good experiences in leadership for the communicators themselves. The school has a range of extra-curricular activities that enable students to work with those of other year groups, and the entertainment provided for parents as part of the celebration of Diwali, Eid and Christmas demonstrated the confidence and easy social inter-action of the students. There is a range of support intended to develop students' self-esteem, for example the 'Positive thinking group' and the 'Aim high groups'.
19. The school is clearly committed to the celebration of its cultural diversity. There are links with Germany, France, Dubai and Pakistan, and the school plays host to visitors from a variety of other countries. Moseley's Festival of Diversity provides students in Years 7, 8 and 9 with a range of experiences from puppetry to Gaelic football, and from the use of chop-sticks to dance workshops. The wide range of languages offered by the school expands students' horizons and the language assistants themselves become valuable sources of information about other cultures. As a consequence of this celebration of diversity the school community is harmonious and proud of its heritage.
20. Attendance makes a positive contribution to students' learning. It exceeds 90 per cent in all year groups and, overall, is above the national average for secondary schools. Attendance has improved significantly since the previous inspection thanks to the school's very good procedures. There are very thorough systems in place for monitoring and identifying students who are absent without good cause. The school targets individuals who have low attendance rates and, in co-operation with the education social worker, takes action to improve their performance. A system of first day contact with home is an effective deterrent against truancy and unpunctuality. The school also provides positive encouragement for good attendance. Students with excellent attendance records receive due acknowledgement and tangible rewards. The incidence of extended holiday leave has decreased, but is still a major reason for absence. The school and the education social worker have secured the support of local mosques in persuading Muslim families not to go abroad during term time.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (2002-2003) (%)

Authorised absence	
School data	3.7
National data	7.2

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.2
National data	1.1

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

Sixth form

Students' attitudes, values and personal qualities make a positive contribution to their academic progress. Their attitudes to learning are very good and they behave very well. Their attendance and punctuality are good. Their personal development is good overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students are enthusiastic about the sixth form and have very good attitudes to learning.
- Students behave very well, and are mature and responsible
- Students' attendance and punctuality are good.
- A minority of students behave in an immature and inconsiderate manner.

Commentary

21. Overall, students have very good attitudes to learning and are very enthusiastic about the sixth form. They have no doubt that its courses and teaching methods meet their needs and aspirations. They are also extremely pleased with the ethos and environment of the sixth form. They feel that members of staff treat them as young adults and as friends, which has a positive impact on their motivation. The majority of students have high expectations and are eager to succeed. They are determined to prove themselves and are therefore willing to work hard. Their mature and responsible approach to their studies is a major factor in their very good achievement. A few students have a relaxed attitude to punctuality and therefore arrive late for their lessons. They are greatly outnumbered by the students who arrive on time and are keen to get on with their work. The large numbers who are studying ICT and business have particularly good attitudes to their learning.
22. Students' very good motivation and enjoyment of life in the sixth form mean that standards of behaviour are very high. Some members of Year 12 are immature and lack good social skills; for example, they interrupt their peers who are trying to speak, and are reluctant to listen to other people's views. However, they are a small minority. The vast majority of students are responsible and polite young adults who have very good relations with adults and with one another.
23. Attendance and punctuality in the sixth form are good. Students attend because they want to do well, but they are also aware that the school uses formal sanctions against absenteeism and poor time keeping. In fact, they value the discipline that these procedures provide. They feel that the school's structured routines help them to keep on track with their learning. A significant number of students have returned from local colleges to Moseley sixth form for this reason.
24. The spiritual and social development of the sixth form is good. Their moral and cultural development is very good. Students have the opportunities to develop their leadership skills as prefects and through supervision of groups in extra-curricular activities. Their support makes a significant contribution to the smooth running of events in school. Their examination courses include very good opportunities for reflection on significant issues.

25. Some students have excellent opportunities to extend their horizons through participation in the European Awareness Conference in Brussels and the ‘TUC Citizenship and Work Conference’. Students have in recent years attended conferences in Nashville, USA and London. They are developing their political awareness through such experiences and through meeting their local MP and MEP. Other students are more reluctant to take initiative outside the lessons or to take responsibility however, unless they are approached.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a very good quality of education for its students. Teaching, learning, the curriculum, pastoral care and links with parents are all very good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good in Years 7 to 9 and very good in Years 10 and 11. The quality of assessment of students’ work is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is very good in geography and physical education; it is excellent in ICT in Years 10 and 11.
- Teachers place an excellent emphasis on coursework.
- Teaching is unsatisfactory in design and technology in Years 7 to 9.
- Students with little or no English do not always get enough support.
- Teachers are very good at improving attitudes and behaviour.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 190 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
7 (4%)	34 (18%)	89 (47%)	55 (29%)	4 (2%)	1 (1%)	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen. Percentages may not total 100 owing to rounding up or down.

Commentary

26. In Years 7 to 9, teaching is good in most subjects, and is very good in geography. Teaching is satisfactory in ICT, art and design and music, but unsatisfactory in design and technology. In Years 10 and 11, teaching is at least good in all subjects, is very good in geography and physical education and is excellent in ICT.
27. The main differences in the quality of teaching between Years 7 to 9 and Years 10 and 11 stem mainly from the way that the school targets its better teachers to the examination courses in Years 10 and 11. The school’s managers have very good information on the performances of teachers, so know who will most help students get the best results in examinations. Teachers in Years 10 and 11 have a very good knowledge of their subject and an excellent understanding of how to get the best out of students in their coursework. This enables students to maximise their marks in coursework, knowing that they will not do as well in written examinations where they will be held back by their relatively weak literacy skills. In most subjects there is a message of ‘you can do it’, but in ICT, physical education and geography in particular the message changes to one of ‘you can still do better’, emphasising the high standards set by teachers in these subjects.

28. The targeting of teachers does have its drawbacks, however. In ICT, for example, the teaching in Years 7 to 9 is often carried out by inexperienced or non-specialist teachers who are more likely to struggle with keeping students occupied and interested, because they are not as confident as others in the best ways of teaching the material. In Years 10 and 11, on the other hand, the team of teachers in ICT are experts both in the subject and in the examination syllabus; they are able to choose exactly the right method for ensuring that all students make the best possible progress in every lesson. It is rare for students to experience a lesson that is less than of very good quality in ICT in Years 10 and 11. A similar situation exists in design and technology, in that there is a considerable difference in the quality of teaching between the two key stages. In Years 7 to 9, teaching is unsatisfactory because too much of the teaching is boring, often caused by the teacher talking for too long. This in itself is an issue as students with little or no English cannot follow what is going on. However, students move from teacher to teacher in design and technology in Years 7 to 9 and other teaching is very good, so students catch up on the design skills that they should have learnt with previous teachers. In Years 10 and 11, in design and technology, the best features from Years 7 to 9 are apparent, with teachers planning lessons that are demanding in terms of what students are expected to learn so students are motivated and enjoy their work.
29. One aspect that is a common strength across the school is the way that teachers change the attitudes and behaviour of students, by their insistence on high standards. There is a very good level of consistency in the expectations of teachers regarding students' attitudes to work; an expectation supported by parents. This consistency of approach leads to improved behaviour as students move through the school, which is especially important in Moseley as a high proportion of students have special needs that relate to attitudes and behaviour. These students make very good progress towards their targets in Years 7 to 9 as a result of the teachers' efforts, combined with the good work of the learning support department. However, teachers also emphasise that improving attitudes is not just about how someone behaves in school. In physical education, for example, simply walking back to school from the swimming pool becomes a lesson in how to behave in the street and how to treat others with courtesy and respect. This emphasis on respect is apparent throughout the school, with teachers insisting that students listen to one another and reinforcing the point that all students are equal. In doing so, they are reinforcing the school's 'golden rule' of respect for all.
30. Teachers use support assistants well, when they are available. However, the learning of students with little or no English is not as good as other students, especially in Years 7 to 9 where their achievement is only satisfactory. There are two problems with the support for such students. Firstly, the school has not got enough bi-lingual support staff. In some lessons, teachers can get around the problem by pairing the student with another who is bi-lingual, or by finding a sixth former who free and bi-lingual. In other lessons, though, such students get left behind as they lose track of what is happening, or they give the pretence of understanding, without really having learnt anything. The other problem is that some support staff do not have a good enough command of English themselves, so students get into bad habits of spelling, for example.
31. Teaching and learning for students with special educational needs are good in Years 7 to 9, and satisfactory in Years 10 and 11. Teaching is better in Years 7 to 9 where teaching methods concentrate on developing students' basic skills, especially reading and writing, and, when combined with the good support from the learning support department, this results in very good achievement for students with special educational needs. In Years 10 and 11, teachers do not always focus well enough on providing suitable work for the range of ability found in most

classes. Individual education plans for students with special educational needs are good and contain suitably specific targets for improvement. However, teachers make very limited use of them to provide work at an appropriate level. This affects both the suitability of work provided and teachers' ability to assess whether students with special educational needs are making good progress and meeting their targets. Nevertheless, the specialist teachers and learning support assistants provide very effective and caring support for students with special educational needs in Years 10 and 11, so they are able to achieve well.

32. The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection, especially in the proportion of lessons that are now very good or better. This improvement is partly a result of the school's systems for developing teachers' skills; however, the way that the school has organised its advanced skills teachers into a team, and used their expertise, is driving up the quality of teaching at a rapid rate.

Assessment

33. Assessment is good overall. The school takes great care to ensure that it has as much information as it can on students when they enter the school and supplements this with its own tests. This information is then used to ensure that every student is given the appropriate support and placed in the correct set. Many students enter the school with difficulties with literacy; the vast majority have English as an additional language and a significant proportion are at the early stages of learning English. The school has special support mechanisms to ensure that these students are given the help that they require.
34. A wealth of reliable information is held centrally and the school uses this very effectively to track progress and intervene if a student is falling behind or in need of extra help. The strength of this system is that it is accessible to all teachers who can use it to update their records or to find out how students are performing. All teachers know which students have special educational needs and which students are gifted and talented and so can use the information to help them plan their lessons.
35. Marking and feedback to students in lessons are mostly good, especially in English and physical education as students know what their mistakes are, although in music and design and technology they do not get enough advice on how to improve their work. There has been a drive to help students to understand what they have to do to reach the next level and the emphasis is on students knowing what level they are performing at so that they can ask the teacher to tell them how to reach the next level. Almost all departments clearly display notices telling students what to do to move up a grade and literacy targets are placed on the outside of every student's exercise books so that they are constantly reminded what they need to do. Assessment is better in Years 10 and 11, because teachers have an excellent knowledge of the examination requirements and match their assessment procedures to the examination criteria, especially in terms of coursework.

Sixth form

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is at least good in all the subjects inspected, except in mathematics in Year 12, and is very good in ICT and business.
- The consistency of very good teaching in the main school carries on in the sixth form.

Commentary

36. Almost all students in the sixth form study ICT at one level or another; many also study business studies. Teaching in both these subjects is very good. The common factor in the teaching of these subjects is the high quality of support that students receive, based on teachers' excellent understanding of the subjects and examination syllabuses. This knowledge allows teachers to tailor the lessons to the needs of individuals, while at the same time ensuring they are receiving the individual advice that will enable them to improve the quality of their work and their performance in the examination. Teaching is also good in health and social care, where there are many students, and in English and leisure and tourism. Teaching in mathematics is satisfactory in Year 12 and good in Year 13; teachers have the same strength in terms of knowledge of the subject and syllabus, but do not guide students nearly as well because the marking of work is infrequent.
37. Students' achievement is very well tracked and is closely monitored by subject teachers and by tutors. The detailed information held centrally is very well used; students' performance is carefully analysed and compared to predictions for future attainment using a school designed system. This allows teachers to intervene promptly if action is needed. Marking of students' work is thorough and outlines clearly what students need to do to improve.

The curriculum

The curriculum is very good. There is a very good range of extra clubs and activities. The school has adequate resources, staffing and accommodation. The school fails to provide a statutory act of collective worship.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In Years 10 and 11, there is a very good range of courses on offer.
- The school provides targeted support for many different groups of students.
- The range of extra activities is very good.
- The school does not provide a daily act of collective worship.

