

INSPECTION REPORT

THE HAYESBROOK SCHOOL

Tonbridge

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118927

Headteacher: Mr N J M Blackburn

Lead inspector: Mrs M J Kerry

Dates of inspection: 7th – 10th March 2005

Inspection number: 268965

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Secondary modern
School category: Foundation
Age range of students: 11-18
Gender of students: Male
Number on roll: 866

School address: Brook Street
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mr I Daker

Date of previous inspection: 12th October 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The Hayesbrook School is a boys' 11-18 secondary modern Foundation school with a mixed sixth form. It has Specialist Sports College and Training School Status. The school is led by the headteacher, Mr N J M Blackburn, working in partnership with the associate headteacher, Mrs D J Coslett, as co-heads. The school is smaller than average. It has increased in size since the last inspection and is heavily oversubscribed. Selection to grammar schools operates in the local area and almost the top 40 per cent of students are selected by ability at age 11. Another 17 per cent attend the two local denominational schools. Attainment on entry is below average, and well below average in literacy and in English, with few high attaining students. The sixth form is much smaller than average. Attainment on entry to the sixth form is well below that which would usually be seen. The sixth form has grown from 74 students at the last inspection to 110 currently. Although mixed, it is almost all boys. There is joint provision for sixth form physical education with West Kent College; this is taught at Hayesbrook School by Hayesbrook staff. About 80 per cent of Year 11 go on to school or further education. Almost all the remainder go into training or employment. Socio-economic circumstances are below average. The proportion of students with special educational needs is above average (29 per cent) and the proportion of students with statements of special educational need is also above average. The school population is almost all white (98 per cent), with a small number of students from Asian, black, Chinese, Japanese and other ethnic backgrounds. There are a few students who have English as an additional language, but none are at the early stages of English language acquisition. The school has received numerous awards and quality marks, including Achievement Awards three years in a row, and the Most Improved Sports College

Award. The school is closely involved in community and learning partnerships, particularly through sport and through the West Kent Learning Federation. In September 2004 the school was successful in becoming the lead school in a training partnership of six schools.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|---|
| 9931 | Mrs M J Kerry | Lead inspector | |
| 9736 | Mr J Brasier | Lay inspector | |
| 1033 | Mr H Chester | Team inspector | Mathematics |
| 2739 | Mr I Benson | Team inspector | Geography Psychology |
| 4451 | Mr R Howarth | Team inspector | Religious education Citizenship |
| 12475 | Mr S Johnson | Team inspector | Music |
| 12844 | Mr M Saunders | Team inspector | English |
| 15075 | Mr B Goodman-Stephens | Team inspector | Modern foreign languages English as an additional language |
| 15590 | Mrs S Slocombe | Team inspector | Physical education Special educational needs |
| 17732 | Mr D Martin | Team inspector | History |
| 18281 | Mr D Webster | Team inspector | Information communication technology |
| 23268 | Dr K Corrigan | Team inspector | Business education Physical education post-16 |
| 19983 | Mr H Webb | Team inspector | Science Biology post-16 |
| 31779 | Mr V Harrison | Team inspector | Design and technology |
| 33368 | Mrs V Greatrex | Team inspector | Art and design |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a very effective school which gives its students a very good quality of education. Standards are in line with the national average by the end of Year 11, which represents very good achievement from students' modest starting points. Standards are below average in the sixth form, but nevertheless this represents good achievement. Teaching and learning are very good. Leadership and management are outstanding, and are bringing about sustained improvement. The school gives very good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Results at GCSE are well above average for secondary modern schools.
- The consistency of quality across all subjects means that all departments are successfully raising achievement.
- Teaching and learning are very good which leads to high achievement.
- Provision for the high proportion of students who have special educational needs is excellent and their achievement is very good.
- Provision for physical education is outstanding, and excellent use has been made of sports college status to raise standards.
- The innovative arrangements for joint headship are highly effective.
- The curriculum is excellent, with outstanding extra-curricular activities.
- There is an excellent ethos, which is highly inclusive.
- Excellent community links, including international links, enrich students' learning.
- The sixth form offers students a good quality of education.

