

INSPECTION REPORT

CROOKHORN COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

Waterlooville

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116428

Headteacher: Mr Grahame Sammons

Lead inspector: Rev W Keast

Dates of inspection: 16th – 19th May 2005

Inspection number: 274553

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE COLLEGE

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of students:	11 – 16
Gender of students:	Mixed
Number on roll:	883
College address:	Stakes Hill Road Waterlooville Hampshire
Postcode:	PO7 5UD
Telephone number:	02392 251120
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr V Petherick
Date of previous inspection:	11 th October 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COLLEGE

Crookhorn College of Technology is an average size comprehensive school for students aged 11 to 16. It gained technology college status in 2004. The college is in competition for students in an area which has a surplus of places. Students come from areas within which there is significant economic deprivation. Their attainment when they come to the college is below average, with proportionally fewer of the highest-attaining students compared with the national distribution. The majority of students are white British and there are no traveller children or refugees. This profile reflects the area. The number of students for whom English is an additional language is low and a very small number of these is at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of students joining or leaving during the course of a year is average. Currently, an above average proportion of the students is identified as having special educational needs with a below average proportion having a statement of these needs. The identified needs of those students with a statement, or for whom the college seeks support of outside agencies, relate to specific learning difficulty (dyslexia), moderate learning difficulties and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties in equal measure.

The college holds Investor in People, School Achievement and Healthy School Awards and has just had its Charter Mark and Investors in Careers Awards, re-accredited.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
1522	W Keast	Lead inspector	
19653	L Dickson	Lay inspector	
2447	F Mikdadi	Team inspector	English; English as an additional language
18178	I Matthews	Team inspector	Mathematics; information and communication technology
30433	C Corp	Team inspector	Science
32367	J Pike	Team inspector	Art and design
31238	G Clubb	Team inspector	Design and technology
33018	A Read	Team inspector	Geography; religious education
27226	R Cribb	Team inspector	History; special educational needs
34089	R Gaff	Team inspector	Modern foreign languages
7926	J Bowden	Team inspector	Physical education
11746	R Coulthard	Team inspector	Music
24142	S Argyle	Team inspector	Citizenship
33448	J Wye	Team inspector	Engineering

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Crookhorn College of Technology is a sound school. It provides a satisfactory quality of education for its students. Attainment on entry is below average but results at the end of Year 11, in 2004, were broadly average. Results at the end of Year 9, in 2004, were above those of similar schools. Current standards are below average in Year 9 and average in Year 11. Students' achievement, overall, is satisfactory. Leadership and management are good. Students' attitudes are satisfactory, overall, but unsatisfactory in Years 7 to 9. Behaviour around the college is good but a significant minority of students do not behave well in lessons. The college provides sound value for money.

The college's main strengths and weaknesses are

- Many staff are teaching well in difficult circumstances but the behaviour management skills of some newer teachers are ineffective with a significant minority of students
- Students are very well cared for, and guidance and support are good
- Leadership and management are generating improvement
- Good classroom practice, for example in assessment and monitoring of individual students' progress, is inconsistent across the college
- Provision, overall, in music and citizenship is unsatisfactory
- Extra-curricular learning opportunities, accommodation and learning resources are good and support students' achievement well

Since the previous inspection the key issues, relating to curriculum planning and outcomes in history, have been resolved effectively and the college is well on the way to resolving the separation of vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The college has recently achieved technology college status. However, not only has the headteacher changed but so has a large part of the management team and a large proportion of staff. The college is just emerging from nearly two years of staffing difficulties. **Within this context, the college has made satisfactory progress.**

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Performance in GCSE/GNVQ examinations at the end of Year 11, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
	B	C	C	D

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

Students' achievement is satisfactory. Results, in 2004, in the national assessment at the end of Year 9 were below average for all schools but above average, overall, for similar schools. English and mathematics results were above similar school averages while science results were average. The trend in results at this age is in line with the national, upward trend. Current standards in Year 9 are below average overall. They are average in English, mathematics, history, modern foreign languages and physical education. Students' achievement is satisfactory. Students are achieving well in English, geography, history and physical education but are underachieving in music where too much teaching has been unsatisfactory.

GCSE subject results, in 2004, were broadly average in many subjects despite greater than national proportions of the year group being entered. They were significantly above average in English literature and significantly below in art and design, business studies, design and technology, history, geography and physical education. The average total point score trend is downward but the 2004 results were an improvement on those in 2003. The proportion of students gaining five or more grades A* to C and students' average point score for their best eight subjects have rising trends. Current standards in Year 11 are average and students are achieving well overall and in most subjects. Students achieve very well in music. The achievement of students with special educational needs is satisfactory and gifted and talented students achieve well, particularly in Years 10 and 11. The small number of students for whom English is an additional language achieve well as they rapidly develop language competence.

Students' personal qualities, including their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory. Students' attitudes are satisfactory overall, but unsatisfactory in Years 7 to 9. Behaviour overall is satisfactory and is good around the college and at break times. Attendance and unauthorised absences are close to the national average. The college works hard to ensure this.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The college provides a satisfactory quality of education.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Much teaching is good, and it is good, overall, in Years 10 and 11. Teachers use their good subject expertise to plan interesting lessons with a variety of tasks and activities. In good teaching, these engage and motivate students so they learn well. A significant minority of students have reacted adversely to staffing changes and recruitment difficulties in the last two years. Some newer staff have difficulty managing the attitudes and behaviour of these students effectively, particularly in Years 7 to 9. The curriculum satisfactorily meets students' needs with good supporting resources and a good range of extra-curricular opportunities. Arrangements for students' care and welfare are very good, with good support and guidance. Links with parents are satisfactory and those with the community and other schools and colleges are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The college is led well by the headteacher and other key staff carry out their leadership responsibilities well, often providing a clear vision for their subject or area. Management of the college is good. Governance is good. Members of the governing body are loyal to the college and work hard on its behalf. However they have not ensured the requirement of a daily act of collective worship.

PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE COLLEGE

The response to the college, of the comparatively small number of parents who returned questionnaires or attended the parents' meeting, was positive. Parents felt their children were making good progress, that teaching was good and teachers were fair, expected hard work and helped students to mature. They expressed concern over behaviour of some students, a concern which inspectors share. Overall, students were positive about their college. They liked the college, felt they were taught well, trusted and expected to work hard. They were more critical than their parents of their behaviour. While saying that there was bullying and harassment, subsequent discussion with many students indicated that it was not seen as an issue, with reported instances being resolved.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the college should do to improve are

- Reduce the impact of the minority of students' poor attitudes and behaviour
- Identify good practice and weaknesses in teaching and then improve its consistency
- Develop a closer link between college and subject targets and more rigorously monitor individuals' progress towards these
- Improve music provision in Years 7 to 9
- Fully meet requirements in citizenship

and, to meet statutory requirements

- Provide a daily act of collective worship

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS

Standards achieved in subjects and courses

Results, in 2004, in national examinations at the end of Year 9 were below average and at the end of Year 11 were average. Year 9 results, in 2004, were above those of similar schools. Current standards in Year 9 are below average and in Year 11 are, overall, average. Achievement in Year 9 is satisfactory and, in Year 11, students are achieving well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In 2004, Year 9 students gained better results and made greater progress than students in similar schools
- In 2004, Year 11 students gained subject results which were broadly average despite more of the year group, than nationally, taking each examination
- Achievement in Years 7 to 9 has been adversely affected by students' attitudes and staffing instability
- Students are underachieving in music in Years 7 to 9 because there has been some unsatisfactory teaching
- The five-year trend in the average total point score gained by Year 11 students is downward whereas the trend in other indicators is upward

Commentary

1. Students' attainment, on entry to the college, is below average and there is a smaller than national proportion of higher-attaining students. At the end of Year 9, in 2004, students' results were below the national average for all schools. The spread of levels that students gained showed fewer reaching the higher levels (Levels 6 and 7) and more gaining the lower and average levels (Levels 4 and 5) than nationally. This reflects the entry profile of attainment. In comparison with similar schools¹, results in English and mathematics were above average and results in science were average and, overall, results were above average.

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

Standards in:	College results	National results
English	32.4 (37.4)	33.5 (33.4)
mathematics	34.6 (35.0)	35.7 (35.4)
science	31.9 (34.0)	33.2 (33.6)

There were 185 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. National information now allows the progress that each student made, from the end of Year 6 in 2001 to the end of Year 9 in 2004, to be calculated. When compared to the national figure, this gives an indicator of the overall progress of students, or what is referred to as the *value added* by the college. The 2004 cohort of students made similar progress to students nationally and better progress than students in similar schools.
3. On a year-by-year basis, subject results vary. Sometimes girls perform better than boys, and in other years the reverse happens. On average, over the last three years, boys have performed a little better than girls in mathematics while performance in English and science has been broadly similar. The trend in results, over the last five years, is in line with the gradually rising national trend.
4. Standards in the current Year 9 are below average overall. They are average in English, mathematics, modern foreign languages, history and physical education and below average in all other subjects. Students' overall achievement is satisfactory in relation to their attainment at the beginning of Year 7, and in most subjects. They are achieving well in English, geography, history and physical education but are underachieving in music where teaching has been unsatisfactory. Students' achievement in these early years is adversely affected by the poor attitudes to learning

¹ Schools whose pupils achieved an average point score of at least 26 but less than 27 in the Year 6 tests in 2001

shown by a significant minority of students which impedes their learning and that of others. The issue in history, identified in the previous report, has been very effectively tackled.

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

	College results	National results
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-C grades	45 (37)	52 (52)
Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-G grades	90 (85)	89 (88)
Percentage of students gaining 1 or more A*-G grades	96 (96)	96 (96)
Average point score per student (best eight subjects)	32.8 (31.2)	34.9 (34.7)

There were 186 pupils in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

5. There are many ways in which results at the end of Year 11 may be compared. The average total point score of students picks up the attainment of all students and will be potentially higher in schools where students are entered for more examinations. The capped average total point score includes the best eight results for each student regardless of the number of examinations taken. The proportion of students gaining five or more grades A* to C is an indicator of how well the highest-attaining students are doing and the five or more grades A* to G measure now includes a requirement that these must include English and mathematics.
6. In 2004, both students' average total point score and their capped average total point score were average. The proportion of students gaining five or more grades A* to C was below average while the proportion gaining five or more grades A* to G was average. In comparison with similar schools², these indicators were below or well below average. However, the college's results at the end of Year 9 in 2002 moved them from one group of similar schools into a higher one, but only just. The college results were above or well above the average of the schools in this previous group, a group in which the college had been placed for several previous years. The overall progress these students made, the value added by the college, from the beginning of Year 7 to the end of Year 11 was average, although the progress from the end of Year 9 was below average. The proportion of the highest (A*/A) grades gained by students suggests that the higher-attaining students within the cohort have achieved well.
7. There was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls, either in 2004 or on average over the last three years. The trend, over the last five years, in the average total point score is downward, although 2004 results showed a rise over the previous year. The trend in both the capped average point score and the proportion of students gaining five or more grades A* to C is upwards.
8. Results in English, mathematics, science, communications studies (media studies and the performing arts), French and statistics were all broadly average even though, in each case, a greater proportion of the cohort of students was entered than was the case nationally. Results in art and design, business studies, design and technology, geography, history and physical education were significantly below average although, in all but art and design, the proportion of students that was entered was often significantly above the national proportion. English literature results were significantly above average although a smaller than average proportion of students was entered. Generally, there was little difference between the performance of boys and girls, although boys outperformed girls in communication studies, English literature and physical education. Overall, students' attainment in English literature, compared to their attainment in the other subjects, was significantly better than the national picture. Similarly, attainment in design and technology, history and geography, in comparison with the same students' attainment in their other subjects, was significantly below the national picture.
9. Current standards in Year 11 are average overall, and in most subjects. They are above average in English, mathematics and music, and below average in art and design, design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT). Staffing instability in the last two years has had an adverse impact on standards in these subjects. Overall, students in Year 11 are achieving well.