Commentary

38. The way that the school organises its curriculum is highly innovative. Central to the school's philosophy is that the curriculum should meet the needs of all students. To this end, the school has organised support for specific groups of students. For example, there is a scheme for supporting African-Caribbean students that is very well attended. The scheme has received national attention for the way that the students' self-esteem has been improved and the school has seen a significant improvement in their achievement, to the extent that this group no longer underachieves. Many other groups are also targeted, such as those who should be getting high GCSE grades, those who are carers, or those who, with a bit more effort, could get five GCSEs at grades A* to C. There are many extra classes to help students catch up if they have arrived after the start of Year 7, as well as booster classes to help those who have underachieved in previous years. Students with special educational needs do particularly well in Years 7 to 9 because of the good support they receive from specialist staff and the whole school push on improving literacy and attitudes to learning.
39. In Years 7 to 9, the basic curriculum is good. The provision of a diverse range of languages is rooted firmly in the belief that all languages are equal and that students are entitled to learn their home languages. Being a language college allows the school to offer an exciting range of enrichment activities such as trips to France, Dubai, Spain and Italy. In Years 10 and 11, the curriculum is very good. There is a strong emphasis on vocational education; vocational courses include applied GCSEs in subjects such as ICT and health and social care. All these courses develop skills and knowledge and have a strong work-related element. There are very good links with colleges of further education. A group of students follow a specific work-related course that meets their needs very well. These students gain success and attain vocational qualifications. The very good progress made by students with special

educational needs in Years 7 to 9 ensures that they are able to have access to the same curriculum as other students and to all the school's activities. However, one weakness is that the school does not provide a daily act of collective worship.

40. In all years, there are classes in all subjects that are made up entirely of boys. The main reason for this arrangement is so that there are sufficient numbers of girls in the other classes that they do not feel isolated. However, the arrangements also mean that teachers can tailor their teaching strategies more closely to the needs of the boys.
41. There is very good provision for extra-curricular activities. From the early morning homework clubs through to after-school clubs, students have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities; the proportion involved in activities of all types are in excess of those usually seen in schools. As well as clubs catering for students' interests, there are also many extra academic classes which play an important part in ensuring students achieve very well. There is also a very good range of sporting activities which occurs out of normal school hours.
42. There is a good personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme and students have separate citizenship lessons. Special events such as the UNICEF 'Making Peace' conference for Year 9 students provide students with the opportunity to learn about the UN Convention on the 'Rights of the Child'. Gifted and talented students are well catered for. In particular, students who are talented have exceptional access to cricket coaching of the highest order and this is reflected in one of the school's cricket teams being county indoor and outdoor champions. Gifted students have the opportunity to study for separate sciences at GCSE level. In mathematics, many students gain their GCSE a year earlier than is usually seen and go on to study GCSE statistics.
43. The school has a good number of special educational needs support staff, who help students to achieve as well as others. However, cutbacks in funding and problems with recruitment have led to a reduction in the number of support teachers for students who are learning English for the first time. The school no longer has enough support for all such students.
44. The curriculum is significantly better than that noted in the previous inspection. Diversity and challenge are fundamental to the school and to this end the curriculum is very successful.

Sixth form

The curriculum is very good, with a very good range of extra clubs and activities available. The accommodation is satisfactory; staffing and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The college provides courses that are very well suited to the needs of the students.
- There is very good provision for enrichment.

Commentary

45. The college provides a range of courses, at different levels, that are suitable for the students staying on to the sixth form; these are taught by well-qualified staff. Most students study for two-year courses although there are students who leave after one year after gaining success. Other students take three years and build up from intermediate through to advanced level courses. The courses build very well on those lower down the school, so students have a very good foundation for their studies. The college also offers courses using its video-conferencing facilities to support 'minority' A-levels. Many students study key-skills based courses which help to improve their skills in communication and number. The courses are very well suited to the needs of the students, many of whom see their future in ICT, the caring services or business. The school provides a wide range of options within these subjects in particular, so students can start at whatever level is appropriate and work their way through to a level of accreditation that is right for them. The school also makes sure that these subjects are well resourced, particularly with computers, so that students can all work individually. Students have the

same very good access to enrichment activities as those in the main school and, like other students, have support for specific groups such as those who, with encouragement, could apply to the top universities.

Care, guidance and support

Main school

The quality of care is very good and is strength of the school. Students receive very effective support and guidance, which significantly enhance their academic progress and personal development. Health and safety arrangements are good, as are the school's arrangements for taking account of students' views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The pastoral system makes good provision for continuity of care
- Students have a high regard for the support that they receive from the learning mentors.
- Vulnerable students receive very good personal support and guidance.
- Students' academic progress and personal development are closely monitored and very well supported.
- The condition of the toilets on the eastern site is poor; students feel very strongly about this issue.

Commentary

46. The school makes good provision for students' welfare, health and safety. It has put in place good procedures to raise awareness of, and deal with, child protection issues. Arrangements for first aid are also good and address the problems of the large campus. For example, in the event of an accident members of staff can summon a qualified first aider via two-way radio. The use of portable radios also enhances the quality of security at both sites. The school has a comprehensive health and safety policy that clearly outlines responsibilities and routines. Most risk assessments are thorough but the physical education department needs to carry out a little more work in this area. The school has improved the toilets in the west site, but has yet to deal with the problems of the east site. Students feel extremely strongly about this matter. They say that the state of the toilets at the east site is "disgusting" and unacceptable; inspectors agree with their views.
47. The school's system of pastoral care is very effective in meeting the diverse needs of its students. The induction of the new intake is well organised and enables Year 7 to meet teachers and get to know the school site before they transfer from primary school. This boosts their confidence and helps them to settle quickly. The large numbers of students who enter the school after the start of Year 7 receive very good personal guidance. There are several support staff who speak community languages and are able to assist anyone who does not understand English. The pastoral system provides students with good continuity of care. Form tutors and heads of year stay with their tutor group and year groups from Year 8 to Year 11 and therefore get to know students and their families well as individuals. The school offers a very good choice of sources of advice. Students can obtain guidance from non-teaching staff, youth workers, or trained peer mentors (known as student communicators). The school's learning mentors are very highly regarded. Students are well aware of their role, and many of them say that they would go to a mentor if they had a serious problem. The school provides vulnerable individuals with very good support. For example, there is a Young Carers Group that helps children who have responsibility for looking after relatives. The learning mentors play an invaluable part in supporting students with problems. They advise them on how to manage their behaviour and very effectively help them to cope with the demands of school life. The mentors are one of the reasons why students with special education needs make very good progress. Girls have their own areas within the school, so they have spaces where they can get away from the boys, either for reasons of faith or simply to get some peace at lunchtime.
48. The school makes very good arrangements to support each and every student's academic achievement and personal development. It keeps very good records on attainment, behaviour and attendance and provides students with very good feedback through termly 'Progress Reviews'. The system gives tutors

designated time for meet their tutees individually to discuss their work and to plan for improvement. It is effective in promoting students' understanding of their learning and progress, and assists them to set realistic targets.

49. Provision for academic and personal support is enhanced by the quality of relationships within the school. Students like and trust members of staff, and therefore are willing to turn to them for help with problems. They respect their teachers and have confidence in their advice. The majority of students also believe that members of staff are interested in their views and take account of their opinions on the running of the school.
50. Overall, students receive good guidance on the next stage of their education. The school provides Year 9 with good information on their options for Year 10 subjects. Students who are now in Years 10 and 11 have few regrets on the choices that they made. Nearly all sixth form students are happy with the advice that they received when they were in the main school. However, there were a few Year 11 students who were intent on choosing AS-level subjects that they would find difficult. They were not getting effective advice on courses that would give them a realistic chance of success; the school has recognised this deficiency and has taken steps to ensure that it will not occur again. Students receive good guidance on life outside school and the world of work. The school's programme of PSHE covers sex and drugs education, citizenship and careers, and provides students with the information that they need to make sensible decisions about their lifestyles. Students of all ages value 'social studies' lessons, saying that they find them both interesting and helpful. There is good provision for work experience. The school ensures that all students in Year 10 obtain placements, but encourages them make arrangements for themselves. This approach is very effective in developing their independence and initiative.

Sixth form

Sixth form students receive very good educational and personal support. Provision for their welfare, health and safety is good. Policies and procedures are the same in the sixth form as in the main school. There are good arrangements for consulting students and taking account of their views.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of personal support is very good.
- Students get very good help with developing their study skills.
- The school makes good arrangements for guidance on careers and future courses of study.

Commentary

51. Students receive very good personal help and guidance in the sixth form; arrangements are similar to those in the main school. A system of form tutors and head of year provides well-structured pastoral care. The school takes good account of students' individual needs. One of its learning mentors has specific responsibility for advising sixth formers who require extra support. The induction of students who are new to the school is handled well. Members of staff go out of their way to help them to settle in and to cope with their work. A student who joined the sixth form last year from a school in another country is full of praise for the support that he has received. He says that it has enabled him to make good progress in a course that is very different from anything that he had experienced before.
52. There are very good arrangements for academic support and guidance in the sixth form. Students have access to extra classes in their subjects and can also attend weekly lunchtime sessions on study skills. They find this extra provision very helpful in raising their attainment. As in the main school, there is a system of progress reviews involving one-to-one discussions between students and teachers. Students say that the reviews, together with regular marking of their work, give them very good feedback on their learning and progress.

53. The quality of guidance on further courses of study and careers is good, and enables students to make informed decisions about their future. The school arranges visits to local universities in order to promote understanding of the opportunities and demands of higher education. The sixth form programme of personal and social education provides students with good general advice on careers and employment. The quality of individual guidance on careers is also good. Students have access to careers advisers, and their teachers give them good practical help with applying for courses and completing UCAS forms. On very rare occasions students do not get guidance that serves their best interests and, as a result, go ahead with courses for which they are unsuited.
54. Arrangements for seeking students' views are good overall. The majority of them believe that the school and sixth form councils provide effective means of raising concerns with senior members of staff. They also feel that their teachers treat their opinions seriously. However, many students think that the school does not act on their views or explain why it cannot take action on what they want.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Main school

The school has a very good partnership with parents, the community and other schools and colleges. Its links are major strengths that enhance the quality of pastoral care and make an important contribution to students' learning and personal development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are very satisfied with the quality of the education that the school provides.
- There are very good arrangements for providing parents with information about the school and about their children's progress.
- A wide range of links with the community enhances students' learning and progress.
- There are strong and mutually beneficial links with other schools and colleges.
- There are few links between subjects and local employers.

Commentary

55. The school has the confidence of parents. They are very happy with the quality of teaching, the progress that their children make, and teachers' expectations of students concerning hard work. Their support has a positive impact on attainment and progress. Parents are ambitious for their children, want them to do well and are very supportive. The majority of them attend consultation evenings in order to discuss their children's progress with teachers. Attendance at these occasions has risen sharply in recent years and is now very high. Parents' desire for their children to succeed has a positive impact on standards of attainment. For example, they ensure students go to school and do not miss lessons. Parentally-condoned truancy is rare, and even the incidence of extended holiday leave has declined considerably. However, although parents are keen to help their children they often lack the necessary knowledge to provide effective support for learning. Many of them have limited skills in literacy and numeracy and are therefore unable to give much help with homework.
56. The majority of parents come from the ethnic minorities. Many of them speak English as a second language, and significant numbers do not speak it at all. The school has very effective strategies for establishing good links with them and engaging their support. It employs a team of home/school liaison workers who speak a number of community languages and have

established a good rapport with many families. They make a very valuable contribution to the partnership between home and school. Other notable features are the parents' groups and weekly 'drop in' sessions. These are held during the day and encourage mothers to come into school to meet heads of year and form tutors on an informal basis. Their success is evident from the inspection's survey of parents' views. This shows that, despite the barriers of language and culture, the vast majority of parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with queries and concerns.