The school has made excellent progress since the last inspection. All the key issues relating to improving standards, provision for literacy, teaching, curriculum and provision for students with special educational needs have been very successfully addressed. Progress in raising standards from well below average to their current levels is excellent. Achievement, which was satisfactory, is now very good. Much of the school has been rebuilt, providing high quality accommodation, and there has been significant investment in information and communication technology (ICT). The curriculum has been transformed and excellent community links formed locally, nationally and internationally. The school has gained, and made excellent use of, sports college status, and has become the lead school in a training partnership. It has received an Achievement Award three years in a row and 17 quality marks. Leadership and management are now outstanding.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Performance compared with: | | all schools | | | similar schools |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2004 |
| Year 11 | GCSE/GNVQ examinations | C | C | C | A |
| Year 13 | A/AS level and VCE examinations | E* | E | E | |

Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E well below average; E* - very low. For Year 11, similar schools are other secondary modern schools.

Students reach standards which are in line with the national average, and achievement is very good. At the end of Year 9, students reach standards which are in line with what is expected nationally. This represents very good achievement from starting points which are below average, and well below average in literacy skills and English. Overall results in English, mathematics and science are likely to be in line with the national

average in 2004, and are rising at a rate faster than the national trend. Standards at the end of Year 11 are also rising at a faster rate than seen nationally. They are in line with the national average overall, but the proportion of students obtaining five or more A* to G grades is well above the national average. This represents very good achievement. The proportion of students obtaining five or more A* to C grades has risen steadily since the last inspection and in 2003 was above the national average; it was just above the national average again in 2004. This is very good achievement given students' starting points, and the high proportion who have special or additional educational needs. These results are particularly impressive as this is a boys' school, and boys nationally achieve less well than girls do.

Achievement is very good in English, mathematics, science, ICT, art, design and technology and geography. It is good in modern foreign languages, history, music and religious education (RE). Achievement is excellent in physical education (PE), and satisfactory in citizenship. Students who have English as an additional language achieve very well, and those who are gifted and talented achieve well. In the sixth form, students make good progress, often from low starting points. In the sixth form subjects inspected in detail, achievement is very good in PE, business education and ICT, good in English, science and psychology and satisfactory in mathematics.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Personal development is well supported by a programme of regular assemblies and by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities. Students' attitudes and behaviour are very good and attendance is well above average. The school's ethos is excellent.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is very good. Students quickly become confident learners who are keen to participate. **The quality of teaching is very good both in the main school and sixth form.** There is consistently high quality across all subjects. Examples of excellent and very good teaching were seen in all departments. Students receive very good quality care, support and guidance. There is very effective tracking of students' progress and achievement. The curriculum is excellent and is enriched by an outstanding programme of extra-curricular activities. Links with the community, including international links, are excellent. There is a very effective partnership with parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are outstanding. The leadership provided by the headteacher and associate headteacher is excellent. Planning for improvement is thorough and coherent, so that sustainable and constant improvement is made. Self-review is very well used, by both senior managers and heads of department. Management is very effective. There are excellent arrangements for the support and development of staff, leading to high quality classroom practice. The governing body is extremely well informed and provides challenge as well as support. Statutory requirements to provide a daily act of collective worship are not met in full, there is no RE for post-16 students and there are some omissions from the reporting of examination results to parents.

PARENTS' AND STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents and students are highly satisfied with the school. Both have had an opportunity to express their views through annual surveys. The school takes note of these views and has reported back to parents the results of the survey.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Implement the school improvement plan.

The plan provides a well-founded and comprehensive plan for improvement, based on rigorous analysis of data and excellent self-evaluation. There is no need for any key issues beyond those already contained within the plan;

and, to meet statutory requirements:

- Move further towards meeting in full the requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship for all students, and provide religious education for all post-16 students.
- Include national averages when reporting results to parents of GCSE/GNVQ and AS, A2 and AVCE examinations.

THE SIXTH FORM AT THE HAYESBROOK SCHOOL, TONBRIDGE

This is a smaller than average mixed sixth form: there are two girls on roll. It serves the town of Tonbridge and its surroundings. Provision is made for GCSE, AS, A2 and vocational courses.

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an effective and inclusive sixth form. Although overall standards are below average, they are improving and results in vocational course are above average. Results represent good, and sometimes very good, achievement from students' modest starting points. Students have excellent attitudes to school and to their work, are very well taught and achieve well. Students' learning benefits from a very good quality curriculum that is complemented by an outstanding programme of extra-curricular and enrichment activities. The sixth form operates within its budget and provides good cost effectiveness. Leadership and management are good.