² Schools whose students' average point score in Year 9 was at least 33 but less than 36 in 2002

They are achieving very well in music and satisfactorily in design and technology, ICT and modern foreign languages.

10. Students' competence in mathematics and ICT, and their literacy skills, are satisfactory.
11. Students with special educational needs make steady progress and their achievement is satisfactory. The very clear handbook, identifying teaching approaches and detailing the individual education plans, is often well used by teachers but work is not always sufficiently matched to students' needs so that, across all subjects, achievement is not consistent. The good level of support and the caring, sensitive work of the whole special needs team motivates students and recognises their successes well. This underpins the significant achievement of many of those students whose needs are considerable. The achievement of students who have been identified as gifted or talented, and higher-attaining students generally, is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 and good in Years 10 and 11. Students for whom English is an additional language achieve well. They are able to follow their courses of study independently and, despite their need for support in English, they make good progress.

Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Overall, students' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory, as is their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students behave well around the college
- Many students show good levels of interest in learning particularly when teaching is good or better
- The unsatisfactory behaviour and attitudes of a minority of students disrupts their own learning and that of other students
- Relationships between staff and students are generally positive, but a small minority of students show a lack of common courtesy to some teachers and support staff

Commentary

12. In their response to the pre-inspection questionnaire, students said that this was a good college to be at. They believed that they were taught well, were expected to work hard and were trusted. They were critical about students' behaviour and said that bullying did take place. Younger students were more positive in their response than older students. Students particularly liked the facilities available to them, both within subjects and on the campus overall. They disliked the impact that the behaviour of some of their peers had on learning and they would like more seating to be available around the site, particularly at lunchtimes.
13. In most lessons students behave well and show positive attitudes to their work. They particularly enjoy subjects such as English, physical education, or those which involve practical activities. However, a significant minority of students, particularly in the younger year groups, are immature, find it difficult to concentrate for long periods, and are generally unwilling to learn. They can ignore instructions and disrupt the lesson, despite the efforts of many staff, and this slows the learning of other students. The attitudes of these students often has the greatest effect in those classes where the staff are new to teaching or the college, or who do not use the college's behaviour management strategies consistently. More experienced or confident staff usually cope well with some able to transform the attitude of students through their high expectations and the positive relationships they build with students. In these lessons there is often an enthusiasm for learning, with students focused on their work and trying hard to achieve their best.
14. Students with English as an additional language have very good attitudes to their learning. They are keen to improve their English quickly in order to catch up with their peers. The result is that they work hard to maintain the same learning pace as everyone else. They form very good relationships with other students who in their turn are keen to help them improve their use of English. Consequently, these students are given a large number of opportunities to practise their spoken English. Students who are gifted and talented are well motivated. They respond particularly well in their GCSE courses and many attain at the higher levels because of this. The learning support team, the inclusion unit team, pastoral support team and mentors focus on building the self-esteem

of students with special educational needs. Their positive approach enables most to participate fully when they are supported in lessons.

15. Behaviour around the college is generally good, with students behaving sensibly when arriving at and leaving the site, and when moving between lessons. During assemblies they listen attentively when teachers are addressing them, and enter and leave the hall quietly. At break and lunchtimes there is a relaxed and sociable atmosphere. Relationships between most students, subject teachers and support staff are constructive and conducive to learning, especially where teachers make effective use of the college's code of behaviour. In the main, students show respect, but there are some students who show a blatant lack of courtesy in their interactions with staff.

Ethnic background of students

Exclusions in the last college year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of students on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	843	124	6
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	6	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	4	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	2	0	0
Chinese	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	1	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	14	0	0

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

16. The number of exclusions for last year was above average, as the college sought to reinforce its behavioural code, but has reduced within most year groups this academic year. The college uses exclusions appropriately and as a last resort when dealing with such difficulties as persistent disruptive behaviour or verbal abuse. The student inclusion unit is relatively new, and has the potential to make a good impact on behaviour. Early indications are that some difficult students who have spent time in the unit have improved their attitudes and behaviour and avoided the possibility of exclusion. During discussions, students said they felt secure and safe, and whilst acknowledging that bullying does occur, they stated that any incidents reported to the college are dealt with effectively.
17. The opportunities for students' personal development are satisfactory. The contribution made by subject departments is variable with particularly good practice in art, English and geography. Displays around the buildings acknowledge students' achievements and make them feel valued members of the college community. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme addresses important issues such as stereotyping, relationships and responsibility, and makes a positive contribution to students' personal development.
18. Opportunities for the development of spiritual awareness amongst students are unsatisfactory. Assemblies are well planned but those observed had little spiritual content and did not provide a daily act of collective worship. Registration periods deal with administrative matters, allow private conversations or promote individual reading. Few form tutors direct students to the *thought for the day*. Subjects such as art, drama and English provide good opportunities to explore feelings and an

understanding of self, but these are not generally planned and the college does not have a policy for promoting spiritual awareness across subjects.

19. Moral development is promoted satisfactorily. The college provides a good role model through its policies. This year, the concept of four *Cornerstones* of respect, achievement, responsibility and commitment, has been introduced to support the code of behaviour for the college community. Where these values are modelled and promoted effectively by staff, students respect the values and try hard to abide by them. The reinforcement of these values, however, is inconsistent, leaving some students with a feeling of indifference about them. In subjects such as geography, students explore ethical issues, for example the contrast between wealth and poverty in Brazil, and there is a strong emphasis on understanding fair trade and a commitment to recycling. Other issues, such as euthanasia, vegetarianism and abortion, are considered in religious education lessons.
20. Opportunities for social development are good. Although the overall provision for citizenship is unsatisfactory, there are good opportunities for some students to take an active role in the life of the college. Participation in the process of elections, representing their tutor group or year group on year or college councils, and volunteering and training as peer mentors, make important contributions to these students' development. All students have an opportunity to be involved in charitable fund raising. The prefect system and the appointment of head boy and girl help the college to function as a cohesive community and support students' development well. Drama productions and concerts, major events in college life, involve large numbers of students. Through residential trips, students learn to live and work co-operatively. The renewed emphasis on the house system is giving increased opportunity for students to take responsibility as house and team captains and inter-house competition further supports students' personal development. Students are encouraged, in some subjects, to work both independently and in small groups but in others the lack of opportunity limits their scope to develop independence.
21. Students have many opportunities to pursue their interests in aspects of British culture, both in lessons and clubs, especially music, drama and sport. Some subjects actively work to help students understand different cultures. In art, for example, students study works from a range of western and non-western cultures, and religious education raises students' awareness and develops their knowledge of a range of cultures and religions. Students have a satisfactory awareness and appreciation of Britain as a multicultural society.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
College data	7.2	College data	1.2
National data	6.9	National data	1.1

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

22. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. The vast majority of students attend regularly and on time, and the college and education welfare service work closely to identify those who have attendance problems. Support is targeted to these individuals, with strategies put in place to encourage regular attendance. The number of students who are absent without good reason is broadly in line with other schools. The college has good systems in place to ensure good attendance and to follow up absences and detect truancy, and is rigorous in pursuing parents for a legitimate reason for their child's absence.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE COLLEGE

The college provides a satisfactory quality of education. Teaching is satisfactory, as is students' learning. The curriculum satisfactorily meets their needs with good supporting resources and a good range of extra-curricular opportunities. Arrangements for students' care and welfare are very good with good support and guidance. Links with parents are satisfactory and those with the community and other schools are good.

Teaching and learning

Teaching, overall, is satisfactory. It is better in Years 10 and 11 than in Years 7 to 9. Students' learning is satisfactory. The assessment of students' work and the use made of these assessments are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Nearly three-quarters of teaching is good or better
- Teachers' good subject knowledge leads to well-planned lessons
- Some teachers, mainly new to teaching or to the college, are not able to manage the behaviour of some groups of students effectively
- Teaching supports and develops students' literacy skills well but can sometimes be too directive
- Students' unsatisfactory attitudes adversely affect their learning in a significant minority of lessons

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 107 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0 (0%)	22 (21%)	48 (45%)	24 (22%)	10 (9%)	2 (2%)	1 (1%)

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.

23. Overall, teaching is satisfactory although that seen during the inspection was not as good as that reported last time. It is best, in Years 10 and 11, where it is good. This is the reverse of what was reported last time. Both students and parents think teaching is good although, in their questionnaire responses, few expressed this strongly. Students are much more convinced that teachers expect them to work hard.
24. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the subject they teach. This enables them to plan their lessons well, to give clear explanations and to explain something in a different way if students do not initially understand. They understand the requirements of the examinations in their subject and prepare students well. Revision lessons in Year 11 showed teachers guiding their students well in techniques to gain the maximum marks.
25. A common feature to many lessons is a clear three-part structure, following the recommendations of national strategy. In many lessons, the quick starter activity was ready for students as they arrived and coped with the variation in arrival times as students moved from different parts of the building. When this task was time limited, it set a brisk pace to the lesson and engaged students' interest and brought their attention to the main learning activity of the lesson. Students responded well when this was clearly a consistent routine. What students were expected to learn during the lessons was often clearly stated at the beginning, and the last few minutes of the lesson were used well to go over these objectives and to reinforce what had been learned.
26. Many students at the college appear to have a fairly short concentration span and teachers have tackled this by planning for a variety of activities and tasks within a lesson and breaking learning down into smaller chunks. This keeps students engaged and involved in their work and, as a consequence, they learn well. Their learning is further encouraged by tasks which are challenging, but not unachievable, and a brisk pace that is maintained by time-limiting the activities. Questioning was used well to challenge students to think, to explain their answers rather than simply accepting a single word or short answer, and involve all students by being directed at named individuals and not just those who offered an answer. Praise is used appropriately to encourage and reward students.

As they go round the class observing students working, teachers support individuals well by responding to their immediate needs.