57. The quality of information for parents is very good. The school prospectus gives a clear outline of the curriculum and of school routines. Further information is readily available on the school website and from the curriculum booklets for each year group. End-of-year reports give parents good information on their children's progress. The sections on subjects include attainment levels, teachers' comments on the student's strengths and weaknesses and targets for improvement. The quality of targets is variable. Some are very specific, while others are of a general nature or relate to attitudes rather than knowledge and skills. Written reports are only one way in which parents are informed of their children's progress. In addition, there are student planners, which contain summaries of progress reviews, parents' evenings and informal meetings with teachers. Taken together, they provide very good information on students' progress. There is little evidence to support a parent's claim that consultation evenings are chaotic. The school has stopped using appointments because they did not work, but the new arrangements have not increased waiting times.
58. The school has a wide-ranging and productive partnership with the community. Its links with local organisations are very effective in extending students' opportunities for learning. This is especially the case in physical education. An agreement between the school and the local sport centre allows students to use the latter's facilities, and the input from members of Attock Cricket Club has helped several students to attain extremely high standards in this sport. The school has good links with the wider world. Its partnership with a school in Germany gives students very good opportunities to develop their language skills. There are some very good links with employers in the local area, and these make a vital contribution to arrangements for careers education. For example, they enable students to go on work experience placements. However, direct contacts between work-related subjects and employers are relatively few. This is particularly the case in health and social care. The school works closely with a number of specialist services that provide support, guidance and extra-curricular activities for students. It has very strong ties with the youth service, and several youth workers are based on the school campus. There is also very effective co-operation between the school and the careers service, Connexions, over guidance to students on future courses and careers.
59. Links with other schools and colleges and with universities are strong and wide ranging. Moseley is involved in collaborative work with several other secondary schools, giving members of staff very good opportunities to exchange ideas with colleagues and share good practice. This in turn has a beneficial effect on the quality of teaching and learning. In science, in particular, there are links with other schools, each with its own area of excellence, that are being built upon to benefit all the schools in the group. There is effective co-operation between Moseley School and local primary schools over the transfer of Year 6 to secondary education. Eight primary schools are also partners in Moseley School's specialist college status, and this has promoted strong curricular links. Moseley gains from the arrangement by receiving students with enhanced attainment in modern foreign languages

Sixth form

The school has a very good partnership with parents of sixth form students. Links with the community and other schools and colleges are also very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school makes very good arrangements to secure parents' continued support for students' learning.
- Links with the local community and other schools and colleges enhance students' opportunities for learning.

Commentary

60. Parents continue to be very supportive of the school when their children are in the sixth form. They want them to do well so that they can go on to further and higher education and get good qualifications. Their aspirations have a positive effect on students' motivation and attendance, and consequently on their attainment and progress.
61. Arrangements for involving parents in their children's learning are essentially the same as in the main school, with a similar cycle of consultation evenings and reports. The sixth form prospectus is very well presented and gives good information on syllabuses and choice of courses.
62. Relations with other sixth forms and with colleges of further education are good even though they are in competition for students. There are no problems over students who move from school to college and back again. Links are constructive and enhance students' opportunities for learning. For example, Moseley School has a consortium arrangement with a local girls' school in respect of post-16 courses. There are very good contacts with local universities. The school uses these to provide sixth formers with information on higher education and to raise their aspirations. Visits to the universities of Birmingham and Aston encourage students to consider the options that are open to them after they have completed their sixth form courses.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the school by the headteacher is outstanding. The leadership of other key staff is very good, as is governance. Management of the school is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides an outstanding role model for others.
- Managers, at all levels, work hard to ensure all students have the opportunity to do as well as others.
- The school adapts very well to its changing circumstances through its use of data and the way it trains staff.
- Leadership and management of design and technology are not good enough to improve standards in Years 7 to 9.

Commentary

63. The school has changed considerably since it was last inspected. In particular, the attainment of students joining the school is now much lower and there are many more students joining the school at a time other than the start of Year 7. The school has adapted exceptionally well to these changes in circumstance; so well in fact, that students' achievement is now even better than it was in the past when the intake was more stable. This has been brought about by the development of a 'can do' culture, among both students and staff. This culture stems from the outstanding leadership qualities of the headteacher.

64. Teachers and non-teaching staff took the time to stop inspectors and tell them just how good the headteacher is. Parents describe the headteacher as “fantastic” and “brilliant”; students describe him as “ace”, commenting that he is “alright, you know” (a high accolade in teenage terms). The reason for this universal warmth is the headteacher’s ability to take people with him in his efforts to get the very best out of all students. He is highly visible around the school and always available for students; many of whom take the opportunity to talk with him. He encourages staff to “have a go”, which they do in the knowledge that, if they fail at something there will be no recriminations, just encouragement to try again or try something different. Many staff, both teaching and non-teaching, give up large amounts of their own time to provide extra support for students, either through organising activities for specific groups, teaching extra lessons or providing extra help with pieces of work. Students appreciate the extra work that staff put in, and, as a result, become proud of their school and want to do well for its sake, as well as their own.
65. Other senior managers in the school, both academic and pastoral, want to live up to the expectations of the headteacher. As a result, they carry out their roles very well. Each member of the senior management team has strengths that complement those of other team members, so that as a team, their impact is formidable. Nevertheless, there are a few weaknesses in leadership and management. The weaknesses in design and technology in Years 7 to 9 are not being dealt with rigorously enough, for example, and the reduced funding for students with little or no English, together with problems of recruitment, has meant that some students are not getting enough support. Planning for the school’s future is very good indeed at a whole school level, but some of the weaknesses identified through the excellent and very detailed analysis of data are not then addressed by subjects.
66. One area where the school is very strong is in the way it provides training for teachers. The policies and practice in place for the professional development of all staff are very good. The needs of individuals are carefully matched with the school’s improvement priorities; in this way the school is able to use its budget efficiently to ensure that the most effective training available is used. The quality of the training staff receive is carefully monitored and thorough records are kept. The most remarkable aspect of the school’s strategy for staff development is the way that good practice is shared amongst colleagues, reflecting a shared commitment to improve, that is led and organised by the team of advanced skills teachers. All staff are given the opportunity to lead training sessions with colleagues outside of the school day and there is a mandatory training session for all staff every week; this keeps all staff abreast of changes and aware of the school’s priorities.
67. The awarding of specialist language college status has been managed well. Its influence is felt across the school so that all staff can see the benefits. The school has been quick to use the community languages and an individual’s own languages as a status symbol, making sure all students see speaking more than one language as something special. The language college status has also been used to emphasise the inclusive nature of the school, where cultural and faith differences are celebrated and students can learn from one another. The result is a very high degree of harmony in the school, which is often at odds with the experiences of the students outside the school.
68. The governors play a very good role in leading the school forward. They, rightly, depend heavily on the advice and guidance of senior staff, but supplement this extremely well with visits to lessons, meetings with staff and calling staff to report to governors. In this way they have developed a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and place themselves in a very good position to question the headteacher and others about its performance. The one weakness is the governors’ failure to ensure that the school is providing a daily act of collective worship.

Sixth form

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Exactly the same strengths are apparent in the sixth form as in the main school.

Commentary

69. The improvement in the sixth form has mirrored that in the main school, because the systems that are used are the same as those in the main school. There has been a very good emphasis on ensuring that the sixth form curriculum changes to meet the changing needs of its students; there are now many more courses in ICT, health and social care and business for example. Many of these courses are vocational, rather than the traditional advanced level courses. This caused the school some problems, because data on the performance of students on these courses has not been available nationally in enough detail to allow the school to compare their performance with that of others. So, the school developed its own system for analysing data and predicting outcomes. Now the school is in a position to carry out the same high quality analysis of students' performance as in the main school.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	5759520	Balance from previous year	203955
Total expenditure	5656770	Balance carried forward to the next	306705
Expenditure per student	3958		

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

Work-related learning (WRL)

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Over two thirds of students take advantage of the good range of vocational courses.
- Good leadership and management are giving direction to WRL.
- Work experience is good and successfully supports and complements school-based work.

Commentary

70. WRL courses are successfully building upon the Year 10 work experience programme where good links have been established with local employers. Students value their work experience placement. They understand it supports and complements the work they do in school and successfully develops an awareness of the world of work. Over two thirds of the students successfully find their own placements. Students benefit from work experience, which successfully prepares them for the world of work. It is supplemented by a full programme of careers guidance from Year 7 to Year 11, which includes good support through the Connexions service. Thorough analysis of WRL has taken place identifying areas for improvement within subjects. The school runs a wide range of applied vocational courses in leisure and tourism, business studies and ICT. These vocational courses are well supported by students and have been developed to meet students' needs.

71. Subjects like English, mathematics, PSHE and ICT involve students in problem solving and working both independently and collaboratively. These skills are easily transferred to the work place as exemplified in the 'Industry Day'. In lessons, students are often engaged working in groups and delivering presentations. WRL is seen as a tool to enliven teaching and to improve

students' learning and achievement. A significant number of teachers have undertaken recent work placements, which brings experience of business, industry and commerce into the classroom. This enriches students' learning especially for those who prefer to learn in a practical way. Visitors from Jaguar Cars, ASDA superstore and other local employers give students the opportunity to be involved in the process of job application and interview preparation.

72. WRL is well led and managed. Audits have enabled an evaluation of the WRL programme and an opportunity to develop enterprise initiatives. The links and partnerships are well established and are successfully creating first-hand experiences for students.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Well below average	Below average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching, learning and achievement are good throughout Years 7 to 11.
- Students have good attitudes. In particular, in Years 10 and 11 they adopt a mature approach and work hard at redrafting their work to improve its quality.
- Some of the marking is superficial and does not give students the guidance they need if they are to improve.

Commentary

Examination results

73. In 2003, results obtained at the end of Year 9 were very low. In 2004, they were significantly better. In 2003, GCSE results were below average and in English literature they were average. In 2004, they were similar in English but dipped in English literature.

Standards and achievement

74. Students arrive at the school with very low standards in English; they achieve well to improve their standards to well below average by the end of Year 9. In Years 7 to 9 there are small groups of higher attaining students who express themselves well orally, can produce accurate and well-expressed written work and who read with some depth of understanding. The majority of students, however, are much more limited in how they communicate. Students are mostly keen to participate in oral work but frequently express themselves using colloquial language. However, they do become more self-critical as they progress through the three years and become better able to find the right tone for different situations. Many students write in simple sentences and their work is marred by errors of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Though students often find difficulty in expressing their response to literature in writing, their oral responses indicate that they are often alert readers.
75. In Years 10 and 11 students improve their skills at a rate that means they move up to being below average. Higher attaining students learn how to use a more formal style and increasingly use the correct technical vocabulary when, for example, they discuss literature. Many students become much more careful about re-drafting their work so as to improve its quality and pay close attention to the guidance provided by teachers. The result is that all students become better able to raise their standards. Higher attainers produce coursework which is well

structured and of good quality. Students become increasingly more able to explain their understanding of what they read, in both oral and written forms.

Teaching and learning

76. Teaching and learning are good throughout Years 7 to 11. Teaching is most effective when the teacher has good subject knowledge and uses this to probe students' understanding, so that they think more deeply and are able to formulate their own ideas more clearly. Teachers generally have a good knowledge of the requirements of the courses they teach, some through being examiners, and this enables them to clearly explain to students what is expected of them. This, in turn, helps students to be confident, to feel that they are making progress and that they can achieve their aims. Teachers give students helpful guidance on how to improve their work and this leads students to take a more mature approach and to try hard. However, there is some inconsistency. The marking tends to be more thorough and detailed in Years 10 and 11 than in Years 7 to 9 and practice varies from one class to another. When the marking is superficial, students do not know how to improve, and become discouraged. The department enjoys the benefit of a dedicated learning support assistant, who understands the working practices of teachers and who is effectively deployed to support students' learning. Homework is set regularly and used well to support students' learning. Most students behave well and have good attitudes towards learning.
77. In the less effective lessons, teachers tend to set tasks by briefly telling students what they should do rather than by explaining in sufficient depth or, more especially, by demonstrating, what is required. This means that students who have limited powers of expression do not have adequate models upon which to base their own writing, with the result that what they do produce is often too brief and inappropriate. Additionally, when students are not clear about what is expected of them the pace in the lesson starts to flag and students become restless and noisy. Some large classes receive no additional learning support, with the result that some students, particularly those who are at the early stages of learning English as an additional language, make relatively slow progress.