The main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Very good teaching and learning enable students to achieve well and be successful as learners.
- The very broad range of learning experiences within the curriculum and the excellent extra-curricular and enrichment programmes, are enhanced by local, national and international links, including partner schools in New Zealand and Thailand.
- The students value the support and guidance offered by their teachers and the very good systems for tracking and monitoring their academic progress and personal development.
- Students have excellent attitudes to school and to their work: they enjoy outstanding relationships with teachers and are active contributors to the wider life of the school and to its effectiveness.

QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES OF THE CURRICULUM

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

| Curriculum area | Evaluation |
|--|---|
| English, languages and communication - English | Very good. Standards are average: very good teaching and learning enable students to achieve well. Leadership and management are very good. |
| Mathematics | Good. Current standards are below average: achievement is satisfactory as a result of good teaching and learning. Leadership and management are very good. |
| Science – Human biology | Good. Standards are below average, and good teaching and learning enable students to achieve well. Leadership and management are good. |
| Information and communication technology | Very good. Well above average results and high achievement are the result of very good teaching and learning and very good leadership and management. |
| Humanities - Psychology | Good. Standards are below average: good teaching and learning enable students to achieve well. Leadership and management are good. |
| Hospitality, sports, leisure and travel | Excellent. Standards in sports studies are average: very good teaching and learning enable students to achieve highly. Work in the Community Sports Leader Award is outstanding. Leadership and management are excellent |

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

ADVICE, GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT

From the time they apply to join the sixth form, students receive very good advice, support and guidance. As part of their preparation and induction, they can sample courses and lessons. Admissions criteria are used flexibly to ensure that each individual student makes appropriate decisions, following receipt of their GCSE results, regarding the level and number of courses they will follow.

Ongoing support and guidance are provided through subject teachers, and by a team of form tutors co-ordinated by the head of sixth form. Within each subject, very good systems are used to monitor and track each student's academic progress. Marking and assessment of students' work also provide very good quality oral and written feedback so that they know what needs to be done to improve the standard and quality of their work. A tutorial programme led by the head of sixth form enables form tutors to monitor students' personal development, and to provide support and a listening ear for those with concerns.

There are very good arrangements for hearing the student voice. The school actively seeks students' views through a questionnaire as well as through access to the head of sixth form and her deputy and via form tutors. Students respond positively and are keen to improve things, for both current and future members of Years 12 and 13.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SIXTH FORM

The governing body has a clear commitment to the work of the sixth form and its success. Together with the senior leadership team and the head of sixth form, they have provided a robust framework for its work. As a result, a high quality curriculum is provided with very effective systems for monitoring standards and the overall effectiveness of the sixth form. The governing body and senior leadership team continually review the cost effectiveness of this area of the school's work against clear criteria.

The head of sixth form, her deputy and the team of form tutors are accessible and provide effective pastoral support for students. Subject teachers and course leaders support students very well in their academic development. As a result, students have access to a range of adults who know them well and can provide specialist advice and guidance. Leadership and management within subjects and courses inspected in detail are very good.

Leadership and management of the sixth form are good. Outstanding issues relate to the further strategic development of the sixth form, especially the range of courses and routes to success necessary to meet the increasingly diverse range of needs of those who wish to continue their education beyond the age of 16. A review of provision is underway.

STUDENTS' VIEWS OF THE SIXTH FORM

Students take pride in the school and are highly committed to it. They value the clear expectations the school has of them, the secure learning environment it provides, the good quality of teaching and the range of resources available to support the learning. They rate highly the quality and effectiveness of school management.

They are concerned about the lack of community spirit and the lack of impact of the personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme. Inspection evidence, however, suggests that there is a strong sense of community within the sixth form. This is clearly apparent in the contribution many students make to the life and work of the school, as well as in the harmonious relationship that exists between Years 12 and 13 and the support that they provide for each other. There is no evidence to suggest that the PSHE programme is not effective. The evident maturity of students in their roles as exemplars and mentors for younger students, and the manner in which they lead the school council and many other activities, suggest a very positive response to the provision.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY STUDENTS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards of attainment are in line with national expectations at the end of Year 9. At the end of Year 11, standards are in line with the national average and well above average for boys in modern schools. Students' achievement is very good. Standards are below national averages in the sixth form, but this represents good achievement from students' starting points.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is consistently high achievement across all subject areas.
- In 2004, results at the end of Year 11 were well above those of other secondary modern schools nationally.
- Standards at the end of Year 9 and at the end of Year 11 are rising at a rate faster than the national trend.
- The achievement of students who have special educational needs is very good as a result of the excellent provision made for them.
- Provision in the school's area of specialism is excellent, and has had a major impact on raising standards across the curriculum.
- The achievement of sixth form students is good, particularly in vocational courses.