27. Students' literacy skills are below average when they come to the college and a significant minority of students do not like expressing their ideas and understanding in writing. Their oral response is often better than their written. Teachers often provide a framework to help students structure their writing although, on occasion, this was over-used and students were too 'spoon fed' and not challenged sufficiently to be more independent in their learning. Teaching, in most areas, used and explained the technical vocabulary associated with a particular subject well.
28. Many students are not self-motivated learners and a significant minority, particularly in Years 7 to 9, are unwilling to engage in the learning process. For teaching to proceed and learning to take place, these challenging attitudes and students' behaviour need to be managed very firmly and consistently. Confident, experienced teachers, and those whom the students have known over several years, are more successful at this. A large proportion of good and very good teaching was observed but not without, even these teachers, having to work hard to get an appropriate response from students. In satisfactory lessons, learning was often adversely affected by the impact of students' attitudes.
29. The staffing changes in the last two years have meant that some students, particularly last year, did not have the same teacher for the whole year. Difficulty in recruitment has meant that some vacancies have been covered by a succession of supply teachers. This situation has been resolved. However, the outcome has been that there are currently many newly-qualified teachers or teachers new to the college coping with groups of students who have had a disrupted experience. While planning good lessons with a variety of supported activities, some of these teachers were unable to manage the behaviour of students well enough to be able to put their plans into action and the teaching was unsatisfactory and occasionally poor. In these instances, teachers did not always use the college's behaviour management strategies consistently. In other lessons, students showed no respect for the teacher and blatantly refused to do as requested. The majority of teachers who were observed teaching an unsatisfactory lesson were also observed teaching a satisfactory or better lesson with another group.
30. Since gaining technology college status, mathematics, science, and design and technology rooms have been equipped with interactive whiteboards. Teachers have quickly come to grips with this new technology and the boards were being very effectively used to introduce work and support teaching or learning as the lesson developed. All that can be done on a computer screen can be seen on the board allowing, for example, the showing of video clips, PowerPoint presentations or the completing of spreadsheets. Just as the mouse can be used to move images around on a computer screen, so touching the board surface allows images to be moved around the board. This facility was used effectively, for example, to place and move students' responses as to where particular phrases best fitted on a probability line.
31. Students' work is marked accurately but the quality varies within and between departments. Some teachers use little more than a tick or mark, while others write very helpful comments on the work. These annotations help students understand what they need to do to raise the standard of their work. Marking related to the National Curriculum Level the work demonstrates, and how this might be raised, is particularly helpful. Examples of good practice exist in geography, history, English and areas of design and technology. The college is using professional development opportunities to promote this aspect of its work which is a focus of the current improvement plan.
32. The college uses the good range of assessment data that it has available to determine the National Curriculum levels which individual students might gain at the end of Year 9 or the GCSE grades they might gain at the end of Year 11. Regular assessments of a student's current level of working lead to identifying predicted grades. A good system of monitoring progress towards these operates, and the outcomes shared with students in their annual performance review. However, the extent to which students know what their level of working is, what their subject target grades are, how well they are progressing towards these targets and what they might do to improve the level of their work is not consistent between subjects. The college is planning changes to improve this for the coming year.

33. Teachers are fully aware of the need of students with English as an additional language. They offer very good one-to-one support. Those students who receive extra support from the Local Education Authority make good and quick progress. Students enjoy their learning and respond well to the support that they receive. The teaching of students with special educational needs is satisfactory. In the best lessons, a range of good support strategies results in students being fully involved in their learning and making good progress, often achieving well and occasionally very well. Teachers are generally well aware of the needs of individual students and adapt their teaching well to address their specific needs although, on occasion, work was not well matched to the students' need and they did not make sufficient progress. Learning support assistants (LSAs) provide good classroom support for individual students. Work is generally well matched to the needs of higher-attaining students in most subjects with well-planned tasks that extend the gifted students' learning to higher levels. There were occasions, however, when the opportunity for independent extension work was not planned for and missed.

The curriculum

Opportunities for learning are satisfactory overall and meet the needs and aspirations of students. The curriculum has been reviewed and developments planned to reflect the specialist technology college status. Opportunities for learning outside of lessons are good. Accommodation and resources support the curriculum well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good opportunities for activities outside of lessons broaden students' learning opportunities
- A well-planned pastoral course supports students' personal development effectively
- The college prepares students well for later stages of education and employment
- The provision for citizenship is unsatisfactory
- An opportunity for all students to experience a daily collective act of worship is provided but not always taken

Commentary

34. The curriculum meets the statutory requirements for Years 7 to 9. Students may choose one of two modern foreign languages to study and, additionally, all students study drama. The curriculum is particularly broad in design and technology, where a good range of courses caters well for all students, and in performing arts, in Year 9, where all students study music, drama and dance. The amount of time given to subjects is adequate although in Year 8, in modern foreign languages, and in all years in religious education, the time allocated is below that recommended. New this year, the two week 'smart start' programme effectively focuses on basic key skills early in Year 7 and supports students' transition from a primary to a subject-based curriculum. The key curriculum issues identified in the previous report have been resolved. The college has successfully introduced many of the recommendations of the National Strategies for teaching in Years 7 to 9.
35. Students in Years 10 and 11 follow a curriculum which provides breadth and balance in the education of all students. Personalisation in these years is achieved through the three 'pathways' approach recently adopted by the college. The large majority of students follow an academic programme with a good range of optional subjects. A more vocationally-based programme is being developed with, this year, the opportunity to study applied engineering (jointly delivered with a local college of further education) and well-advanced plans to offer applied science and applied business studies from September. The needs of a small, identified group of students are met through a programme involving reduced curriculum time in the college, a strong vocational element available at the local further education college and an extended physical education programme based on outdoor and adventurous activities.
36. All students attend three assemblies, weekly, in their year groups and spend their other two days in their tutor groups. There is a planned coherence between assembly themes and the *thought for the week* provided for tutor use. Opportunities exist, therefore, for statutory requirements for daily acts of collective worship to take place. However, little evidence was seen of the use of the *thought* by tutors and the assemblies, while being an effective experience for students, did not all incorporate an act of worship.

37. All students benefit from a well-planned and structured pastoral programme that meets statutory requirements for their personal and health education. The wide range of topics included in the health and relationships course is well supported by input from outside organisations and the college matrons. A balanced careers education and guidance course prepares students well for their transition from Year 9 to Year 10, and their transition from Year 11 to either the world of work or further education. Outside advisers support the work of the college well in this respect and Project Trident supports the work experience placement for Year 10 students. A well-structured 'Skills for Life' event for Year 11 students, including problem-solving activities, mock interviews and a taster session at a local college of further education, involves local employers and colleges well. The pastoral programme makes a contribution to students' understanding of citizenship, as do aspects of teaching in some subjects. However, the requirements of the subject are not fully met nor can the college guarantee that all students have the same experience.
38. A good range of activities outside the college day support students' learning and personal development effectively. Participation rates are good in physical education and the arts. Almost a quarter of students has represented the college in competitive fixtures, with Years 7 to 9 association football teams doing particularly well this academic year and netball teams maintaining their place in the top leagues. About half the students take part in recreational activities throughout the year and a developing range of house fixtures is providing further opportunities for students to take part in sporting activities. Trips abroad, as well as trips within the United Kingdom, enrich students' learning experiences. Extra-curricular provision in the performing arts faculty enriches the life of the college. As well as regular clubs and opportunities to learn instruments, students have the opportunity to be involved in regular productions and display their acting, musical and dancing capabilities. Of particular note is the small, all-boys dance group, *X-Dream*, which has developed a good reputation and which performs widely in the local area. Teachers provide many opportunities to support students' learning through, for example, revision classes.
39. Students with special educational needs have good access to the full curriculum, appropriate to their needs. The development of the three pathways programme ensures that students, who might otherwise fail to complete their education, have access to a curriculum that meets their needs. Each subject area has a responsibility for planning two activities a year that are designed to meet the specific needs of the gifted and talented students. The visit to Southampton University to explore forensic science and the *Youth Speaks* competition, both reported in The Link (the college newsletter), are good examples of these. Good links to Portsmouth University mathematics department supports Year 8 students and the *Shining Star* programme is particularly successful. The involvement of Year 6 students in summer schools for gifted and talented is a strong feature of the developing programme.
40. Accommodation is good and enhances the curriculum. Landscaped areas make the site attractive. Well-maintained buildings are conveniently grouped together and linked by covered walkways. Subjects are within dedicated faculty areas and the greater proportion has suited rooms. Classroom displays give strong subject identity in English and the humanities. Art does not have sufficient display space and there is currently no disabled access to the upper floors of buildings. Very good specialist facilities include part of the technology provision, the performing arts complex and physical education facilities. Several acres of playing fields give good provision for winter and summer games. The learning resource centre is well resourced and used extensively by students during and after college. Students generally remain outside the buildings during lunchtime and many would appreciate a greater provision of seating.
41. In most subjects, learning resources meet students' curriculum needs well. A good provision of computers supports teaching in many areas and other subjects have satisfactory access. The new interactive whiteboards are proving particularly effective and are being used well. Resources are unsatisfactory in geography, which lacks appropriate fieldwork equipment and GCSE textbooks.
42. The match of teaching staff to the needs of the curriculum is satisfactory overall. English and science have strong teams of subject specialists. Music, art and religious education have some difficulty meeting curriculum needs due to staff who either lack experience or specialist qualifications. The college works hard to recruit suitable staff and the high turnover of recent years has now stabilised. The provision of support staff is good and they are well deployed; reducing the

administrative work load of teachers and provides good support for students' health and welfare and learning.

Care, guidance and support

Arrangements to ensure students' care, welfare, health and safety are very good. The college provides its students with good support, advice and guidance, resulting in satisfactory achievement for the majority of students. The college involves students well in its everyday activities, seeking their views on its work and development, and generally acting upon them.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The college monitors students' academic and personal progress effectively through its pastoral support and uses its counselling and mentoring systems well to meet individuals' needs
- The college seeks the students' views well and acts on them so that they feel valued and able to bring about improvements to college life
- Very good child protection, health and safety and first-aid procedures ensure that students' welfare needs are very well met
- A good induction scheme helps students settle in well when they start at the college in Year 7
- The good systems for dealing with disruptive behaviour and unsatisfactory attitudes by students are not always used rigorously and effectively

Commentary

43. The college cares very well for its students. They feel safe and have an adult who they can turn to when they need support. This is usually their tutor, who is also the first contact for parents. Staff have very good knowledge of, and training in, welfare matters and when necessary, involve the appropriate support agencies offering specialist advice and guidance. This work is very well supported by the college matrons, the two counsellors, the mentors, the careers officer, education welfare officer and the Connexions' team. Child protection procedures are very good with all teaching and support staff receiving very thorough training. Internet security protects students from access to inappropriate websites. New procedures to combat bullying are having a positive effect. The peer mentoring scheme, where Year 11 students support younger students, has played an important part in this. The college's policies and procedures for health and safety are up-to-date, and are rigorously applied.
44. The monitoring of students' academic and personal progress is well organised. Through the student progress review (SPR) system, all students receive personal targets that are based on the very well kept records of their academic and personal progress. These discussions, with tutors and parents, give students a good opportunity to talk about their progress and parents have the opportunity to be involved in their children's education. All students maintain their own self-assessment progress booklets and tutors know individuals' targets well. A good exchange of academic and pastoral information, between the feeder schools and the college, ensures that new students are well known, particularly those with special educational needs. Good liaison and transfer arrangements with the feeder primary schools help students in Year 7 to settle into the college well.
45. The college knows the students with special educational needs well and works effectively to build their self-esteem so that nearly all are able to integrate fully into the day-to-day activities of the college. The links with feeder schools are well developed and provide a good support for transfer both in and out of the college. The college recognises that its monitoring of the gifted and talented students is at present insufficient, but plans are in hand to improve this. Teachers make sure that students with English as an additional language are well integrated into the college. They give them good support and encourage other students to work closely with them, resulting in rapid improvement in their acquisition of English. Students are effectively helped in their efforts to maintain their study of their home language so that Years 10 and 11 students are being entered for examinations in Arabic.
46. The college has a thorough system for monitoring and responding to students with behavioural difficulties, although it is not always used consistently within the classrooms. The new 'on call' system effectively involves senior staff in active support around the college, dealing effectively with students who disrupt the learning of their class. A regular analysis of the recorded use of the system seeks to identify patterns of teacher usage and student involvement, leading to more focused

action. The pastoral support for identified students is strong and the student inclusion unit is well organised, helping students who are at risk of exclusion, deal with their difficulties before they return to their normal classes.