Leadership and management

78. The head of department is a good role model and teachers work well together as a team. However, monitoring has not been entirely effective in ironing out inconsistencies of practice or in enabling teachers to share best practice. GCSE results have improved since the previous inspection and progress has generally been good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

79. Standards of literacy are below average by the time students reach Year 11, and by Year 9 students' literacy skills are well below average. Overall, this represents very good progress, since students' standards on entry to Year 7 are very low.
80. There are a number of factors that account for this level of improvement. In Years 7 to 9 the school has implemented a STEPS approach to literacy, which involves setting targets for students to achieve in their writing. This has been valuable in involving teachers in all subjects and has led to a focus upon how to improve skills in writing. In Years 10 and 11 students are required to produce coursework as a part of their preparation for GCSE. There is considerable emphasis placed on this work. Teachers provide a good quality of guidance and students work hard to improve the quality of their work, particularly through redrafting. This process inevitably involves much emphasis upon skills in communication and so helps to drive up the general standard of literacy. That there is a greater stability in the population of students in

Years 10 and 11 than there is in Years 7 to 9 also helps this clear improvement in standards as students move up the school.

81. However, there are some aspects of the provision of literacy that are less effective. The extent to which the school has adopted the National Strategy for Literacy is somewhat variable. Some aspects of it have been incorporated well, for example, the manner in which STEPS operates to support writing skills and in the use of the nationally promoted lesson structure. However, there is relatively little emphasis upon a full range of reading skills, particularly in Years 7 to 9. Additionally, a number of teachers rely upon giving oral explanations and instructions to students when setting a task, rather than showing them how to do it through, for example, demonstration. The quality of marking, particularly paying attention to students' spelling, punctuation and grammar, is inconsistent.

Modern foreign languages

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

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

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve well in German and Urdu because they are well taught and well prepared for the examination.
- Students enjoy learning a language and respond by behaving well.
- In some lessons students have work that is too easy or too difficult for them.

Commentary

Examination results

82. In French and in German, examination results were below average in 2003. In Urdu, results were well below average. No students took an examination course in Spanish in 2003. Students did worse in French and Urdu than in other subjects they took in the school but in German there was no significant difference in their performance. In 2004 results dropped in French but rose slightly in German. In Urdu results improved and in Spanish there were no examination entries. The school enters several other individual students for languages, such as Arabic or Dutch. Usually, these examinations are taken in Year 10 and students invariably do well.

Standards and achievement

83. Students arrive at the school with well below average standards; they achieve well and their standards are below average by the end of Year 9. The current Year 9 students are working well below the level that would be expected nationally in French and Spanish, below in German and at the average level in Urdu. In German and Urdu achievement is good and in Spanish and French achievement is satisfactory. In all languages students often have literacy difficulties when they enter the school and a significant proportion are at the early stages of learning English; they are making good progress as they improve their English as well as learning another language during their lessons. In Spanish achievement is satisfactory as they have not been learning the language for as long as the other languages and have reduced time to study it.

In Urdu progress is good; almost all students have some knowledge of the language before they begin the course and so progress in speaking and listening is often stronger than in reading and writing. In Urdu spoken skills are well developed as students often have opportunities to practise this outside the lesson. In German, achievement is good as students are taught well. In French, students achieve as would be expected. Most higher attaining students in all four languages write accurately on a limited range of topics and can work in at least two of the main tenses. In French, German and Spanish, students with special educational needs are hindered by their literacy difficulties in reading and writing but can often speak with good pronunciation and find listening relatively easy.

84. By the end of Year 11 students' skills are well below average in French and Spanish. In German their skills are below average and they are average in Urdu. In German and Urdu achievement is good and in French and Spanish achievement is satisfactory as students are making appropriate progress during Years 10 and 11. Students at an early stage of learning English and those with special educational needs continue to achieve well. In Spanish, the two-year course will lead to a certificate in business language competence but no students have yet been entered for all the elements of this examination, although the majority have passed one element. In French and in Spanish, students have also suffered from some instability in staffing which has disrupted their learning. In the GCSE courses in French, German and Urdu, higher attaining students are more competent in listening than in other skills. Students do not often get the opportunity to speak at length or from memory, especially in French, but when made to do so by the teacher they have reasonable accuracy and pronunciation. Students develop satisfactory skills in reading texts but do not often work on authentic texts in French. In writing, they perform better in coursework where they have more time to work out and refine their answers.

Teaching and learning

85. In German and Urdu teaching is good, and in French and Spanish teaching is satisfactory. In all the languages the teaching has strengths in common. For example, teachers explain clearly what students have to do, using the foreign language as often as possible; this is a real strength in Urdu. Students are expected to listen carefully to the teacher and are treated fairly but firmly when they misbehave. In the good lessons, teachers taught at a lively pace with carefully designed activities which allowed students to revise key language in ways that were motivating and fun. Students enjoyed, for example, pretending in German that they were lost in a rainforest and having to dress up and then describe what they had to wear and what they had to eat. Teachers use carefully selected resources and a wide variety of tasks, including lots of games and competitions to encourage students to work quickly.
86. In all years teachers are making good use of the national strategy for improving teaching, such as starting lessons with quick revision exercises and dividing the lesson into three parts with a summary at the end. In Years 10 and 11, students are well prepared for the demands of the examination and are motivated by the modular examination in which they can build up marks as they progress through Years 10 and 11. In German students are given helpful revision guides and extra help is available in all the languages when needed. Teachers use ICT well, for example to help make the presentation of new language clear using the interactive whiteboard. Lower attaining students sometimes benefit from having worksheets adapted for their needs but this is not consistent across the department. Students get good feedback in lessons about their performance and teachers ensure that accuracy and pronunciation are corrected when necessary. Students who are gifted or talented are encouraged to enter for the GCSE early and are given master classes. In all languages there were instances of students beginning to use the language

spontaneously, for example to ask for a pen or for a teacher to explain something. Relationships between staff and students are very good and teachers ensure that their behaviour is good.

87. In French and Spanish, especially in Years 10 and 11, students have suffered from some instability in staffing which has disrupted their learning. For example, they have not been able to complete some of the Spanish examination units. In the weaker lessons, which were more often seen in French, students had work that was too easy or too difficult for them. For example, they worked with single nouns for most of the lesson and were only to put these nouns into full sentences in the closing minutes of the lesson. Sometimes the objectives were not precise enough and did not state whether students would be speaking or writing, or simply understanding the new language. Students were not often allowed to work in pairs and so did not get enough practice at oral work. There were times when students relied heavily on reading out answers from books or sheets and did not work enough from memory. In Urdu quiet girls were not always included in the lesson. Homework is not consistently checked and is sometimes not recorded by students in their planners. In some classes, especially in German, students are encouraged to keep their work neatly and to make notes that they can use for revision purposes later. However, some students, especially those of middle and lower ability, find revising difficult as they do not keep their notes systematically.

Leadership and management

88. Examination results are carefully monitored so that teachers know what improvements are needed, but the actions taken in response do not ensure that the different skills are equally well covered. There is a very good breadth of languages available for students to study and a range of accreditation which includes vocational options to suit the varied needs of the students. There are extensive links with local businesses and colleges, including links with teacher training institutions, and students also benefit from a wide range of clubs and activities which helps them to learn a language. Languages continue to be popular with students and all continue with at least one in Years 10 and 11, with two thirds doing two. The department now provides an improved quality of education to that at the time of the previous inspection.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Well below average	Below average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers help students achieve well by planning lessons clearly, using their good understanding of mathematics.
- Teachers have high expectations of the students; however, individual higher attainers are not always sufficiently challenged.
- ICT is not used sufficiently to consolidate or extend students' learning.
- The very highest attaining students in Year 10 take their GCSE examination early and in Year 11 study GCSE statistics.

Commentary

Examination results

89. Results in the 2003 national tests at the end of Year 9 were well below average. In 2004 they improved slightly. The GCSE results in 2003 were well below average; they improved significantly in 2004.

Standards and achievement

90. Students arrive at the school with very low standards; they achieve well and their standards are well below average by Year 9. By Year 9, students' investigational skills are well below average as the students' exposure to using and applying mathematics in Years 7 and 8 is insufficient to develop these skills further. Students overall have well below average numerical and algebraic skills. Only the higher attainers are able to generate with ease numerical sequences using given rules; the lower attainers struggle with this owing to their difficulty in recalling their multiplication tables.

91. By the end of Year 11, students' data-handling skills are below average. The higher attainers can construct cumulative frequency diagrams from raw data enabling them to find the inter-quartile range. However, they do not label axes accurately and in their random sampling methods use the wrong terminology in describing the sample, illustrating the weaknesses in their literacy skills. Overall, students have below average shape, space and measure skills. However, the standard of the lower attaining students is well below average. Whilst they can calculate the perimeter of quadrilaterals by counting the number of centimetre squares, they struggle to do this by multiplication, again due to weak numeracy skills. Students in the early stages of learning English as an additional language have very low literacy skills and hence are unsure of the definition of words such as 'perimeter'. This is one of the major barriers to students in Years 7 to 9 making better progress in mathematics, especially in the national tests.

Teaching and learning

92. Overall, teachers have high expectations of the students, which result in their good achievement. However, some higher attaining students in most classes do not benefit from extra work that would enable them to reach their potential. The very highest attainers, on the other hand, take GCSE early and study an extra GCSE in Year 11, so they do particularly well. Teachers help students to achieve well by planning lessons clearly and having a good understanding of mathematics. Travelling between lessons often results in students arriving late, resulting in valuable learning time being lost, especially for the more punctual, who often just wait, unoccupied. The use of the 'three part' lesson structure gives students a variety of activities that assist their learning. Teachers use good starter activities, to get students going, but the finishes do not recapitulate sufficiently what has been learnt. Students receive good support in lessons from the teachers in order to progress. In one Year 10 lesson on trigonometry, students were very well supported. They were guided closely as to the level they were working at and what they had to do to attain a higher grade, resulting in students making very good progress. Helpful, constructive marking takes place, although there are inconsistencies across classes. Homework is provided regularly and assists in the raising of achievement; however, the low submission rate and poor presentation by some students do not help their learning.

Leadership and management

93. The head of department has a clear vision for improvement and provides good leadership of a team which works hard to raise standards. Schemes of work in Years 7 to 9 have been developed well and support teachers effectively, though this is not the case in Years 10 and 11. Monitoring of both teaching and students' work takes place and this helps teachers to raise

standards. In lessons, ICT is not used sufficiently by teachers as a teaching tool or by students to develop their understanding of mathematics. The students benefit from regular assessment of their learning but the recording mechanisms are not sufficiently diagnostic to allow value added to be closely monitored to substantiate targets. The majority of students are aware of target grades but are unsure of the actual steps needed to achieve their target. Flexible course arrangements in Years 10 and 11 have been made to best suit the needs of students. The highest attainers in Year 10 are entered early for their GCSE examination and in Year 11 study GCSE statistics with the option to re-sit their examination at the higher tier. The department provides very good extra-curricular activities, which support students well in raising their interest and achievement in mathematics. Students' achievement is now better than it was at the time of the previous inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

94. The teaching of mathematics as a basic skill across other subjects is satisfactory. The mathematics department has delivered a training session to other subjects on the teaching and learning of mathematics. An audit of their provision has also taken place and recently been reviewed. Numeracy is a feature in some subjects' lessons, such as geography, where data handling is used well and numeracy is clearly identified in schemes of work and teachers' planning. However, this is not the case in some subjects where numeracy is not sufficiently embedded to develop students' numerical skills across the curriculum.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Well below average	Below average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students do better in GCSE examinations than might be expected, given their test results when they enter the school.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge, plan lessons carefully and manage students well, so that students' learning is generally quick and secure.
- Teaching of electric circuits and chemical equations is not as good as it should be in Years 7 to 9.
- In Years 10 and 11 there is a very good range of courses, so that all students can follow a course that is right for them.
- Good leadership and strong teamwork within the department have led to improvements in test and examination results.