Commentary

1. Students enter the school with levels of attainment that are below average. Their levels of literacy are well below average and attainment in English is also well below average. Very few students are high attaining, due to the selection process operating in the local area. About one third have special educational needs, or are in need of some other form of support with their learning.
2. By the end of Year 9, standards are in line with expectations, with results in national tests in English, mathematics and science being overall in line with the national average. Results over the past five years are rising at a rate faster than that seen nationally. Analysis of students' work during the inspection confirmed that standards are in line with expectations when taken across all subjects. This represents very good achievement from students' starting points. In physical education (PE) students are already reaching high standards by the end of Year 9.

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

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| English | 31.4 (32.4) | N/a (33.4) |
| mathematics | 35.9 (36.6) | N/a (35.4) |
| science | 32.8 (36.6) | N/a (33.6) |

There were 154 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Standards of attainment are in line with the national average for all maintained schools at the end of Year 11 when measured by average points score. However, the

proportion of students gaining five or more A* to G grades is well above the national average. For many students, obtaining grades in the range D to G is a significant achievement. When results are compared to all secondary modern schools nationally, they are well above average. This is particularly impressive as this is an all boys' school, and boys nationally achieve less well than girls do.

4. The proportion of students gaining five or more A* to C grades has risen consistently since the last inspection, improving from 24 per cent to 54 per cent in 2004. In 2003 it was above the national average, and in 2004 it was just above average. This represents very good achievement, given that very few students on entry are higher attaining, and that many have special educational needs. The slight fall in 2004 relates to the GNVQ course in information and communication technology (ICT). The school has addressed this, and this is reported in detail in the ICT paragraph. Results in English and mathematics in 2004 were particularly strong.
5. Overall, standards at the end of Year 11 are rising at a rate faster than that seen nationally. At the last inspection, average points score was well below the national average. It is now securely in line with the national average. Students' work seen during the inspection, both during work scrutiny and in class, confirmed that standards are in line with those seen nationally. All this demonstrates significant progress since the last inspection.

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

| | School results | National results |
|---|----------------|------------------|
| Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-C grades | 54 (57) | 52 (52) |
| Percentage of students gaining 5 or more A*-G grades | 97 (95) | 89 (88) |
| Percentage of students gaining 1 or more A*-G grades | 99 (98) | 96 (96) |
| Average point score per student (best eight subjects) | 34.4 (35.9) | 34.9 (34.7) |

There were 148 students in the year group. The percentages include the equivalent GCSE grades obtained in GNVQ assessments. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

6. Students' achievement is very good in Years 7 to 9 and in Years 10 and 11. Value added indicators place the school in the top three per cent of all schools nationally at the end of Year 9. At the end of Year 11, value added is in the top 17 per cent nationally. This is using the five or more A* to C measure, which is a very demanding measure for this school, given students' attainment on entry. The school is one of only 19 schools nationally to receive Achievement Awards three years in a row. In 2003, it was the most improved Sports College, and received an award from the Specialist Schools Trust. The school performs very well against its targets.
7. Achievement is good in ICT, modern foreign languages, history, music and RE. In mathematics, English, science, art, design and technology (DT) and geography, achievement is very good, and in PE it is excellent. Achievement is satisfactory in citizenship. A particular feature of the school is the high level of consistency across subjects, with all departments being successful in raising achievement. This is due to a number of factors including: high quality teaching which is rigorously monitored; excellent arrangements for the induction and development of staff which improve teaching and learning; analysis which is informed by thorough and consistent use of a wide range of data, and excellent provision for students who have special educational

needs. There are also very good arrangements to support literacy and students rapidly improve the low level of skills which many have on entry. Students' competence in the use of ICT is good, and has improved since the last inspection. The school's specialist status has also been outstandingly well used to raise achievement.