47. All students benefit from very good impartial careers guidance. The well-organised careers programme begins in Year 7. Very good links with the Connexions service support the college's own programme. An identified group of students in Years 10 and 11, who might otherwise fail to complete their education, are very well supported. For example, through the well-planned engineering day with the army team observed during the inspection. The excellent and appropriate experience provided by the mock interview day, involving the business education partnership, is much appreciated by students.
48. Students are involved well in the daily life of the college through their college and year councils. Year representatives on the college council are from the five year councils, themselves made up of elected representatives from each tutor group. Students feel they have an effective voice and have contributed considerably to consultations on the landscape project, the house system, teaching styles and uniform. The work with the Stakes Lodge project, designed to improve an area near the college, is just one example of the college council's wider contribution, of which the students are rightly proud.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The college has a satisfactory partnership with parents and a good relationship with other schools, colleges and the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The partnership with other schools is good, providing support for pupils, students and staff
- The college has developed its links with the local community well, for example through making its facilities available to a large number of local groups and individuals
- The college works well with parents of students with special educational needs, but is less successful in encouraging the involvement of other groups of parents

Commentary

49. In the pre-inspection questionnaire which saw about one-tenth returned, parents generally expressed satisfaction with the college, but several have a few concerns about inconsistencies in behaviour management and consultation with parents. These are supported by the inspection. Parents expressed particular satisfaction with the arrangements for settling their child into the college and most said they felt comfortable about approaching the college if they had any concerns.
50. The college is committed to developing an effective partnership with parents and to raising the level of parental satisfaction. It encourages the involvement of parents through running courses on relevant matters, for example the recent *Coping with Teenagers*. Pastoral staff are quick to contact home to discuss concerns of any nature and to deal with any parental queries. The college provides parents with regular and useful information about its activities and any relevant developments through a well-presented termly newsletter and the college website. Reports on students' progress are satisfactory overall. They generally give a good outline of how much effort has been made, but the grades given for achievement are not always explained clearly enough.
51. The involvement of many parents in their children's learning and the life of the college is limited. Two-thirds of parents attend consultation meetings and academic reviews, whereas none do so for the governors' annual meeting. The parent-teacher association works conscientiously to raise funds for the college but only relatively few parents are involved. Good links have been developed between the college, parents of students with special educational needs and the agencies that support them. Parents are kept very well informed and closely involved in any reviews of their child's progress.
52. The college carries out specific consultations with parents and responds to some of the views raised. For example, the format for open evenings was altered in response to suggestions from parents. However, the college does not have any formal, regular mechanisms for seeking parents' views, and many parents did not feel the college consulted them enough on relevant issues.

53. A significant aspect of the role of a technology college is to work closely with other schools, especially primary schools, to raise the quality of education in the area. This is beginning to develop with valuable curriculum links with local primary schools covering a broad range of activities such as dance, drama, science and design and technology, some of which focus on the gifted and talented pupils. Primary school pupils make regular visits to use the college's technology facilities. Feeder schools are regularly visited and consulted, with information exchanged and joint training taking place. Good contact with local schools and colleges supports vocational courses for students, and advice and guidance on their choice of post-16 education. The close ties with South Down College and Highbury College work well, and many students go on to study at one or other of these.
54. Community links are also an important aspect of the technology college development. College facilities are used extensively by community groups which run social and sporting activities beyond the college day and during the holidays. These include a drama group, football club and computing classes. The college is actively involved in the Stakes Lodge Project, a local initiative which organises community-based activities in the nearby housing estate. Recently, staff and students have been working closely with architects from the local council on an environmental project to landscape the college grounds. Several local employers offer valuable support, particularly with Year 11 mock interviews and work experience placements. Regular visitors to the college include representatives from the police, fire brigade and army. A dance group from the college goes out to perform in the local community and beyond in the south east. Local partnerships are strong with those with communities beyond the immediate area, including those made possible by the Internet, being developed.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The college is led well by the headteacher and is based firmly on the drive for a collegiate approach to management and improvement. Other key staff carry out their leadership responsibilities well, often providing a clear vision for their subject or area. Management of the college and governance are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has started to introduce a collegiate management system which is aimed at involving all staff in raising standards
- Governors are hard working, supportive and committed to seeing the college improve but are not always sufficiently rigorous in challenging underperformance
- There is a coherent link between the college development plan, performance management and the professional development of staff
- Although there are rigorous systems for monitoring classroom practice, strategies for improving the quality of teaching are not always effective
- The financial management of the college is good

Commentary

55. The governors work hard for the college and are loyal and supportive. They regularly visit the college to meet teachers. Some governors observe classroom practice in their link role with a faculty. The governors' committees have clearly designated responsibilities all of which are usefully defined in the college's governor handbook. Annual briefings by middle managers and members of the leadership team on the achievements of specific departments or on new policy developments help them to put the examination results into context. Governors are involved well at a strategic level and they are fully committed to the college's new technology status. Although there are instances when members of the governing body have challenged outcomes there is some lack of rigour in the way in which they fulfil their role as a critical friend to the college. They have a clearer grasp of the college's strengths than its weaknesses. They fulfil all their statutory duties with the exception of ensuring that there is a daily act of collective worship.
56. The headteacher has introduced a system of collegiate management into the college and has plans to expand this principle further. He places great emphasis upon the development of teams and individuals, empowering them widely in the decision-making process. Senior managers provide good leadership in supporting and promoting these aims. The leadership within subject areas is more variable. Very good leadership in English, for example, contrasts with unsatisfactory situation

in citizenship. It is good overall. The headteacher and his senior team provide very good role models, leading by example within the classroom. The college is thorough in its self-evaluation identifying well most areas of weakness. The overall impact of these weaknesses is sometimes underestimated resulting in over-generous judgements as to the college's effectiveness.

57. The leadership and management of learning support are good and all statutory requirements are well met. Well-written documentation supports students' progress. The links to feeder schools are strong. Good strategies for early identification of needs are backed up by regular assessment. The monitoring of planning, in curriculum areas, is insufficient and leads to students being disadvantaged in some lessons. The importance of ensuring that the gifted and talented students achieve at the highest levels is well understood by the leadership team and while there is a drive to ensure that curriculum provision fully extends each child to his or her full potential, the tracking of their progress is not yet sufficiently rigorous. Talented students in the arts are supported well by the governors' award scheme.
58. All teachers are well supported by the college. They are observed teaching and any emerging issues addressed by further support and training. Staff who are new to teaching or to the college experience very good support for the first twelve months with a well-planned sequence of further training and guidance. All staff are able to attend training based on their individual and college needs. This results in a positive impact on their development and that of the institution. The college has very strong links with many local colleges and universities and has, on average, eight trainee teachers at any one time. These students are very well supported and are seen as a positive asset to the college. Monitoring of lessons, to provide a whole-college overview on the progress of teaching and learning, continues once staff are established. Subsequent strategies to improve weaknesses in the quality of teaching are not always effective. Some lessons continue to be disrupted through unacceptable student behaviour despite pro-active intervention by managers.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	2917116	Balance from previous year	15505
Total expenditure	2871510	Balance carried forward to the next	61111
Expenditure per student	3191		

59. The college applies the principles of best value well. A recent audit confirms good financial control. Budget allocations are monitored through comparison with national financial benchmarks. Governors have sought to achieve best value for money, for example by the college setting up its own cleaning unit. Appropriate financial procedures are in place to achieve value for money in expenditure on larger items or services.

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

Work-related learning

Provision in work-related learning is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Year 10 students' two-week work placement is followed up in tutorial time and English lessons
- A Year 11 mock interview day informs developing work on curriculum vitae and personal statements in preparation for the next stage
- A thorough curriculum audit has identified gaps in current provision and plans are well-advanced to fill these
- Vocational options have been introduced with further options planned
- An audit of the contribution made by subjects identifies only English and modern foreign languages providing work-related learning activities so far

Commentary

60. Nearly all students in Year 10 directly experience work-related learning through the two-week placement, facilitated by the Trident project. All are strongly encouraged to participate. English topic work and tutorial sessions build on this experience and consolidate students' learning and development. Students on curriculum pathways two and three have opportunity to choose vocational courses and extensions to these are planned for September. Year 11 students benefit from a mock interview day, with both academic and industrial partners taking part, and the subsequent work based on this. Work in this area is well supported by the local college of further education and employers, who both provide work-placement opportunities for the students and visit the college.
61. A very good session by the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers was observed. The students were given practical, problem-solving challenges to complete in teams. For example, they had to build a crane to lift a ball while meeting given specifications. This task was tackled enthusiastically by the students and it sharpened their problem-solving abilities and developed team-work well. It also taught them some basic engineering principles such as stability, strength and optimisation of materials. This was put into context well with a short video about the work of army engineers.
62. The management of work-related learning is sound, with the newly-appointed co-ordinator developing a clear overview of the existing provision and formulating plans to enhance it. Extra-curricular opportunities are used well but individual subjects' contributions to work-related learning are in their infancy.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 and 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Media studies is taught in Years 10 and 11. It has increased in popularity since its introduction eight years ago and results are amongst the highest in the college. In 2004, over half the entry of 39 students gained grades A* to C. The standard of work seen in the current Year 11 was above average with many students achieving high grades for their written and practical work. Teaching is very good with a strong emphasis on independent investigation and response. Teachers support students well in organising their work and accurately reporting their findings. Students' good skills in using ICT give the more able students' work a professional appearance and those with literacy weaknesses the opportunity to improve their basic skills. The course is very well run within the English faculty and contacts are increasing with local media institutions and further education colleges. However, with large numbers of students interested in the subject, equipment and resources are now insufficient, in particular for work in film and sound recording.

English

Provision in English is good.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Average	Above average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good
Leadership	Very good	
Management	Very good	
Progress since the last inspection	Good	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The 2004 GCSE English literature results were well above the national average
- Teaching is of a consistently good quality
- Leadership has successfully created a team with a unity of purpose and practice
- Students have insufficient opportunities to work independently
- Provision for enhancing the students' literacy skills is effective

Commentary

Examination results

63. The results of national testing, at the end of Year 9 in 2004, were below the national average but above average for similar schools. Few students attained the higher levels. Staffing problems caused the drop in results in 2004. The English language GCSE results, in 2004, were in line with the national average despite a greater proportion of the year group, than nationally, being entered. The results in English literature were significantly higher than the national average, although a smaller than national proportion was entered.

Standards and achievement

64. On joining the college, students' literacy standards are below the national average. They quickly acquire the skills needed to speak and listen effectively. Students can listen courteously, take account of the speaker's point of view and respond accordingly. Occasionally, they find it difficult to engage in open-ended discussion. Many students in Year 7 are able to read aloud well. Many can read with feeling and interest. Students' writing skills are less well developed than their speaking, listening and reading. They find it difficult to write at length and accurately. However, students are able to respond well to their teachers' help with writing frames.