Commentary

Examination results

95. In the 2003 national tests at the end of Year 9, results were very low. GCSE results for double award science were well below the national average in 2003. Results in both Year 9 tests and GCSE examinations improved significantly in 2004. Also, for the first time in 2004, one group

in Year 11 took three separate GCSE science subjects; all students taking these more demanding courses were successful in gaining grades A* to C.

Standards and achievement

96. Students in both key stages generally have at least a basic knowledge of the topics they are studying. Higher attainers in all year groups reach standards that are average for their age. Students of all abilities in Years 10 and 11 have better investigative skills than their skills in other aspects of science. Standards in the separate science courses are above the national average and, in Year 10 physics, students demonstrate good understanding of the working of loudspeakers and microphones. However, middle and lower attainers often find it difficult to remember the details of earlier topics.
97. Students' standards in tests and examinations are badly affected by weaknesses in their literacy skills. For example, in last year's national tests at the end of Year 9, students whose reading skills were weak had problems in understanding exactly what the questions meant. In addition, almost all students have difficulty in saying precisely what they mean when writing answers to unfamiliar questions.
98. At the end of both Year 9 and Year 11, students do better in tests and GCSE examinations than might be expected, given their test results when they entered the school. Hence their overall achievement is good. This is the result of the quality of teaching that students receive in class and also the extra help and booster classes which are available to all. The lowest attainers do particularly well and almost all of them are enabled to gain a grade G or above in double award science.

Teaching and learning

99. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan their lessons carefully. They generally manage students well, even when students arrive at the lesson restless and disinclined to work. When teaching is good or better, explanations are clear and distinct and important learning points are reinforced in various interesting activities. Occasionally, teaching is very good, for example when Year 7 students were required to memorise the features of plant and animal cells and then tell the rest of their group how to draw and label those cells. Students enjoyed the activity, concentrated furiously throughout and were genuinely striving to remember the diagrams and key words.
100. However, there are some weaknesses in teaching, particularly in Years 7 to 9. For example, the teaching of electric circuits is inadequate and leads to students in Year 10 having only patchy understanding of basic principles. Also, teachers do not place enough emphasis on the use of chemical equations to summarise reactions. In all year groups, there is some lack of variety in the activities that students experience over time. In particular, students get little chance to use computers within science lessons, largely because there is a shortage of access to suitable equipment.

Leadership and management

101. The head of department leads by example, both in the quality of his teaching and in his determination that every student will achieve as well as possible in science. Teachers, technicians and support assistants work well together as a team and share this aim to raise standards. The department chooses its courses for Year 10 and 11 very carefully in order to meet the needs of all students. It now offers 21st Century Science, as well as three separate science subjects, in addition to the more usual double award course.

102. The monitoring of the work of the department is good. For example, there was a particularly thorough investigation into why students did not do as well as expected in Year 9 tests in 2004. The department has two, recently appointed, advanced skills teachers who are already working with other teachers to improve the quality of teaching in the department. However, monitoring of, and support for, teaching are not yet as effective as they might be in securing uniformly good or better teaching for all groups. Since the previous inspection, GCSE results and test results in Year 9 have both improved. Hence, the department has made good progress since it was previously inspected.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Very low	Average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Excellent
Teaching and learning	Satisfactory	Excellent

Leadership	Very good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Very good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve exceedingly well in Years 10 and 11 because of the excellent teaching they receive.
- Students' weak literacy skills impact adversely on their standards.
- Very good leadership has brought about significant improvements.
- Students in Years 7 to 9 struggle with many of the basic ICT skills because teachers do not ensure they are always on task.

Commentary

Examination results

103. Results in the 2003 examinations were below average and improved significantly in 2004. Students achieved exceedingly well given their attainment on entry to the course in Year 10.

Standards and achievement

104. Students arrive at the school with very low standards; they achieve satisfactorily and their standards remain very low by the end of Year 9. By the end of Year 9, students have a basic understanding of presentation software although very weak literacy skills adversely affect standards. Students understand what a spreadsheet can be used for but struggle with basic formulae and many do not understand basic modelling techniques. Students construct databases and know that they can sort records. Their use of the technical language of the subject is weak; they often know the answer to a question but struggle to develop their answers because they cannot put it into English.

105. By Year 11, students have achieved extremely well to improve their standards to average. Students have an average knowledge of website construction and successfully use hyperlinks. Technical language develops, with higher attainers able to answer questions on standard common document formats. Students use presentation software well and use more advanced features such as using sounds to identify key elements of their presentation. Lower attainers

produce presentation slides and know about copyright procedures. Students modify features of their presentations for different audiences. Students understand what to use a database for but struggle to use complex search routines. Students produce spreadsheet models and input basic operators; lower attainers struggle to comprehend why and where spreadsheets might be used. Students make excellent use of the Internet to research projects, for example when students were producing a fact sheet on Cardiff. Students from ethnic minority backgrounds make similar progress to other students, as do boys and girls.

Teaching and learning

106. The main difference in the quality of teaching between Years 7 to 9 and other years is that most of the specialist teachers are deployed in the upper years. Specialist teachers have an excellent knowledge of the subject. They use their knowledge of the examination system to ensure students' coursework is of a good standard. Teachers take care to include all students when preparing tasks which ensure students of all levels of attainment achieve exceeding well in Years 10 and 11.
107. In Years 7 to 9, teachers do not always ensure students are listening to instructions and, as a result, students are often confused. In Years 7 to 9, non-specialist teachers struggle to manage students' low level disruption and in some lessons this leads to learning being unsatisfactory. In Years 10 and 11, specialist teachers use excellent management strategies which bring about students' very good attitudes; the school code of courtesy and respect is very evident. Planning is thorough and the pace of lessons is rapid. Teachers use good resources and exemplar materials to highlight to students how to improve. Non-specialist teachers do not always correct students' spelling errors and miss opportunities to explain to students the technical language of the subject.

Leadership and management

108. There is a very clear vision for improving the subject. There is a strong team of teachers who work well together and are supported very well by senior members of the department. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good. Results have risen significantly as a result of much improved teaching.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

109. Standards are very low in Year 9, but average by Year 11. The use of computers in other areas of the curriculum is satisfactory. Students use ICT to enhance their coursework. In art and design, ICT is used very well to manipulate images. In geography, students produce charts and data analysis using ICT. However, in some subjects, little use is made of ICT because of problems with booking the computer rooms.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is **very good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Below average	Average
Achievement	Very good	Very good
Teaching and learning	Very good	Very good

Leadership	Excellent
Management	Excellent

Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE results are rising rapidly as a result of very good teaching.
- Students achieve very well because of the very good guidance they receive.
- Excellent leadership ensures that students' progress is closely monitored and action taken to raise standards.
- There are insufficient fieldwork opportunities for some students in Years 7 to 9.

Commentary***Examination results***

110. Results in the 2003 examination were average, but improved significantly in 2004, particularly at the highest grades.

Standards and achievement

111. Students arrive at the school with very low standards. By the end of Year 9 students have achieved very well and made gains in knowledge of world topics and in developing their map and graphical skills. Year 7 students achieve well in measuring distances on local maps, but students who are at the early stages of learning English make slower progress because there is insufficient adult support to help them in lessons. Students make significant gains in knowledge of terms and use them correctly to describe why some countries are more developed than others, but standards are below average because they do not explain answers and many have writing weaknesses.
112. By the end of Year 11 students have made very good gains in knowledge and have improved their understanding of topics such as flooding in major world areas like Bangladesh. Higher attaining students achieve above average standards in GCSE coursework and this helps to ensure they do very well in the examination. The quality of work is improved through the use of ICT. Lower attaining students achieve very well because of the support and guidance they receive in lessons and at other times, but they do not make enough use of examples in answers.

Teaching and learning

113. In Years 7 to 9 students learn very well because teachers are knowledgeable and explain points clearly so they understand what their learning is about. Lessons are carefully planned and are well structured to give opportunities for students to be actively involved. They enjoy this, concentrate well and make very good progress. Occasionally, however, too much time is spent on introductory activities so that the latter part of the lesson is rushed and learning is not consolidated. Students are very well informed about how well they are doing through the detailed marking and guidance about how to improve. This leads to them rapidly improving their knowledge and understanding of topics. Students with special educational needs make similar progress because teachers take care to help them overcome their writing difficulties. In Years 10 and 11 students learn very well because teachers make high demands of them in lessons and set rigorous learning challenges for them. Gifted and talented students flourish on these occasions and make rapid advances in learning. Students benefit from teachers' strong class management so they know what is expected of them and do very well as a result.

Leadership and management

114. The well-informed and effective leadership of the subject ensures that there is a strong ethos for learning and it is central to the subject's work. This is shared by teachers and students alike so that very good team spirit exists and leads to students achieving very well. The curriculum is

good overall, but there are not enough opportunities for more students in Years 7 to 9 to benefit from fieldwork. Since the previous inspection students' achievement has improved and teaching and learning have further improved.

History

Provision in history is **good**.

	Year 9	Year 10
Standards	Well below average	Below average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve well because of good teaching by enthusiastic teachers.
- Lessons are interesting and challenging so students behave well and strive hard to succeed.
- Teachers know students' needs well and provide good individual support.
- There is insufficient in-lesson support for teachers in meeting the needs of students who arrive at the school with little or no English.
- The methods used for developing students' literacy in Years 7 to 9 are too limited.

Commentary

Examination results

115. Results in the 2003 GCSE examinations were below average. Results in 2004 were similar.

Standards and achievement

116. In Year 9, standards are well below average and, as they are very low when students enter the school, students' achievement is good. In their oral and written responses students show that their understanding of how to use sources of evidence to interpret events has developed well. Lower attaining students achieve as well as others because teachers provide good individual support for them. In the few lessons where extra staff are provided to support students who are learning English for the first time, their achievement is in line with other students.

117. There is no Year 11 group in history this year, but in Year 10 written work, and lessons, standards are consistent with students continuing to achieve well. Students of varying levels of attainment producing a graph from statistics, for example, showed good understanding of the correlation between German unemployment from 1924 to 1933, and the number of votes cast for the Nazi Party in elections to the Reichstag. The one student who did not achieve well in that lesson was a newly arrived student with very little English. There was no additional support to supplement the individual help conscientiously provided by the teacher, and this is a significant barrier to the better progress of such students.

Teaching and learning

118. In Years 7 to 9, all students benefit from being taught by enthusiastic teachers who expect high standards of work and behaviour. Teachers explain clearly the aims of lessons and provide interesting and challenging learning tasks that stimulate students' interest. Written work is assessed accurately and students know, because of informative feedback, how well they are

doing and what they must do to improve. Homework is used well to extend learning beyond the lesson. Learning is enriched well by the provision of extra-curricular activities like the field study visits to Kenilworth Castle and Birmingham City Centre. Students share such experiences, electronically, with schools in Pakistan and Dubai; an outcome of the school's language college status, this greatly enhances students' appreciation of their own and other cultures. The teaching of literacy helps students to improve their writing, but the range of strategies used is limited. Nevertheless, students' learning is good because of good teaching.

119. In Year 10 students produce good assignments, because teachers have emphasised the importance of this to the gaining of the best possible GCSE grades. Good teaching continues to challenge and capture the interest of students, who work hard and strive to reach the highest levels open to them. Assessments are accurate and students benefit from very knowledgeable feedback from their teachers.

Leadership and management

120. The subject is well led and managed. The head of department leads a team with a shared commitment to good teaching and learning that has maintained good standards through a period in which lessons have had to take place in cramped temporary teaching rooms. The subject development plan matches school priorities and focuses on further improving learning and teaching, and on improving examination results. The subject's plans do not yet, however, state explicitly enough the strategies that teachers must use to further improve students' literacy skills, including speaking skills. Good progress has been made in all respects since the last inspection.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **good**.