Example of outstanding practice

Specialist sports college status has been very effectively used to raise standards of achievement across the curriculum

The school has been extremely imaginative in its use of specialist sports status, which was seen right from the start as having an impact well beyond the PE department. The emphasis on improving achievement across the board means that every department has been linked into specialist status in some way; for example, by incorporating sports related material into business case studies, or studying sports psychology or basing English compositional work around sport as an inspiration. Techniques used within PE to evaluate and improve performance using sophisticated ICT have also been disseminated to other departments where this will help to raise standards. The result of this whole school involvement has been highly motivational for students, even those not especially interested in sport. A striking example is the recent sports trip to Thailand. This has provided a wealth of material which is being extremely well employed to raise achievement further. In citizenship, a potentially difficult Year 8 group was closely engaged by video clips of their fellow students reflecting on the difference between Thai social culture, morals, religious beliefs and customs, and those of our own society. Because the words of their peers had immediacy and relevance for them, they were keen to think about aspects of society which could easily have been abstract and unreal. The use of video, and the amount of thought which had gone into the subject content, meant that the impact of the trip was extended far beyond the original participants, and helped to deepen understanding of global citizenship.

8. Wherever possible, the school admits students with special or additional educational needs from its partner schools. Great care is taken to ascertain, before entry, both the needs of the students and the support they require, so that the staff are well prepared. Students are welcomed into a safe and caring environment. The appointment of a manager for inclusion to oversee provision for vulnerable students in the school has ensured that support is co-ordinated and that the needs of the students are identified and met.
9. The majority of students with special or additional educational needs have low standards of attainment on entry to the school. Additional literacy lessons are successful in helping to improve their reading, writing and spelling skills. Their confidence, self-esteem and level of achievement are raised by the very effective support they receive from staff, both in the subject departments and in the learning support department. Support for students in accessing the curriculum is very good, whether it is through withdrawal to work in the learning support department, special grouping or setting, or by individual or group support from specialist teachers or learning support assistants. The achievement of these students is very good.
10. The small number of students who have English as an additional language achieve very well. The school encourages these students to take external examinations in their home language

and the results are very good. The achievement of students from different ethnic groups is analysed, to ensure that they are achieving as well as their peers. The school's monitoring is extremely thorough.

11. A high quality central programme provides opportunities for gifted and talented students to extend and challenge their thinking and expand their knowledge and understanding. In some subject lessons, tasks and activities are planned specifically to extend these students but this is not the case in all. The progress and the achievement of gifted and talented students are good. The further development of provision for the gifted and talented is a current focus of the improvement plan.

Sixth form

12. The sixth form is inclusive, in line with local and national priorities to raise aspirations and improve participation in post-16 education. Many students enter with lower starting points than would usually be the case. Overall attainment on entry to the sixth form is well below that which is usually seen.
13. Results in 2004 were well below average. There was, however, improvement from the previous year, particularly in results on vocational courses. On these courses, results were above average and there was a significant improvement in the percentage of A/B grades obtained. The school is currently reviewing its post-16 provision, including the balance between vocational and A level courses. Results for A2 courses also improved last year, although to a lesser extent. Taken over all courses, the pass rate improved, and the proportion of A/B grades doubled, confirming the upward trend in points score which has been established over the past three years. Taking account of the standards of work seen in the seven courses inspected in detail, and recent results covering the whole range of courses, standards are below average overall and in line with the average for vocational courses. Standards in current work in ICT are above expectations, and last year's results were well above the national average. In mathematics, science and psychology, standards are below expectations, but they are in line with expectations in English, business education and PE.
14. Given students' modest starting points, these standards represent good achievement. Achievement is very good in business education, PE and ICT; it is good in English, science and psychology and satisfactory in mathematics. The small number of sixth form girls are well integrated and achieve as well as boys. The school's own value added analysis also indicates good achievement, when results are compared to predictions based on students' prior attainment at GCSE. Sampling of other lessons in law, design and technology, and history also provided evidence of good achievement. In sampled lessons of art and GCSE photography, achievement was very good, and in geography it was excellent.

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

| | School results | National results |
|--|----------------|------------------|
| Percentage of entries gaining A-E grades | 79.2 (73.6) | 92.3 (92.3) |
| Percentage of entries gaining A-B grades | 22.1 (10.4) | 36.2 (35.6) |
| Average point score per student | 166.5 (128.8) | 265.2 (258.2) |

There were 51 students in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

15. Since the last inspection, there has been excellent progress in raising standards. Key improvements are:
- Standards at the end of Year 11, a key issue at the last inspection, have risen from well below average to in line with the national average.
 - Standards at both the end of Year 9 and the end of Year 11 are maintaining above average trends of improvement.
 - Provision for students who have special educational needs, which was a weakness and a key issue at the last inspection, is now excellent, and the achievement of these students is very good.
 - Post-16 results, although still well below average, are showing a strong upward trend, with AVCE results above the national average.
 - Provision for literacy, a key issue at the last inspection, is now very good, and students' literacy skills improve from well below average on entry to in line with the average at the end of Year 9
 - Students' competence in the use of ICT has improved and is now above average.
 - At the last inspection, progress was satisfactory in all three key stages. Achievement is now very good in the main school and good at post-16.
 - Challenging targets and predictions are in place (again a key issue at the last inspection) and are being exceeded.