65. By the time students reach Year 10, their writing has sufficiently improved to allow them to produce good GCSE essays. They enjoy reading and many respond well to poetry, showing considerable understanding of meaning and, in many cases, showing empathy for experiences in other cultures. Students become particularly good at understanding and using examination techniques. Those who are entered for GCSE English literature show excellent understanding of literary texts and produce well-argued essays. Students successfully word process their written work, presenting it in an attractive and readable form.
66. Achievement is good in all years. Students make particularly good progress in their speaking and listening. With teachers structuring lessons in a manageable way, students are able to respond in a way that allows them to build on previous learning. This is particularly the case with students with special educational needs who receive very good support.

Teaching and learning

67. In no lesson seen during the inspection was teaching less than good. Teachers use an agreed lesson structure which allows students to have a clear understanding of the intended learning outcome, work on manageable *bite-size* tasks that they understand and get a clear evaluation of their work. Teachers are consistent in challenging any unacceptable behaviour so that learning is very rarely disrupted. Teachers also succeed in ensuring that students' concentration is maintained by offering a variety of activities. Questioning strategies, although good at eliciting responses from students, tend to be limited to simple questions which do not require the student to think deeply. Students lack the ability to work independently. In literature lessons, teachers are willing to take some risks by allowing students to delve quite deeply into literary texts, particularly poetry.
68. Teachers mark work promptly and effectively. They use a great deal of praise. Marked work gives a clear target on what to do next in order to improve. Occasionally, the target is too general, for example asking a student to write in paragraphs when the student clearly does not know what a paragraph is. Students understand what each level or GCSE grade means. By the time that they are doing their GCSE, they are given many opportunities to evaluate their own work and they know what they need to do to improve further. Assessment is very good in Years 10 and 11 because it includes clear strategies aimed at helping the students gain a very good understanding of examination techniques. This is probably the main contributory factor, along with the good teaching, to the good progress made by all students and in particular by those doing English literature as well as English language.

Leadership and management

69. Leadership has successfully created a good working team in a relatively short time. The result has been a smooth running department where all are agreed on the best strategies to enhance students' achievement. Teaching and learning are regularly monitored which leads to improvements in teaching strategies. All teachers are agreed on how to run a structured lesson in a way that facilitates students' learning. English rooms are attractively decorated with the displays of students' work and of useful language prompts.
70. The department has undergone significant improvements under its new leadership. Since the last inspection, teaching is now invariably at least good. Literacy skills have improved as a result. The gap that used to exist between girls' and boys' performance has been narrowed and GCSE results have improved most significantly in English literature.

Literacy across the curriculum

71. Students' competence in literacy is average in Years 7 to 9. It is good in Years 10 and 11. This shows considerable progress. Literacy provision in most subjects includes using key words, reinforcing the use of technical words, modelling essay writing, giving students a writing framework and word processing on a regular basis. Students' speaking is their strongest literacy skill and this helps enhance their listening skills. Most students are able to read in a way that helps their learning. The main weakness, in most subjects, is the students' writing ability. Despite the writing frames presented by many teachers, students find it difficult to produce continuous writing with ease and this makes many of them reluctant to write. In some subjects, such as English, students' writing improves significantly by the time that they are doing their GCSE examinations.

Modern foreign languages

Students in Year 7 are offered French and either German or Spanish, which they study until the end of Year 9. Currently, French and Spanish are taught in Year 7, and French and German in Year 8. Neither Spanish nor German is taught in Year 9 because these students followed the previous timetabling arrangements when only French was offered. In Year 10, students currently can choose to continue with French and have the opportunity to take up a second language.

Provision in modern foreign languages is satisfactory.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Average	Average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Teaching and learning	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Leadership	Satisfactory
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since the last inspection	Satisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE results have improved significantly since the last inspection
- In the better lessons, teachers show good knowledge of their subject and use the foreign language well
- Poor behaviour results in unsatisfactory learning and achievement in a minority of lessons
- Teachers do not do enough to develop students' speaking skills
- Students have good opportunities to study a range of languages

Commentary

Examination results

72. The results of teacher assessments at the end of Year 9, in 2004, were in line with those reported nationally, although few students reached the highest levels of attainment. GCSE French results have been consistently in line with national averages in recent years despite entering twice the national proportion of the year group. No students have as yet taken GCSE in Spanish and none have taken German since 2002. Students will, however, be taking GCSE in both languages this summer, as well as in French.

Standards and achievement

73. Students' written and reading comprehension skills are generally better developed than their speaking skills. Lower-attaining students demonstrate less than expected levels of knowledge and understanding: for example, too many students have an insecure grasp of basic vocabulary. However, in French by the end of Year 9, higher-attaining students can successfully use a range of tenses in their written work, and a good variety of expressions relating to the topics they have covered. In Years 10 and 11, higher-attaining students can communicate well and write, for instance, quite sophisticated job application letters. In Spanish, most students make good progress in Years 10 and 11, and achieve above average standards. However, in German the standards reached by students at the end of Year 11 are below average. For example, students find it very difficult to deduce the meanings of unfamiliar expressions.

Teaching and learning

74. The quality of teaching and learning is variable. In the more successful lessons, teachers had high expectations of behaviour, to which students responded well. Teachers were a good model for students in their use of the foreign language, and they offered Year 11 students valuable advice on preparing for and responding to GCSE examinations. In a Year 8 lesson, the teacher conducted the lesson at a brisk pace and largely in French, regularly checking students' understanding. Students' knowledge and skills were gradually developed through the teacher's use of a good range of activities that moved from listening and repetition to speaking and writing. The students responded well and were very keen to participate. The teaching, in a Year 10 Spanish lesson, was enthusiastic

and effective with the teacher using Spanish well to explain unfamiliar words and expressions, rather than resorting to translation into English. However, in other lessons students were not given enough opportunities to practise their oral skills, and planned activities were not sufficiently varied or challenging. In a minority of lessons, poor behaviour by a significant minority of students prevented the classes from making sufficient progress. Teachers do not always give students enough written information about their achievement, so they often do not know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

75. Leadership has a clear vision of the role of languages and of what needs to be improved. Students can now choose from three languages in Year 10, and a significant number opt to study two. Detailed schemes of work have been developed which would be helpful to a new teacher joining the faculty. However, there is insufficient monitoring of teaching and assessment. Not enough is being done to share good practice or to help teachers solve problems, for example with behaviour. The use of ICT is underdeveloped. Although some issues highlighted in the last inspection report have been tackled, others have not, in particular the range of activities used in the classroom.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is satisfactory.

	Year 9	Years 11
Standards	Average	Above average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Good
Teaching and learning	Satisfactory	Good
Leadership	Satisfactory	
Management	Good	
Progress since last inspection	Satisfactory	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Higher-attaining students do well; they are given appropriate and challenging work
- The poor attitudes of a significant minority of students, particularly in Years 7 to 9, are holding back their learning
- The use of the new interactive whiteboards, combined with a consistent application of the college's behaviour policy, are having a significant impact on the quality of learning
- Data on student performance are used well. Areas for development are identified and targets are set for pupils, but they are not always made aware of these
- Good management is resulting in improved standards, particularly in Years 10 and 11

Commentary

Examination results

76. Students' attainment on entry is improving and is now average. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 9, in 2004, were below average compared with all schools but above average compared with similar schools. The trend in results has broadly matched the national improvements. There was no difference between boys' and girls' performance in 2004.
77. At the end of Year 11 in 2004, GCSE results were broadly average with students doing particularly well at grades A* and A. Overall, students made better progress than expected from the time they enter the college until the end of Year 11.

Standards and achievement

78. Standards are comparatively better in Years 10 and 11 than they are in the younger age groups, mainly as a result of better teaching and the improved maturity and attitudes of the students. Higher-attaining students in Year 9 had successfully completed work in Pythagoras and trigonometry; all students in Year 8 understood and could successfully apply the ideas of probability. Achievement is satisfactory, overall, in these years because most students make the expected progress from their level of attainment when they enter the college. In Year 11, and in preparation for GCSE exams,

higher-attaining students were able to match more difficult equations with non-linear graphs successfully. Students on the GCSE grade C/D borderline were working successfully on algebraic substitution. The level of work showed higher standards and good achievement for these students in relation to their below average attainment on entry to the college.

Teaching and learning

79. A very good feature of many lessons is the way in which teachers make use of the new interactive whiteboards. These are used well to introduce starter activities and other work. There were examples of very good teaching where an effective combination of the boards, rapid-paced lessons with strict time limits for activities, and clear explanations, resulted in very good learning. In these lessons, an insistence on high standards of behaviour and a consistent approach in the application of the colleges' behaviour code, successfully overcomes the poorer attitude of some of the students.
80. Students' learning, particularly in Years 7 to 9, is adversely affected by the poor attitudes of a significant minority of students who are often reluctant to work and to respond to teachers' instructions. In weaker lessons, there are inconsistencies in the way the teacher uses the behaviour code and the lesson may be unsatisfactory.
81. The marking of students' work is generally satisfactory but does not refer to students' levels and target grades, so students do not know how their level of work relates to their target or what they need to do to reach it. The modular course, recently introduced in Years 10 and 11, does however give the students a very good level of information about their current progress.

Leadership and management

82. The day-to-day management of the department is good and has resulted in well-organised schemes of work, a range of after-college activities which include revision sessions, and an effective organisation of the new GCSE modular course. The team has worked together well and there is an improvement in standards, particularly in Year 11, where the GCSE module results indicate a significant improvement on last year. The department has a good development plan, but the absence of permanent leadership means that long-term development will be difficult to implement. Similarly, routine monitoring and evaluation has not been effective in correcting some of the problems with the quality of teaching. The department has a number of high-quality teachers, but the current uncertainty over leadership results in there being less impetus for change. Since the last inspection there have been major changes in the nature of the college intake and given the current performance of the department, improvement overall has been satisfactory.

Mathematics across the curriculum

83. Students' skills in mathematics are sufficient to ensure that they can cope with the demands of other subjects. In drama, students use measurement well to construct and design stage sets. Science in particular makes good use of mathematical ideas in graphs and the use of correlation, and provides many other opportunities to use numeracy skills, for example in calculations involving energy. In design and technology, students' knowledge enabled them to effectively use ideas of angle in design development.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is good.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Below average	Average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Good
Teaching and learning	Satisfactory	Good
Leadership	Good	
Management	Satisfactory	
Progress since the last inspection	Satisfactory	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teachers are very well-qualified subject specialists
- Students achieve best when actively engaged by teachers who have high expectations
- Some teachers use a restricted range of teaching styles
- Leadership has ensured that all staff share the common desire to raise standards
- All lessons are well planned and follow set procedures
- Some lower-attaining students do not have a good attitude to learning

Commentary

Examination results

84. Results in the national tests at the end of Year 9, in 2004, were below average but were in line with those of similar schools. Results have risen since the last inspection with a trend similar to the national pattern. GCSE results, in 2004, were broadly in line with the national average. Results have been variable, year on year, since the last inspection but the overall trend is improving.

Standards and achievement

85. Students enter the college with attainment that is below the national average. Although standards at the end of Year 9 remain below the national average, this represents satisfactory achievement. For example, while students in Year 7 could identify some basic examples of inherited characteristics such as eye colour, students in Year 9 could use their knowledge of particles to predict how liquids have different flow properties. In Year 11, students achieve well and standards seen were close to the national average. All students were actively involved in revision sessions for their GCSE examinations. They were able to use their science knowledge and numeracy skills to analyse graphs accurately. The higher-attaining students achieve better than other students due to their good attitudes to learning. They produce coursework of a suitable standard and receive good guidance from their teachers. The achievement of some lower-attaining students was not as good due to their lack of engagement and motivation.