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

Leadership	Satisfactory
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Satisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students are keen to be involved and to respond in lessons, because of good teaching.
- Students' knowledge of Islam supports their achievement.
- Teachers ensure that maximum marks are gained from GCSE coursework.
- Students have too few opportunities for first hand experience of people and places of belief.
- There is too little support for students with low levels of English comprehension.

Commentary

Examination results

121. In 2003, GCSE results were above average, but were much lower in 2004. Results fluctuate greatly over the years, although the general trend is upwards.

Standards and achievement

122. Standards in Year 9 are below average. Achievement is good given students' well below average standards on entry to the school. In oral work students often demonstrate a good grasp of the key features of Islam and recognise the importance of duty to the Muslim. They speak with confidence and often conviction, and are able to link what they learn to their own experiences. Students achieve a higher standard in their oral responses than in their written work. Knowledge of other faiths is less secure. Some students find problems with the vocabulary in written information. When this occurs, the significance of what they are studying is sometimes lost. Written responses are often closely linked to the text provided and they do not develop their ideas unless directed to do so. Where students are at an early stage of their English development, their progress is halted when they cannot understand the information provided. The lack of visual material or visits to see the places they are studying reduces the impact of what they learn.

123. Standards in Year 11 are now below average; this represents good achievement for this group of students, whose standards were well below average when they started the course. Students apply their knowledge of Islam to issues concerning the sanctity of life, and the fundamental belief in a supreme being. Their oral work reflects a higher standard and demonstrates a secure grasp of the main teachings that support the Islamic response to these issues. Most students can identify a different view from a non-Muslim standpoint. They are confident in their oral responses and willing to demonstrate their knowledge. Written responses are brief, however, and while demonstrating knowledge, students seldom have the opportunity to discuss or evaluate the different viewpoints in writing. Relevant responses are made, but not developed to demonstrate understanding of the significance of the differing views; they do not reflect on the problems of putting belief into action when making moral decisions. Their coursework on the mosque demonstrates care and detailed knowledge and various aspects are explained and described clearly.

Teaching and learning

124. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers ensure that lessons start with clear aims that are shared with the students. They have high expectations of behaviour and encourage students to take an active part in the lessons. Relationships are good and this supports students' confidence. The high level of knowledge and expertise of the teachers is a strength of the department, and this enables students to respect them. Students rely on their teacher to provide the information and as a consequence their research skills remain underdeveloped. Teachers provide clear and concise supporting information sheets. However, these enable students to mask a lack of understanding by selecting a sentence that they think may be correct, but

without real knowledge. The department provides good support for the development of literacy skills through its use of word search and missing word exercises, and through the use of writing frames. Students' progress is difficult to assess, however, as written responses demonstrate the correct selection of text rather than religious understanding. Marking is superficial, and while teachers use praise and encouragement well, there is little individual constructive advice. There is insufficient opportunity for independent research or group presentations through which students can demonstrate understanding and use of the religious concepts studied.

Leadership and management

125. The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. Teachers have high expectations and the numbers choosing to follow the course at GCSE are rising. The department works well as a team and the development plan identifies appropriate areas for development. Additional time for help is freely available and revision classes support GCSE groups. New resources have been bought to support lower attaining students; however, students following the GCSE course do not have a book for personal use at home. This limits opportunities for research and results in a dependence on worksheets rather than stimulating enquiry. The use of visits to places of worship or visitors from other faiths has declined. Since the last inspection computers have been introduced for research in the classrooms; standards and quality of education provided are similar.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

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

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Well below average	Below average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Good
Teaching and learning	Unsatisfactory	Good

Leadership	Unsatisfactory
Management	Unsatisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Unsatisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve well in Years 10 and 11 because of good teaching.
- Teaching is unsatisfactory in Years 7 to 9 because too many lessons are lacklustre and fail to meet the learning needs of all students.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning has not been rigorous enough to ensure all teaching reaches a satisfactory standard.
- Not enough use is made of ICT so students' standards are not as high as they should be.

Commentary

Examination results

126. Results in the GCSE examinations in 2003 were below average. The small number of students who took a GCSE in design and technology achieved better than they did in most of their other subjects. Results in 2004 were similar.

Standards and achievement

127. By the end of Year 9, students' designing and making skills are well below average; this represents satisfactory achievement overall. Students in Years 7 to 9 spend time learning different aspects of the subject with different teachers. Some aspects, notably electronics, are taught badly, so the students underachieve in these aspects. In other aspects, however, such as textiles, the teaching is very good, so students catch up on the skills in design that they should have learnt earlier. Overall then, students end up achieving satisfactorily. By the end of Year 11 standards of designing and making are below average. This represents good achievement since Year 9. In graphics and textiles, students take great care over the presentation of their coursework and produce well-made products. This good performance in coursework is offset by their weaker performance in written examinations, where they are held back by their literacy skills. Whilst students occasionally use ICT in their work, in general it is making very little impact upon standards.

Teaching and learning

128. In Years 7 to 9 the standard of teaching varies considerably and is unsatisfactory overall. Too often lessons are lacklustre, lack pace and challenge and are over dominated by teachers who talk too much; this is a particular problem for students who are at an early stage of language learning because they cannot easily follow the lesson. In contrast many other lessons are taught well because teachers plan lessons that engage students by giving them interesting focused activities; this inconsistency in teaching is the reason why not all students learn as much as they should do. Students clearly enjoy their practical lessons and experience a wide range of practical activities that enable them to design and make interesting products. However, the contrast in standards between the best and worst teaching is stark; this is most apparent in the rigour with which designing is taught.

129. In many lessons students work at a brisk pace and the lessons are carefully planned to meet the needs of individual students; however, in most cases the lesson objectives focus on what the teachers want to teach rather than what the students are going to learn, and as a consequence students do not learn as much as they should do. When challenged and engaged by teachers, students' attitudes are very positive and they are interested and take pride in their work; even when students are poorly taught their attitudes are at least satisfactory. Homework is set regularly across all aspects but is often unsatisfactory because students are routinely given tasks such as copying out from worksheets.

130. In Years 10 and 11 teaching is good so students' achievement is good. Teaching is particularly effective in textiles and graphics because teachers have high expectations and have adopted teaching methods that engage students in their own learning. Students' work is marked regularly and teachers use their good subject knowledge to provide focused, challenging activities. However, standards vary considerably because some of the activities undertaken by students are either too easy or uninspiring.

Leadership and management

131. The head of department has a clear vision for the subject and understands many of the weaknesses within the provision. Indeed, many policies have been developed in order to improve standards and raise achievement; the good achievement by students in Years 10 and 11 reflects this. However, the key weakness of the provision lies in the inconsistencies that exist between the best and worst practices in the department, particularly in Years 7 to 9. The monitoring of the teaching and learning has not been thorough and rigorous enough; as a result significant weaknesses in the provision mean that too many students are not doing as well as they should do and standards have fallen since the previous inspection.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design

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

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

Leadership	Satisfactory
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Satisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good in Years 10 and 11, because of good teaching.
- Standards in the use of ICT are above average.
- Teachers do not give enough demonstrations or illustrations to inspire and inform students in Years 7 to 9.

Commentary

Examination results

132. Results at GCSE level were average in 2003 and similar in 2004.

Standards and achievement

133. Students arrive at the school with below average standards in art; standards remain below average by Year 9, representing satisfactory achievement. The greater proportion of drawing and painting does not have enough detail or finish. Students do not use their sketchbooks adequately to research and experiment with ideas; this aspect of their work is not promoted well enough. Standards in the use of ICT are above average. Students have a good understanding of how to use symbols to represent ideas such as fear, strength or calmness in self-portraits. Standards in Year 11 are average. Still life drawing is good, especially in the use of colour with oil pastels. All students study the tradition of mask-making from a chosen culture and their designs are bold, dramatic and colourful; they use a range of materials creatively and effectively. Some work lacks a fine finish and students do not spend enough time on their work outside of lessons.

Teaching and learning

134. In Years 7 to 9, teachers do not give enough demonstrations or illustrations to inspire and enthuse students. They depend too much on the spoken word, and a minority of the students, especially those who have little or no English, do not fully understand the aims of the lesson. This lack of demonstration also means that students are not given enough formal teaching in the skills of drawing and painting, especially in how to use a range of techniques to achieve tone and texture. Where there was unsatisfactory teaching the teacher failed to interest the students and a significant proportion of the boys disrupted the learning of others. Teaching in the GCSE course is good and students are given clear guidance on how to meet the requirements of the examination, especially in the preparation of coursework. In all lessons, in all years, students with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language get appropriate one-to-one guidance and support from the teacher. The artist in residence has made good provision for the gifted and talented.

Leadership and management

135. There is adequate provision for ensuring a smooth transfer of responsibilities to the new head of department who takes up the post at the beginning of next term. The subject makes a good contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by studying the art and customs of a wide range of cultures and by exploring how to present human emotions through the use of symbols. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. The good features have been maintained and some aspects of teaching have improved in the GCSE course.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Well below average	Not applicable
Achievement	Satisfactory	Not applicable
Teaching and learning	Satisfactory	Not applicable

Leadership	Good
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Satisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The department is beginning to make real progress because of good leadership.
- Students do not use computers enough in lessons and as a result miss out on an important part of the curriculum.
- Marking is unsatisfactory so students do not always know how well they are doing or what they need to do to get better.
- The subject is growing in popularity after a period of disruption and lack of interest.

Commentary

Examination results

136. GCSE results in 2003 were very low. No students were entered for examinations in 2004.

Standards and achievement

137. Students enter the school with much less musical experience and skills than normally found. By the end of Year 9, their skills have improved but are still very low compared to the national picture. Students can clap simple patterns and identify basic musical elements in the music they hear but they cannot compose music well or perform it with confidence and accuracy. Many students struggle to maintain their own simple part in group work. Many younger students cannot clap even the most basic patterns in time with each other. Although students get good opportunities to use electronic keyboards they do not use computers with music software to enhance their work. Students' listening skills are poor and very few understand the need to listen in silence to each other's performance in order to evaluate what they hear. Students of all attainment levels achieve as well as each other because the emphasis is on practical music making rather than written work. However, the quality of their written work is generally well below that normally seen. Speaking skills are better than written skills, and many students try to use appropriate technical vocabulary such as 'dynamics', 'pitch' and 'ostinato'. There is no noticeable difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls. No students study music in Years 10 and 11.

Teaching and learning

138. Students learn satisfactorily. Lessons are well planned and teachers effectively demonstrate musical ideas and provide clear examples. In the best lessons the pace is brisk and lively which keeps the students focused and enthusiastic about their learning. Students are beginning to really enjoy music lessons because teachers ensure lessons are musical and capture the students' interest. Teachers expect students to behave well; they generally drive the pace forward to keep the students motivated. Teachers circulate groups well in practical sessions and ensure students are challenged and supported. They offer good support to students who are at an early stage of learning English and those identified as having special educational needs, enabling them to achieve as well as their classmates. Occasionally the pace of learning drops because too much time is given to one task and students' concentration begins to wane. Resources are used well but the new computers have yet to be integrated into lessons. Marking of work is unsatisfactory and rarely gives students the necessary information to improve their work.

Leadership and management

139. The head of department knows what needs improving to move the department forwards. He has rightly focused on regaining students' interest in the subject through an increased emphasis on practical activities. This has resulted in other aspects of management being neglected. For example, the departmental documentation is weak, assessment procedures are not effective and the schemes of work are in need of urgent review. There are, however, plans to reintroduce the subject into Year 10 and 11 through the expressive arts course and twilight GCSE music classes. After some considerable disruption the subject is now valued by the students. More students now take the free instrumental lessons, and out-of-school musical events are beginning to increase. These extra activities really help to support students learning.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Well below average	Average
Achievement	Good	Very good
Teaching and learning	Good	Very good

Leadership	Excellent
Management	Very good
Progress since previous inspection	Very good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve very well in the GCSE examination course as a result of very good teaching.
- Outstanding leadership provides a clear vision focused on quality and improvement.
- Boys cannot study dance in Years 7 to 9.

Commentary

Examination results

140. The 2003 GCSE examination results were average, and the 2004 results were similar.

Standards and achievement

141. Standards in Year 9 are well below average at this early stage of the year. Nevertheless, this represents good achievement in relation to the students' very low starting point on entry to the school. Boys achieve very well in volleyball, and girls in basketball, even though they have not yet mastered all the basic skills of these games. Many students are only just learning to swim. Students with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, are well integrated and supported, achieving equally as well as their classmates.
142. In the Year 11 GCSE course, standards are broadly average, reflecting very good achievement during Years 10 and 11. Standards are below average in practical activities because students are insecure in applying their newly learned skills in the game situation. Nevertheless, boys achieve well in basketball, and girls in trampolining. In the theoretical aspects of the course, students show a sound knowledge and understanding of the body's energy systems. Year 10 students achieve well at the beginning of their core curriculum courses in volleyball and football, but it was not possible to observe any Year 11 work. Standards in extra-curricular sport are often high, well illustrated by the under 14 cricket team that has achieved significant success by winning three County Cup Championships.

Teaching and learning

143. Very good teaching motivates students and inspires them to do their best. High standards are expected and achieved, well illustrated by students' very good standards of participation, dress and behaviour. Students' attitudes are very good, reflected in the physical effort they put into their work, and their support for extra-curricular activities, particularly by boys. High expectations, physical and intellectual challenge and a demanding pace of learning are features of most lessons. Where these are combined with a consistent, rigorous focus on quality and improvement, students achieve very well, clearly illustrated by many students' success in the GCSE examination. Very good planning and organisation ensure that students are actively engaged in a wide range of interesting and purposeful activities that make full use of the excellent facilities.

Leadership and management

144. Outstanding leadership, supported by a strong team, has successfully developed a distinctive, student-centred departmental ethos based on a quest for constant improvement in all aspects of work. The detailed action planning of the subject improvement plan is exemplary. An extensive extra-curricular programme provides good opportunities for all students, particularly the gifted and talented, to excel in school and beyond. However, the curriculum is not fully inclusive because boys do not have access to dance in Years 7 to 9. Assessment procedures are very good, but the 2003 teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 were too harsh. The school is close to achieving the national aim for 85 per cent of all students to receive two hours a week of high quality physical education by 2008. Progress since the last inspection has been very good. GCSE results have improved, and teaching is now very good.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

The school offers several vocational courses; health and social care was the focus for the inspection.

Health and social care

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

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Not applicable	Average

Achievement	Not applicable	Satisfactory
Teaching and learning	Not applicable	Satisfactory

Leadership	Satisfactory
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Not applicable

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers have thorough knowledge of the subject and share their enthusiasm with their students.
- Teachers do not plan sufficiently to meet students' individual special needs.
- Lack of access to health professionals impacts upon standards.

Commentary

Examination results

145. The first group of students to take the Applied GCSE did so in 2004. Currently, there are no national figures with which to compare their results.

Standards and achievement

146. Students start the course with broadly average standards. Standards produced by students in Years 11 are in line with those expected nationally. Students generally work well and respond appropriately to challenges set for them. They show a clear understanding of health and social care services and demonstrate knowledge of how people can gain access to them. They produce competent health plans and can identify the various factors which affect an individual's well-being.

Teaching and learning

147. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and quickly establish a purposeful atmosphere for learning. They seek to make work interesting and varied, involving students productively. Students understand what is expected of them and tasks have sufficient challenge to hold students' interest. However, whilst teachers are highly sensitive to students' individual needs, there is a lack of planning to meet these needs in the classroom, both for higher and lower attainers and for those with special educational needs. Equally, whilst the vocational relevance of the subject is recognised well by staff, there is insufficient use of relevant case studies and a lack of involvement with health care professionals.

Leadership and management

148. Health and social care is not a distinct department and all the teaching staff have responsibilities elsewhere within the school. The co-ordinator of the subject leads and manages in a satisfactory manner. She seeks to implement improvements and has introduced the Applied GCSE since the time of the previous inspection. It is not possible to judge improvement since the time of the previous inspection as health and social care was not reported on at that time.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE) AND CITIZENSHIP

149. The school has a good programme of PSHE, covering the topics of careers education, relationships and sex education and drug abuse.

150. The programme is well planned and resourced and is taught by specialist teachers in timetabled lessons. The morning registration period does not make a major contribution to the teaching of

PSHE. There is adequate time for delivering programmes of study when special events, such as ‘Industry Days’, are taken into account.

151. The quality of teaching in lessons observed during the inspection was good overall. Students’ attainment was below average and their achievement was good.
152. The PSHE programme makes a good contribution to students’ welfare and personal development. It gives them a better understanding of rights, responsibilities and the impact of their actions on other people. It helps them to make informed choices about life styles and raises their awareness of the dangers of drugs, and of unhealthy eating.
153. Careers education and guidance are an important element within the school’s programme of PSHE. Currently the programmes of study are undergoing revision in order to meet the new requirements for careers education in Years 7 to 11. There is good provision for work experience. A well-organised programme of placements gives students in Year 10 a very good insight into the world of work. They benefit greatly by having to apply to employers as though they were seeking permanent jobs. This encourages them to be independent and to use their initiative. They are also required to maintain work experience diaries, and this develops their skill in writing for a purpose. Very good liaison with the careers service contributes positively to the quality of career guidance and helps students to choose post-16 courses that meet their aspirations and attainment.

Citizenship

Citizenship is taught mainly through the PSHE programme. Specific elements of citizenship are also taught through subjects and pastoral lessons. There are additional contributions from form registration, timetable suspension and assemblies.

Provision in citizenship is **good**.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Well below average	Below average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Not applicable

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students have good opportunities to take part in significant group and off-timetable activities, which significantly enhance their achievement.
- A small group of teachers teach citizenship within the PSHE course, which brings consistency to teaching and learning.
- Monitoring and assessment procedures do not sufficiently inform the progress that students are making in developing citizenship skills.
- Subjects’ contribution to citizenship is under-developed.

Commentary

Standards and achievement

154. Students join the school with very little knowledge and experiences of citizenship. By the end of Year 9, students are just beginning to understand about small group debates. However, many find it very difficult, which is often a consequence of their exuberance, limited concentration and poor language skills. The limited time allocated for citizenship constrains the development of skills. However, the active citizenship element and suspended timetable help to compensate for this and consequently, achievement is good. By the end of Year 11 standards are below average; students have achieved well from a low starting point. Students' oral contributions are better than their written work. Year 10 African Caribbean students' written and oral contributions are limited, whereas many Asian students successfully feed back their comments from group discussion. However, most students do not analyse and evaluate well. Enrichment activities like whole school charity work where students raised in different ways large sums of money (over £18,000) for UNICEF. Elections for the year and school councils provide good opportunities for all students to be involved in active citizenship. A suspended timetable allows specific activities, for example, Year 11 work with 'Operation Black Vote', makes a considerable contribution to citizenship.

Teaching and learning

155. Overall, teaching and learning in Years 7 to 11 are good. Teaching is supported by a detailed scheme of work, which brings consistency to the teaching of citizenship within the PSHE programme. Where teaching is good or better it has good challenge, pace and purpose and has a literacy focus. This was well exemplified in a Year 10 lesson on rights and responsibilities, as students were really challenged, which extended their understanding of the issues. In such lessons students share opinions with others and develop their own ideas. Teachers show good knowledge and understanding of citizenship and, most importantly, apply it well. Teachers show enthusiasm and encourage students to participate. However, when taking part in a lesson, students' immaturity, poor concentration spans and exuberance often constrain learning and achievement. Within lessons students evaluate their work and that of their peers but mechanisms for overall assessment are not far advanced. Extra-curricular support groups give students great insight into issues like disability and racism, which give students confidence and make them become better informed citizens.

Leadership and management

156. Good progress has been made with the introduction of citizenship, which has successfully been integrated in to the PSHE programme. However, the citizenship element within subjects is under-developed and is not made fully explicit. Monitoring, evaluation and assessment procedures are not sufficiently developed and do not inform the progress that students are making in the three strands of citizenship. Citizenship was not a curriculum subject at the time of the previous inspection and so no judgement on improvement can be made.

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM

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

The table below shows entry and performance information for courses completed in 2003.

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
Business studies	12	91.7	98.7	8.3	36.8	56.7	80.1
Geography	9	66.7	98.7	0.0	44.5	37.8	84.0
Mathematics	2	50.0	96.7	0.0	55.6	30.0	84.7
Other languages	7	100.0	96.9	42.9	64.5	77.1	93.8
Other social studies	8	87.5	97.4	0.0	42.7	57.5	88.8
Sociology	5	100.0	98.2	20.0	44.3	68.0	83.6
Business VCE	14	48.1	65.0	0.0	14.6	25.9	60.1
Health and social care VCE	10	100.0	67.7	21.1	14.5	74.7	63.5
Information technology VCE	75	77.2	77.9	8.1	23.4	50.3	64.9
Travel and tourism VCE	5	60.0	71.8	0.0	14.5	32.0	62.2

The school recruits viable numbers for all courses and the retention rate is high for most.

ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

The focus for this report was on English, although Urdu was sampled. The teaching was good in the Urdu lesson and their work shows that students are doing better than expected.

English literature

Provision in English literature is **good**.

	Year 12	Year 13
Standards	Below average	Below average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good, lively teaching that involves the students and encourages independent learning.
- Students have very good attitudes to the subject that contribute to their good achievement.
- There is good support for students who have English as an additional language.
- There is not enough insistence on students making formal notes in lessons.

Commentary

Examination results

157. The A-level examination was taken for the first time in 2004 and there are no validated figures to compare the results to national averages. All students gained a pass grade but there were no A or B grades.

Standards and achievement

158. Standards in Years 12 and 13 are below average. This is largely because the students have below average skills in written English, particularly in the vocabulary needed to write their ideas concisely at the required level for the higher grades. However, all students are on course to gain a pass. Standards in spoken English are much better and students take an active part in class discussions. They know the set literature well and argue their opinions logically with good reference to the texts. Students show good initiative and can think for themselves, often showing good insight into the human aspects explored in the plays, poetry and novels.

Teaching and learning

159. Teaching is lively and brisk, and students are given good opportunities to express their own opinions and use their own experiences. They are taught the skills of critical analysis formally and in good depth. While students and teachers make very astute comments in discussion there is not enough insistence that all students make notes to ensure that important points are not forgotten. Teachers are meticulous in ensuring that students understand the precise meaning of unfamiliar words. These are explained clearly by a good range of examples. This makes good provision for students who have English as an additional language and for students who have special educational needs. Teachers are also aware that the cultural situations explored in the

texts studied are often unfamiliar to the majority of students and they provide visits to theatres and other places of significance to extend the students' understanding.

Leadership and management

160. There is good vision for meeting the specific needs of all students in order to raise their standards, and good teamwork. The teachers are deployed according to their special interests and where they can be most effective. The subject makes a very good contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development by considering all these aspects closely as they arise in the literature studied. All the good features reported previously have been maintained; teaching and achievement have improved.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

161. Students have below average skills in literacy on entry to the sixth form. However, they can access their work adequately in the subjects they study. The lack of skills in literacy hinders students' learning in science and their ability to reach the higher grades in English literature. In English there is a clear focus on raising skills in literacy that will benefit all other subjects. In leisure and tourism achievement is also hindered by weaknesses in literacy. In this case there is not enough attention to literacy in the schemes of work. However, literacy here is enhanced by the use of ICT, particularly in the clarity of presentations and improvement in the accuracy of spelling, punctuation and grammar. Many students also study skills of communication in classes that are taught specific key skills.

MATHEMATICS

The focus was on mathematics.

The school gives students the opportunity to retake their GCSE in mathematics. It also offers mathematics at AS-level and it is rare for a student not to complete the course. The school offers AS-level in the areas of pure mathematics and mechanics.