Teaching and learning

86. All the teachers have very good subject knowledge and an enthusiasm for their subject. The course is organised well with well-planned modules. All lessons follow an agreed common format that ensures students are quickly engaged. However, some teachers are reluctant to use a sufficiently wide range of teaching styles, including practical work. Teachers are skilled at controlling question-and-answer sessions in lessons. Students enter class discussions with confidence, showing good oracy skills. Overall, students' attitudes are good and there is a pleasant, co-operative atmosphere in those lessons that they find of interest and relevant. However, some students are easily distracted if they find the tasks uninteresting. Students receive good in-class support and guidance through informal discussions. Teachers use the newly-installed interactive boards well and produce high-quality presentations. Students' work is marked on a regular basis with some teachers giving very detailed guidance on attainment and how to improve the work further.

Leadership and management

87. The wealth of knowledge of science education and examination requirements, within the department, is used effectively to evaluate the courses and clearly identify development needs. The department has planned the further introduction of whole-class use of computers in a considered manner and the introduction of a more relevant applied science course next year. All teachers in the department have a shared desire to raise standards further. Teachers have access to detailed analysis of students' attainment data. However, the department does not monitor students' achievement in a rigorous manner against predicted grades. The teachers are well supported by two technicians. Standards at GCSE have risen since the last inspection and teaching has improved.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Information and communication technology (ICT) is taught as a separate subject to all students. All students in Years 10 and 11 take the short course GCSE. In addition, aspects of ICT are taught in many other subjects. The provision judgement refers to the effectiveness of ICT overall, the main body of the report refers only to the separate subject of ICT, and the final paragraph refers to ICT in the other subjects.

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is satisfactory.

	Years 9	Years 11
Standards	Below average	Below average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Teaching and learning	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

Leadership	Satisfactory
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since last inspection	Unsatisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The improving standards, because of recent organisational changes, are not yet reflected in the results
- Teaching is generally well planned, but the poor attitudes of a significant minority of students, particularly in Years 7 to 9, has an adverse effect on learning and hence standards
- The future plans for the development of the college provide a clear vision for continued improvements

Commentary

Examination results

88. Results of teacher assessment at the end of Year 9, in 2004, were well below those reported nationally. Results of the GCSE short course, in 2004, were well below average. There was no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.

Standards and achievement

89. Students enter the college with a wide range of experience of ICT but their subject knowledge and skills, overall, are below average. Current standards vary considerably from year group to year group. Year 7 are already close to average with Year 9 still catching up from their previously much lower level. Changes in organisation, from September 2004, are having a positive effect in raising standards. A previous gap in students' experience, the use of ICT to control systems, has been filled so that, in Year 7 for example, students create a simple programme to control the sequence of operation in traffic signals. Year 9 students create web pages and use desktop publishing packages to prepare brochures and documents. They are competent in their use of simple spreadsheets and databases. Standards in Year 11, although below average, are higher than those shown by last year's results and are improving. Students develop their competence in word processing, can use more sophisticated spreadsheets and make good use of ICT in the preparation of course work in other subjects. In relation to their attainment on entry, students' progress and achievement are satisfactory.

Teaching and Learning

90. Lessons are well planned and teachers use good resource materials, including making very good use of the new interactive boards. The provision of computers and supporting equipment is good. The effective teachers cope well with the poor behaviour of some students and the college behaviour systems are firmly and consistently applied. However, the weaker teaching is associated with teachers' poor behaviour management skills and students' learning is adversely affected. The recording of student progress is variable, but there are very good examples where teachers have developed IT-based systems where review and recording occur on a lesson-by-lesson basis.

Leadership and management

91. The leadership and management of the department are going through a process of significant change and there will be further changes in September 2005 when the department will expand. Poor curriculum organisation in the past has resulted in low standards but the timetable and curriculum are now well organised to meet the National Curriculum requirements, and this is allowing students to catch up on previously missing experiences. Weaknesses in some teaching have yet to be resolved. Timetabling changes this year have given students a more coherent experience with a subsequent rise in standards. Further changes, coming fully into operation next year, are already showing further raising of standards in Year 10. Although there is now increasingly rapid improvement and development, results are lower than at the previous inspection and progress, overall, has been unsatisfactory.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

92. A new curriculum audit has been completed and the college has formed a cross-curricular group to identify where, in each subject, ICT can be used or students' skills developed. Teachers have been trained in the use of the new interactive boards and, although these are currently limited to certain departments, there is clear evidence that they are being used very effectively.
93. Students are generally competent in their basic IT skills. They successfully use the Internet to research information and can design web pages. They use spreadsheets and databases and routinely use ICT in many subjects to record their work or present their assignments. Some subjects provide good support for developing their skills. For example, the design subjects make extensive use of computer-aided design and manufacture (CAD/CAM) and there is extensive use in music. Other subjects, for example English and art, make too little use of ICT to support teaching and learning.

HUMANITIES

Geography

Provision in geography is good.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Below average	Average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good
Leadership	Good	
Management	Good	
Progress since the last inspection	Good	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Reluctant learners and disruptive students are managed successfully so that everyone achieves well in lessons
- Enthusiastic, knowledgeable teaching and varied lesson activities keep students interested and contribute to the growing popularity of the GCSE course
- Schemes of work, resources and the fieldwork programme provide limited support for the curriculum
- Very good assessment helps students learn successfully

Commentary

Examination results

94. Results of Year 9 teacher assessments have been below those reported nationally for the last three years. GCSE results, in 2004, were significantly below average, as they had been in 2003. However, a much larger proportion of students took GCSE, than nationally, with the result that the average point score per student in the year group was fifty per cent higher than the national figure.

Standards and achievement

95. On entry to Year 7, students' attainment is below average. From the outset, students of all capabilities make good progress, largely as a result of teachers' firm, consistent approach to those with negative attitudes towards learning and unacceptable behaviour. By Year 9, higher-attaining students use specialist vocabulary to explain common weather phenomena while lower-attaining students provide briefer, more colloquial accounts. Year 11 coursework shows students competently using their geographical skills to investigate variations in the quality of life within Havant. Students with special educational needs also achieve well. For example, good support in a Year 8 lesson helped students with the difficult task of analysing data they had collected from a local coppice.

Teaching and learning

96. All lessons observed were good or very good. Teachers used their extensive subject knowledge in lively and innovative ways to organise activities that resulted in productive learning and good personal development. Insistence on high standards of behaviour produced respectful relationships that nurtured discussions. For example, a Year 9 lesson on global trade initially used a wrestling poster to set students thinking about winners and losers. Text, pictures and symbols helped students compare the views of producers and consumers, and the lesson ended with students making corporate decisions on fairness. Students' work is marked thoroughly and full comments give encouragement and advice for improvement. Assessment results are fed back to students so they know exactly what their standard is, what they are aiming for, and how to get there.

Leadership and management

97. Following a period of staffing difficulties, newer members of the department have succeeded in providing stability and in raising the profile of the subject within the college. Teachers are good role models and their enthusiasm is reflected in growing numbers opting for GCSE, and the strong subject identity of classrooms. The department has helped to develop an assessment system that enhances learning, sharing good practice with the college. Resources are being built up, although there are still shortfalls in GCSE textbooks and fieldwork equipment. Fieldwork is not experienced by all years and does not include sufficient physical geography investigations. Brief schemes of work do not track all aspects of learning. Since the last inspection, the quality of teaching and assessment has improved. Integrated humanities is no longer taught and geography has been successfully established as a stand-alone GCSE subject.

History

Provision in history is good.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Average	Average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since the last inspection	Very good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good assessment programme has helped students make significant progress in their work
- Well-structured lessons that are well taught enable students to achieve well
- Tasks are well planned to develop students' history skills and understanding of the past
- A small minority of students do not achieve their potential, because they act in a manner that is immature and does not respect their teachers

Commentary

Examination results

98. The results of teacher assessment, at the end of Year 9 in 2004, were in line with those reported nationally. GCSE results, in 2004, were significantly below national average but were a marked improvement on the two previous years' results.

Standards and achievement

99. Year 7 students enter the college with below average attainment. Standards observed in the present Year 9 are average. Most students have a sound understanding of chronology, cause and effect and use source material satisfactorily. They achieve well. The standards of work seen in Year 11 GCSE are average. Students achieve well, given their levels on entry to the GCSE course. The majority can interrogate sources, draw conclusions well and support their viewpoints with evidence. They recognise bias and judge the reliability and validity of materials satisfactorily. Students with special educational needs generally achieve well. Gifted students often achieve very well, particularly when working on independent tasks.

Teaching and learning

100. Good teaching results from careful planning that provides a variety of appropriate challenges which are structured to develop students' thinking skills. This was particularly apparent in Year 9 work on the response of German citizens to the Weimar Republic. Each student had to analyse what an individual might think, at different times, and justify their opinions to their classmates. They did this well and clearly enjoyed the challenge. In a well-planned Year 11 revision session, several students worked at high levels because the teacher challenged them to consider the consequences of a series of problems faced by the Weimar government for themselves. They developed a good understanding of why opinion often changes with time. Teachers ensure that students have a good understanding of the skills needed to tackle assessments and GCSE questions well. The GCSE coursework component is particularly well taught. Students have a very clear understanding of the consequences of the Vietnam War for America. Many students show considerable development, orally and in writing, during their GCSE course. A small minority of students are disrespectful, seeking purposely to disrupt lessons but at which they generally fail, because of the good classroom management.
101. The teachers know their students well, marking carefully and showing them how they can improve their work. The assessment scheme, in which students are given very clear guidance as to what they need to do to achieve their next target, is proving very successful. Assessment folders in Years 7 to 9 provide strong evidence of the rapid improvement by many students in the standards of their work.

Leadership and management

102. There is a clear vision for the department's work in the improvement plans. A significant improvement has taken place since the previous inspection. Emphasis on teaching styles and students' learning, literacy, citizenship, the very good assessment procedures and the sheer enthusiasm for the subject are behind the very positive progress. Good team-work is evident and the teachers are committed to improving public examination results. A well-planned programme of activities, such as the Flanders trip, has led to an immense interest in the subject and the numbers choosing the subject for examination has increased significantly in the present Year 9. Appropriate homework is regularly set. Students' work is developed well by use of display, in and outside the rooms.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is satisfactory.

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

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since the last inspection	Good

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Specialists and non-specialists teach enthusiastically and with good pace, so students maintain concentration
- Thorough, careful planning ensures that syllabus requirements are met, despite insufficient lesson time
- Marking does not give students enough guidance on how to improve standards and presentation
- Assessment methods enhance students' learning
- Community resources are not used to enrich the curriculum

Commentary

Examination results

103. Results for the GCSE short course, in 2004, were broadly average and similar to the previous year. However, the 2004 results showed a marked improvement in the proportion of students gaining A* to C grades, compared with the previous year. Girls did better than boys; the gender difference was much greater than nationally. There were no GCSE full course results in 2003 or 2004. All students follow either the short or full course.