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

	Year 12	Year 13
Standards	Below average	Average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Good
Teaching and learning	Satisfactory	Good

Leadership	Satisfactory
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Insufficient evidence

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good knowledge of the teachers leads to clear explanations of concepts.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good on the AS course.
- Schemes of work are not developed sufficiently to ensure that the quality of teaching can be improved further.
- The quality of marking is inconsistent and does not always inform students of their mistakes and what they need to do to improve.

Commentary

Examination results

162. There were too few students in 2003 to be able to comment on the A-level results. There were no students taking A-level in 2004. There are no national comparisons for GCSE retakes in Year 12.

Standards and achievement

163. The standard of work by the students taking the GCSE course in the sixth form is below average, but their achievement is satisfactory. The quality of students' written and oral work is below that usually seen at this stage in this course. Students have a basic understanding of topics, for example Pythagoras' theorem, but they can apply them to simple problems only. The standard of work by the students taking the AS option is broadly average. The achievement of these students is good, given their attainment on entry to the course. The quality of students' written and oral work is generally as expected at this stage in the course. In mechanics, students have a secure understanding of resolution of forces and this forms a good foundation for the course. In pure mathematics, students' graph sketching skills are sound. Overall standards of presentation vary. Where they are good, students set their work out clearly and structure answers well. However, not all work is carried out to this standard.

Teaching and learning

164. Teachers have a good knowledge of mathematics. They give comprehensive support with clear explanations when students ask for clarification and this allows students to improve their understanding. In the better lessons, students are encouraged to participate in discussions, responding well to questions and volunteering suggestions in articulate ways. However, in a minority of lessons, there are missed opportunities to involve students more actively. In the better lessons teachers involve students well and encourage them to work together to solve problems and this engages their attention. Teachers generally plan their lessons well, making sure that students are secure in their understanding of basic skills before progressing to new concepts. Students respond well and, on the whole, have positive attitudes to the subject. Examples are chosen well, with increasing complexity. The marking of students' work is inconsistent; the better marking contains good diagnostic comments that show the students where they have made mistakes and what they need to do to improve. The students learn from their mistakes and carry out corrections to problems. However, the marking of the GCSE work is sporadic and, as a result, some work lacks method and rigour and this limits the progress those students make.

Leadership and management

165. Teachers have worked well together to plan the AS-level work. They have developed strategies for raising interest and attainment, by considering the order in which modules of work are delivered. Although there is a comprehensive programme of study that follows the published syllabuses, the schemes of work lack guidance on appropriate teaching methods and use of resources, including ICT, which would enhance the teaching further. There is insufficient systematic monitoring of teaching and learning within the department so that good practice can be shared. There is insufficient information in the previous report to make a judgement on progress since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

166. Competence in mathematics is below the level expected. This is mainly a result of the entry policy to the sixth form, where the school admits far more lower attaining students than is usually the case. However, provision for numeracy across subjects is good. For example, in business education, teachers have high expectations of students; all must bring calculators and there is a strong focus on spotting mistakes in invoices and accurately recalculating them. Many students also study mathematics in classes that are taught specific key skills.

SCIENCE

No subjects were inspected in detail, but biology was sampled. Teaching in both the lessons was good, although analysis of students' work and results shows their achievement to be satisfactory.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The focus for the inspection was information and communication technology (ICT).

Provision in information and communication technology is **very good**.

	Year 12	Year 13
Standards	Below average	Below average
Achievement	Very good	Very good
Teaching and learning	Very good	Very good

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students' achievement is very good because they receive very good teaching and support.
- The very good leadership and management ensure all students receive a consistently good quality of education.
- The subject is very popular with students.
- There are not enough opportunities to visit and learn from businesses.

Commentary

Examination results

167. The subject is very popular with students; nearly all students study an ICT course. Examination results were below average in 2003 and were at a similar level in 2004. These results represent very good achievement given students' starting points when they joined in Year 12.

Standards and achievement

168. Standards in Years 12 and 13 are below average. This represents very good achievement, given students' standards on joining the sixth form. Students are confident users of a wide range of software applications and can transpose information across applications. They have a sound understanding of how the systems they develop work, so can produce user documentation of an average standard. However, students do not always use the technical language of the subject to explain answers. Weak writing skills also impact adversely when students take examinations, thus reducing overall results. Higher attainers use presentation software very well to enhance their work portfolios. There is no significant difference in the progress of males and females or of those from different ethnic backgrounds.

Teaching and learning

169. Teachers provide detailed guidance on what students need to do in order to improve their work. This guidance is very well matched to the demands of the syllabus so students can maximise their marks in their coursework. Teachers use very good resources to enliven tasks and sustain students' interest. The knowledge of the staff is very good; they set challenging tasks that extend all students. Teachers ensure that courses are matched well to the needs of students. This results in students being able to study advanced level courses as well as courses that support their other studies. Students' very positive attitudes also play a significant part in ensuring students achieve very well. Work is completed and students grow in confidence. Students are not provided with enough visits to businesses to gain an insight to how actual businesses use ICT.

Leadership and management

170. The large number of teachers involved in teaching the various courses has been developed into a very effective team. Meetings between them are frequent and regular, so that they can learn from one another and ensure that students achieve very well across the different courses. Consistency is ensured by very good monitoring of teaching, where teachers join lessons both to check on what others do, but also to learn from what they do. Standards have improved significantly since the previous inspection because of much improved teaching.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

171. Students have good access to computers to support their study. In general, the students' skills in using ICT are broadly average in comparison with those usually seen in schools.

HUMANITIES

No subject was inspected in detail, although law was sampled. The teaching was good and students are achieving well.

ENGINEERING, TECHNOLOGY AND MANUFACTURING

No subjects were inspected.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA

No subjects were inspected.

HOSPITALITY, SPORTS, LEISURE AND TRAVEL

The inspection focused on leisure and tourism, but a travel and tourism lesson was also sampled where the teaching and learning were good.

Leisure and tourism

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

	Year 12
Standards	Average
Achievement	Good
Teaching and learning	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Not applicable

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students' knowledge and understanding are improved through links with the leisure industry.
- Good teaching leads to students making good progress.
- Insufficient guidance is given to teachers in subject documentation.

Commentary

Examination results

172. There were no entries for the 2003 GNVQ intermediate examination, but in 2004 six candidates were entered at intermediate level; three students achieved a pass and one student obtained a merit grade.

Standards and achievement

173. Students are knowledgeable about different categories of the leisure industry and of the importance of customer service in order to achieve high standards of service. They broaden their knowledge of theoretical study through reference to specific leisure pursuits such as studies about the wide-ranging opportunities provided by the Aston Villa sports complex in Birmingham. They are able to meet the unit criteria, and written reports are improved by the use of ICT for research and presentation, but grammatical weakness and poor expression reduce the standard reached. Students achieve well through opportunities for work experience, evident in the good quality correspondence and knowledge of business practices, but do not make enough use of the experience to support written work.

Teaching and learning

174. Teachers come to the course with varied backgrounds in terms of the subjects they have studied and this helps provide students with a wide range of learning experiences. The aims of lessons are clear and good use is made of the local community to bring relevance to learning, such as the health and fitness centre and the Midland Arts centre. This experience ensures that students are aware of how their class-based learning is used in practical ways in the local area. Homework is well used to complement work done in school, but students rely on teachers too much for their learning and lack self-confidence, so that both written and discussion aspects are under-developed.

Leadership and management

175. The work of the subject is well co-ordinated and teachers new to the course are supported through in-service training. The quality of learning is monitored but insufficient guidance is given to teachers in the schemes of work about how students' literacy needs and citizenship studies will be met. The subject was not reported on at the time of the previous inspection.

BUSINESS

The focus was on business studies.

Business studies

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

	Year 12	Year 13
Standards	Below average	Below average
Achievement	Very good	Very good
Teaching and learning	Very good	Very good

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The change from academic to vocational courses in recent years is highly suitable to the needs of students.

- The number of students choosing the subject has increased significantly.
- Very good teaching produces challenging lessons that move at a good pace and lead to very good student achievement.
- Students are highly motivated to succeed.
- Students' ongoing performance is analysed very well and appropriately challenging targets are set for their examination grades.

Commentary

Examination results

176. Results in the 2003 examinations, for both A-level and VCE students, were well below average. The change to wholly vocational courses in 2004, however, resulted in considerably better results and such higher standards are evident in current work.

Standards and achievement

177. Students start Year 12 courses with standards that are very low compared with what is normally seen. Due to very good teaching, however, students quickly adjust to the challenging demands made of them. The result is that standards improve to below average by the end of the year, and that makes for very good achievement. In 2004 there was a very significant increase in the proportion of students achieving passes in the GNVQ intermediate course.

178. In Year 13 very good achievement is sustained. The cumulative impact, of high quality teaching and students' great determination to succeed, produces impressive results. In the AVCE examinations in 2004, for instance, all students achieved a grade, compared with just over half of students in 2003. Written work seen, and oral contributions made in lessons observed, match these improved standards.

Teaching and learning

179. Students benefit from very knowledgeable and enthusiastic teaching. Teachers plan their lessons very well, including in them a range of individual and interactive tasks that challenge and stimulate their students. As a result students both learn and achieve very well. Similarly, Year 13 students gain invaluable insight into how to gain high marks in examinations, not only because of very skilled analysis by the teacher of the short time they should allow in an examination to spend on one question, but also because they are then required to do it! Lessons that move at such pace also crackle with energy and good humour that result from students' interest and appreciation of the very good teaching they receive. Teachers' assessment of written assignments is accurate and the marking is detailed and thorough. The monitoring of student achievement and progress is thorough and effectively informs students about how to improve.

Leadership and management

180. The subject is led and managed very well and clear vision and direction are provided. The head of department leads a team which puts into practice the school's 'can do' culture. The annual evaluation of students' performance in examinations is highly analytical and rigorous and the outcomes influence teaching and learning plans. Standards have improved significantly since the previous inspection and very good progress has been made.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Health and social care

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

	Year 12	Year 13
Standards	Average	Above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Satisfactory
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since previous inspection	Not applicable

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Courses are flexible to best meet students' differing needs.
- Teachers are sensitive to students' individual needs and match activities appropriately.
- Higher attaining students are not sufficiently challenged to achieve at the highest levels.
- The vocational focus of the subject lacks development.

Commentary

Examination results

181. All students passed the intermediate GNVQ in 2003 and 2004, many with merits, as has been the pattern for many years. Whilst all the students who took the single and double award AVCE did well, there were insufficient students on each course in either 2003 or 2004 to make statistical comparisons valid.

Standards and achievement

182. Standards on the intermediate GNVQ and single and double award AVCE courses are good. Students achieve well compared with their prior attainment. This is particularly evident for intermediate GNVQ students. The majority of AVCE students build upon the knowledge they have acquired in their previous years of study of health and social care. As a result of this they all demonstrate a secure understanding of health and social care services. They have an appreciation of the ethical issues which arise when balancing the rights of clients with the rights of others. This was well demonstrated in a lesson when students who are to be entered for the double award competently examined the contemporary, sensitive, case of a terminally ill child's right to life. Students were able to look at the recent judgment of the court and they made appropriate, informed reference to both the law and the ethical issues

Teaching and learning

183. Teaching is good and students learn quickly as a result. Teachers have thorough subject knowledge and a genuine enthusiasm for the subject. Teachers prepare their work thoroughly. Teaching methods are varied and lead to a high level of interest from the students. Teachers care for their students and know their students very well indeed; students value the individual approach that teachers adopt. However, whilst distinct needs are recognised well, the provision made does not always match up to requirements. Students who are recognised as gifted or talented do not always receive hard enough work. Work is marked regularly and students are made aware of how well they have done.

Leadership and management

184. There is no separate identity to the health and social care department and, whilst leadership of the subject is satisfactory, departmental procedures are not constantly analysed and reviewed. As the courses grow in popularity, accommodation and resources are being stretched. It is not

possible to judge improvement since the time of the previous inspection as the subject was not reported on then.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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