Standards and achievement

104. On entry to Year 7, students' attainment is below the level expected by the Locally Agreed Syllabus for their age. During the first three years, students improve their subject skills such as evaluation and empathy. They steadily build up knowledge and understanding of religious and secular beliefs and Year 9 students are able to assess the influence these have on people's views. Achievement in Years 7 to 9 is held back by poor quality marking and too much lesson time being devoted to managing behaviour. Effective guidance and discipline enables GCSE students to achieve well. Year 11 competently use knowledge of different faiths and scriptures to examine complicated issues like euthanasia. Good support in lessons helps students with special educational needs to achieve well.

Teaching and learning

105. The teaching observed ranged from very good to poor. Very effective teaching was energetic, took firm control of behaviour, and managed activities that exactly met students' academic needs. Within this framework, a Year 10 lower-attaining group made very good progress when they compared their personal rights with those of children in poverty-stricken countries. When teachers could not find ways to contain challenging behaviour or counter negative attitudes, students' learning was unsatisfactory. Teaching makes a good contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. For example, Year 8 students reflected on all these aspects when they considered Christian teachings and the example of Mother Theresa. The marking of class and homework is not thorough enough because brief comments give too little constructive criticism or concrete help. This is particularly so in Years 7 to 9 where work is not presented with sufficient pride and students do not always know what to do to improve. In contrast, formal assessments are very thoroughly marked and results are fed back to students so they know exactly what their standard is, what target they are aiming for and how to achieve it.

Leadership and management

106. New leadership is building upon inherited departmental strengths. Planning produces ambitious content and clear lesson structure so that tight control is maintained over learning outcomes. This is why the statutory requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus are met even though the subject is not allocated the recommended curriculum time. Priorities for development have been identified and are being put into action. For example, in conjunction with the county adviser, new modules are being written for the recently revised Locally Agreed Syllabus. Students have no opportunities to visit local places of worship or hear talks from representatives of different faiths. Since the last inspection, GCSE religious education has become firmly established. Provision for students with special educational needs has improved. Assessment has been developed.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

Provision in design and technology is satisfactory.

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

Leadership	Good
Management	Satisfactory
Progress since the last inspection	Satisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Leadership is clearly focused on improving standards and achievement
- Too often lessons are disrupted by poor behaviour which results in underachievement
- A good assessment system is raising standards but is not being used consistently across the faculty

Commentary

Examination results

107. At the end of Year 9, in 2004, the results of teacher assessments were below those reported nationally. All students study for a qualification in one of the design and technology options compared with less than two-thirds nationally. In 2004, GCSE results were significantly below average although the average point score per student in the year group was noticeably higher than the national figure. The difference in students' attainment in the subject and the other subjects they took is significantly below the national picture, but this indicator is also adversely affected by the higher than national entry rate.

Standards and achievement

108. Students join the college with standards below average. In relation to this, students' overall achievement is satisfactory but it is different in the different areas. In the lessons seen, students achieved better in resistant materials, graphics and electronics than they did in food technology and textiles. This reflects differences in the quality of teaching. In Years 10 and 11, boys are achieving better than girls because more of them chose the former subjects. At the end of Year 9, students have a working knowledge of computer-aided design and manufacture. At the end of Year 11, students studying resistant materials can produce a critical analysis of electrical products such as lamps. Those studying textiles can design and make cushions using a variety of colour and fabric. Students across the college use ICT competently to access research information that helps them with their initial design ideas. Students with special educational needs achieve as well as their classmates when involved with the practical elements of the course, but struggle when asked to commit their thoughts to paper either in the traditional manner or using a word processor.

Teaching and learning

109. The quality of teaching varies from very good to unsatisfactory, and is satisfactory overall. Where it is good, teachers set work which challenges the students and provides progression in the development of skills. This results in good learning taking place. In these lessons, students are motivated by the variety of teaching methods; short deadlines and the opportunity to work together co-operatively. Less successful lessons are punctuated by the teacher repeatedly having to tell students to pay attention and to behave themselves. This results in frequent interruptions to the lesson that disrupt the learning process. On too many occasions students ignore the teachers. Teachers start lessons by explaining the learning objectives. This is good as it helps students to evaluate their own progress.
110. The department has introduced a good assessment policy which includes target setting, linked to national curriculum levels or GCSE grades, and an element of student self-evaluation. Where teachers are using this strategy, the benefit shows through in students' awareness of their progress and standards are improving.

Leadership and management

111. Leadership has a strong awareness of what is needed to improve standards. Comprehensive departmental documentation is in place which supports a cohesive approach across the varying elements of the subject. Students' progress is now tracked effectively and examination performance is carefully analysed. The quality of teaching is systematically monitored and accurately evaluated although measures to tackle inappropriate behaviour, and therefore improve learning, are not always effective. The department has recently begun working with local primary schools to help raise standards and improve the skills and knowledge of students before they come to the college.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Dance is taught throughout the college as part of the performing arts curriculum. Small groups of girls were entered for the GCSE examination in 2003 and 2004. Results improved, in 2004, with approximately two-thirds of students gaining A* to C grade passes and almost a quarter gaining either an A* or A grade pass. Two lessons were sampled. In a Year 9 lesson teaching and learning were satisfactory. Students were well managed and fully involved in choreographing small motifs. However, a lack of focus on the use of technical language in their comments on others' performance and use of choreographic devices showed their evaluative skills lacked the required depth expected for their ages. In a very good Year 11 theory revision lesson, students were very well managed and being very well prepared for the examination. Some students did not provide enough detail in their responses as regards appreciation of set works but the more confident and higher-attaining students had a good knowledge and understanding of, for example, 'dynamics' and 'body percussion'.

Art and design

Provision in art and design is satisfactory.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Below average	Below average
Achievement	Satisfactory	Good
Teaching and learning	Satisfactory	Good
Leadership	Satisfactory	
Management	Satisfactory	
Progress since the last inspection	Satisfactory	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve well in Years 10 and 11 because teachers use their good subject knowledge to structure learning carefully
- Current leadership is good with a determination to raise standards
- Students' drawing skills are developed progressively so that by Years 10 and 11 they are able to interpret their ideas using a wide range of media
- Younger students in particular do not know how best to improve their work

Commentary

Examination results

112. The results of teacher assessment at the end of Year 9, in 2004, were well below those reported nationally. The 2004, GCSE results were significantly below the national average. This was a big dip, compared to 2003 when the proportion of students gaining grades A* to C was more than twice as high, and is a result of the impact of staffing difficulties.

Standards and achievement

113. Although standards in Year 9 are below average, they are higher than indicated by last year's teacher assessment and represent satisfactory achievement in relation to the below average standards on entry. Students show steady progress with developing their drawing skills. Higher-attaining students often achieve well because they are self-motivated and work hard. Lower and middle-attaining students are often too easily distracted and this lessens their achievement.
114. Current standards in Year 11 are higher than those indicated by last year's results. These students have worked very hard to improve the quality and standard of their work from Year 10. Their drawing skills are close to average, with some delicate observations of plants and shells, explored further through monoprints, collage and relief work. Students write clear explanations about their work, but do not always link their research to their own responses. Both boys and girls are achieving well. Students with special educational needs achieve as well as others, though those with weaknesses in literacy, including some lower-attaining students, struggle with written analysis and research.

Teaching and learning

115. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Where teaching is good, teachers have good subject expertise, give clear explanations and, in Years 10 and 11, provide effective one-to-one support matched to students' needs. Relationships are based on respect and trust, and teachers continually try to build students' confidence by planning learning in small steps. This leads to students working hard and making personal responses because they experience success. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, teachers did not deal sharply enough with a minority of students who were inattentive or silly, and time was wasted throughout the lesson. Time is not always used well so that planned opportunities for students to evaluate their work are missed. Students do know their level or grade, but do not always know how to improve. Students in Years 10 and 11 receive helpful oral feedback and useful written comments on their work, this is not yet so in Years 7 to 9.

Leadership and management

116. Staffing difficulties have had a negative impact on the leadership of art. Current leadership is good. Weaknesses have been identified and action taken which is already having a positive effect on achievement in Years 10 and 11, but not yet in Years 7 to 9 where the quality of teaching and learning is variable. Effective schemes of work are being developed which link knowledge about artists and cultures with developing students' skills. Not enough use is made of computers to support and extend students' learning in art. There are adequate enrichment opportunities.

Drama

Provision in drama is good.

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

Leadership	Good
Management	Good
Progress since previous inspection	Satisfactory

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving and drama is becoming more popular
- Regular assessment of students' work supports their learning
- Strong leadership offers good support to non-specialist teachers
- GCSE standards are limited by the absence and disaffection of some students
- Musical productions involve a large number of students throughout the college

Commentary

Examination results

117. Although GCSE results have declined since the last inspection, results in 2004 improved dramatically upon those of 2003, with two thirds of candidates gaining grades A* to C. Numbers were small but some students gained their highest GCSE grade in drama.

Standards and achievement

118. Although standards are below the national expectation in Year 9, students make satisfactory progress from widely differing experiences at primary school. The majority of students, in one Year 9 class, showed interest and engaged well with the task of using their bodies as props in a group performance of physical theatre. However, a minority of students became unruly and unresponsive and too much teaching time was taken in persuading them back to work. Girls in this class generally worked much harder than boys and their achievement was better. They settled to the task more quickly and improvised and collaborated with more thought. Achievement of students with special educational needs was satisfactory and they made progress at the same rate as their peers. Teachers were aware of individual students' learning or emotional difficulties and gave extra help to meet their needs.
119. The majority of Year 11 students showed skilful acting whilst rehearsing their scripted performances, the week before the final GCSE assessment, and their achievement was good. They were supportive of each other, kept in character throughout and delivered their lines with conviction. Students' plans to extend rehearsals after college and at the weekend were indications of their interest and commitment to do as well as they could. In particular, the higher-attaining students, and those planning to study drama at advanced level, were determined to achieve the highest grade. However, there was some lack of effort by those students who still had not learned their lines and disaffection amongst students who were regularly absent from lessons. This had a negative impact on the achievement of each group. Literacy weaknesses amongst some students limited their attainment in work which involved reading and writing.

Teaching and learning

120. All observed teaching was at least satisfactory, but good or very good when taught by specialist teachers. The regular routines practised in each lesson indicated the teachers' high expectations of students' work and behaviour. Assessment was well used, both in immediate feedback to individuals in lessons and in teacher and student assessment sheets. Students in Year 7, having completed a very good unit of work on Greek theatre, in which they used masks for dramatic effect, had been told the criteria on which they were to be assessed. Being given a preview of the questions, on which they were to identify what they had done well and where they could do better, helped them

focus on improving the standard of their work and their rate of progress. Specialist teachers know the subject well. They showed confidence when introducing new ideas to students and subsequently checking their understanding. They were confident when applying drama techniques to situations and occasionally, to the delight of the students, by performing in front of the class.

Leadership and management

121. Leadership has ensured a shared determination to achieve the best standards possible and to raise the impact of drama within the college. Within the faculty of creative and performing arts, the subject has recently taken on new energy. New schemes of work, a new handbook and extra support from the local authority advisory team offer very good support for non-specialists. There are indications that students in Year 7 and students starting a GCSE course in Year 10 are reaching higher standards than the previous year. Good links with dance, music and art, are developing strong cultural and social provision. Work is thoughtfully planned, teaching is monitored, and the numbers opting to take drama GCSE are increasing. Accommodation in the theatre and well-equipped studio is excellent, though classes are also taught in classrooms and the hall which require furniture to be moved for practical activities. Parents and friends are regularly invited to watch students' group work. Large musical productions every two years enable many students to take part in performance and gain from being involved in a major college activity.

Music

Provision in music is unsatisfactory.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Below average	Average
Achievement	Unsatisfactory	Very good
Teaching and learning	Unsatisfactory	Very good
Leadership	Very good	
Management	Satisfactory	
Progress since the last inspection	Satisfactory	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- GCSE results improved significantly in 2004 and music is now attracting larger numbers in Years 10 and 11
- The effectiveness of teaching varies too much in Years 7 to 9 because some students are unfairly discourteous
- Very good lesson planning includes worthwhile musical experiences and some very good use of ICT
- Extra-curricular performances provide beneficial opportunities for students' social development

Commentary

Examination results

122. Results of teacher assessments at the end of Year 9, in 2004, were average. GCSE results were above average and higher than those gained in recent years, but the small number of candidates makes comparison with national results inappropriate.

Standards and achievement

123. Standards in Years 7 to 9 are below average because the quality of teaching is inconsistent and sometimes poor, and some students are reluctant to learn, which leads to unsatisfactory achievement. Most students have a satisfactory knowledge of musical technicalities and use key words with precision. Recorded evidence of gamelan and samba compositions indicated that some students had worked efficiently in groups and had a sound knowledge of the style and technicalities of the genres in which they composed and performed. Standards in composing and performing in lessons seen, were below average. In contrast, students respond very well to the challenges of work in Year 11 where most students have confident performance skills, which they use productively, leading to very good achievement.

Teaching and learning

124. The quality of teaching and learning ranged from very good to very poor. All lessons are carefully planned to match the needs and interests of students. All theory is related to carefully-planned and interesting musical experiences. Suitable extra challenges are provided for the more talented musicians. The very good range of resources is productively used. Very good use is made of ICT in lesson planning and students' learning. Teaching is very committed. Teachers exploit their musical skills effectively for demonstration, conveying their enthusiasm well. They explained objectives very clearly and gave good individual help and support in practical tasks. Strict deadlines in some lessons ensured a very good pace of learning. The planning and the better teaching indicated a clear understanding of National Curriculum and GCSE requirements. In Years 10 and 11, the small number of students responded very well and learning was very purposeful. Some students were irresponsible and very discourteous in some Year 7 to 9 lessons. Their behaviour was not managed successfully and it affected the whole class. This seriously inhibited learning and was an unreasonable response to the teaching.

Leadership and management

125. The very good leadership has led to a recent rise in GCSE standards. Numbers now following the GCSE course in Years 10 and 11 are much increased. Music makes a significant contribution to arts' provision in the college and provides worthwhile opportunities for social and cultural development. Instrumental teaching flourishes as a result of the Governors' Award Scheme. Regular performances are given in the college and the community. Beneficial links are maintained with associated primary schools. Management is very thorough on a day-to-day basis. Accommodation is very good and provides a stimulating learning environment. All recommendations from the last report have been implemented. College management systems have been ineffective in raising the quality of some teaching to an acceptable level.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is good.

	Year 9	Year 11
Standards	Average	Average
Achievement	Good	Good
Teaching and learning	Good	Good
Leadership	Good	
Management	Satisfactory	
Progress since the last inspection	Good	

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The proportion of students gaining grades A* to C has improved
- Students achieve well in the common course as a result of good teaching
- Leadership provides a sense of purpose and direction for the subject with a focus on raising standards
- Students' attitudes and behaviour are good and result in a productive and purposeful atmosphere in lessons
- Assessment procedures for the common course are not yet fully effective

Commentary

Examination results

126. The results of teacher assessments at the end of Year 9, in 2004, were below those reported nationally. The proportion of students attaining A* to C grade passes at GCSE, in 2004, was significantly below the national average but a considerable improvement on the previous year. Boys performed better than girls, their attainment being broadly in line with the national average.

Standards and achievement

127. By Year 9, all groups of students have acquired a range of individual skills and are able to apply these in the activities they follow. However, in tennis, the quality of girls' work is below average, particularly in the quality and range of strokes used. Students achieve well in relation to their below average standards on entry to the college. In Years 10 and 11, all students, including those identified as having special educational needs, build successfully upon their learning in previous years. The quality of their striking skills, for example in rounders, softball and cricket, are secure. Across all years, students have a good knowledge and understanding of the principles and procedures for warm-up. The quality of students' evaluation, of both their own strengths and weaknesses, as well as those of their peers, is underdeveloped because they are not always given enough opportunities to develop this aspect of their work.
128. In the examination course, the standards of boys' work seen in both practical and theory lessons are average. They have a secure grasp of the techniques required for, and rules of, softball and a good grasp of social issues in sport, such as the involvement of women. The girl's group was not observed.

Teaching and learning

129. Sharing expected outcomes with students at the start of a lesson immediately engages them in the work and helps evaluation and consolidation of learning at the end. Good planning for structure, pace, progression and challenge involves students working in pairs and small groups and, sometimes, in peer-coaching and evaluation. Non-participants, however, are not sufficiently involved in lessons by, for example being part of whole-group demonstrations or being involved in supporting their peers. Teachers have consistent expectations in terms of discipline and in the ability of students to work to their best. Good teacher-student working relationships, along with students' good attitudes and behaviour, result in a positive learning atmosphere in lessons. Effective use of questioning enhances students' speaking and listening skills and enables teachers to gauge the level of students' understanding. Teachers know their subject well and effectively breakdown and demonstrate skills so that students' develop their understanding and recognise what to do to make progress. This was particularly effective, for example, in a Year 10 shot putt lesson. However, ICT is not used sufficiently to support learning in practical lessons such as this. Teachers circulate well and their effective use of praise and constructive criticism makes students aware of their capabilities and what they need to do to improve. GCSE theory work is marked consistently well and useful comments ensure that students know what they have to do to improve the quality of their work. Effective plenary sessions involve students in discussion as to what they have learned and what they need to do to improve.

Leadership and management

130. Leadership provides a good direction and focus for the subject. Teaching and learning are monitored and evaluated resulting in a consistent approach in lessons. Programmes of work are currently being modified to ensure requirements for the teaching of physical education are fully met. Assessment procedures are an integral part of the work in Years 7 to 9 but it is recognised that moderation procedures are not yet fully effective. There are missed opportunities to work with the performing arts faculty, for example in the use of assessment of dance at the end of Year 9 as part of overall physical education assessment. Assessment procedures for the common course in Years 10 and 11 are not yet fully clear. Since the previous inspection half the staff have changed, including a change of leadership and management. Standards in the core course have been generally maintained. Results at GCSE, now that the course is no longer compulsory for all, improved considerably in 2004 and the motivation of students has improved. Resources, particularly ICT to support learning, have improved.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

The college offers a single vocational course, engineering. The course is taught jointly with Southdown College of Further Education. In this, its first year, there is a single Year 10 group.

Engineering

Provision in engineering is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students value the link with the local college because it enables them to use different machines and undertake larger scale projects
- ICT is used very effectively to support learning
- Poor attitudes and behaviour hinder achievement in some lessons
- Marking does not help the students to improve as well as it might
- Teachers planned well to provide a variety of activities, which maintained the students' motivation and good plenary sessions enabled students to share what they had learnt

Commentary

131. Standards in the current Year 10 are broadly average and achievement on this new course is satisfactory. Students' skilful use of ICT enhanced their learning. The use of ICT to record work and develop their portfolio is routine and very good use has been made of a design package in generating ideas and drawing their designs. In another lesson, they were able to group engineering tools by function, drawing them neatly and accurately, and highlighting the tools' important features. Competent practical skills were also seen where students could accurately mark, cut and file a piece of mild steel ready for brazing.
132. The quality of teaching and learning seen was satisfactory overall. Specialist teachers have good subject knowledge and try hard to develop the interest and enthusiasm of the students. Well-planned lessons, with the learning objectives shared with the students, provide a variety of activities such as using computers, developing drawing skills and practical work. The newly-installed interactive whiteboards were used very effectively to introduce work and to provide support and guidance during the lesson. Marking is a weakness. The work seen lacked constructive comments on how to improve and was not graded, although the students received oral feedback during its production.
133. Students' attitudes towards lessons varied, even on the same day. In two, attitudes were at least satisfactory when the students were engaged on the given task. In another, their attitudes and behaviour were poor and this led to unsatisfactory learning and achievement, despite the teacher's determination to maintain an ordered, productive atmosphere. All students spoken to valued the link with the local further education college as it enabled them to undertake work not possible at the school. This link is well managed and effective, as is the overall planning and structure of the course.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal and social education

134. Provision for students' personal, social and health education is good. It is taught as part of the weekly pastoral programme. Topics such as sex education, drugs awareness and relationships are taught each year using appropriate materials with a focus appropriate to students' ages. Statutory requirements are met. Good teaching involved Year 8 students well in discussing risk taking and in the production of a brochure covering the main health issues facing their year group. In two Year 10 lessons, students were actively involved in discussing 'moral' decision making in relationships. In one, the use of time was uneven and resulted in students being a little apathetic. In the other, good use of praise and encouragement and effective class management resulted in good teaching and learning and the enhancement of students' personal development.

Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A curriculum audit has been taken but the college does not have a coherent, planned programme to enable students to cover the requirements of the subject
- There is currently no subject co-ordinator, due to staffing changes, and teaching is not monitored
- College councils and other community-based activities provide good opportunities for some students to take and show responsibility and involvement
- Planning in some subjects identifies opportunities to promote citizenship
- The assessment and reporting of students' knowledge, skills and understanding at the end of Years 9 and 11 are insufficient
- Students are not always aware that they are being taught about citizenship

Commentary

135. Citizenship forms part of the weekly pastoral programme. The modular nature of this programme meant that only in Year 9 was it possible to observe any direct teaching. Issues touching on citizenship were observed in a history and a geography lesson. In addition, discussions were held with relevant staff. College and curriculum documents were scrutinised.
136. No records of standards achieved by students are maintained and no written work was available for scrutiny. Students in the two Year 9 classes observed showed varying involvement and interest in the topic of rights and responsibilities within different political systems. In both classes, teachers worked hard to overcome poor behaviour and indifferent attitudes amongst some of the students. Subjects such as drama, history and geography include citizenship issues in their curricular schemes through studying, for example, children's rights in Year 7, fair trade in Year 9, and propaganda and censorship in Year 11. However, discussion with students showed them to have a hazy notion of which subject area contributed to citizenship. This is because teachers do not make it explicit that a topic has links with citizenship and do not actively promote it as part of a citizenship curriculum.
137. Beyond the classroom, year and college councils provide an opportunity for students to participate in the democratic process and it was clear at a Year 10 council meeting, impressively chaired by two members of the year, that students felt informed on major decisions and that their opinions were listened to. For example, students have played a large part in planning improvements to the college environment. They are actively involved in improving the health and safety of the site. In other activities, such as the many trips and events organised by the college, opportunities are missed to draw valuable insights into becoming informed citizens and acquiring the skills of participation and responsible action.
138. Currently, leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The main weakness being the lack of schemes of work to teach the programmes of study which set out what students should be taught. Although some aspects are met, there is no full coverage throughout the college. In this respect, the college is not meeting its legal requirements. Without whole-college planning and with no co-ordinator to drive and monitor the subject, future development is insecure.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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