Students' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Students' attitudes and behaviour are very good, as is their personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects. Attitudes and behaviour in the sixth form are excellent. Attendance is very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's practice and policies to ensure good behaviour and promote good relationships are outstanding.
- Attendance is well above average.
- The students are very courteous and enjoy very good relationships with teachers and other students.
- Attitudes to learning are very positive; there is a strong learning ethos.
- The many international links and overseas visits and exchanges contribute strongly to the students' social and cultural development.

Commentary

16. The students have very good attitudes. They are very interested in school life and participate enthusiastically in the very wide range of activities that are offered. They are very willing to take on responsibility, for example, as members of the school council, by becoming prefects, or by organising sports teams and clubs. The school promotes good attendance very effectively and attendance levels are well above average; this, together with students' very good punctuality when moving around a widely spread out campus, indicates very positive attitudes.
17. The school has an excellent behaviour policy and this, allied with very high expectations which are consistently followed through, results in very good behaviour. Some students can be challenging, and require skilful management. Exclusions are

used effectively as part of this policy, and although short temporary exclusions are above average, longer and permanent exclusions are few. The students are very courteous and enjoy very good relationships with each other and with their teachers. The school has very effective systems for dealing with bullying and harassment and serious instances are few.

18. Students with special or additional educational needs are fully included in all activities within the school and are encouraged to take advantage of the help and support available to them. Very comprehensive procedures are in place for the tracking, monitoring, and assessment of students' progress, identifying where they may be having behavioural or social difficulties, or underachieving. Relationships between teachers, support staff and the students are very positive and constructive. Comprehensive procedures are in place for the management of students with emotional or behavioural difficulties so that disruptions are kept to a minimum. The provision for students who may be at risk of exclusion is very effective. They are accommodated in a separate study area and taught by specialist staff who engage with the students, maintaining their interest and motivation to learn.
19. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the students has improved since the last inspection and is now very good overall. Spiritual awareness is good and the students' knowledge of the principles of right and wrong is very good. There are good opportunities for spiritual and moral development through the frequent assemblies and the themes and topics which they explore very effectively. Assemblies successfully involve the students. For example, a Year 9 gifted and talented group in geography produced a well thought out and effective presentation on the topic of international fair trade, which was used in several assemblies. Religious education and personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons make a strong contribution to spiritual and moral development through the topics and themes studied. PE, English, drama, art and modern foreign languages also contribute very well. However, form tutor times are not used effectively to reinforce these aspects and the school does not comply with the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship.
20. The students' social development is very good. Their cultural development, including awareness of other cultural traditions apart from their own, is good. There are many opportunities for social development through such activities as fundraising for charity or acting as mentors for younger students. In most subjects, students are required to work co-operatively in groups and pairs. Subjects such as English, art, music, drama, RE, citizenship and modern foreign languages make a strong contribution to cultural awareness. The school has also cultivated substantial international links and through these, as well as through the curriculum, students learn to appreciate other cultures; for example, the school has forged strong links with schools in Thailand. Citizenship also makes a good contribution to students' social and moral development.

Attendance

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|
| School data | 6.6 |
| National data | 6.9 |

| Unauthorised absence | |
|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.2 |
| National data | 1.1 |

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

21. Attendance in the present academic year has risen to 94.1 per cent, compared to 93.2 per cent in the previous year. The attendance officer has been highly instrumental in this improvement, by rigorously ensuring that reasons for absence are obtained on the first day of unexplained absence. This is reinforced by efficient tutorial arrangements and good collaboration with the education welfare officer. Unauthorised absence is very low.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of students

Exclusions in the last school year

| Categories used in the Annual School Census | No. of students on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|---|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| White – British | 847 | 111 | 1 |
| White – any other White background | 8 | 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 – Pakistani | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Chinese | 2 | 0 | 0 |

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

Sixth form

22. Students in this mixed, inclusive sixth form have great pride in their school. They willingly undertake leadership roles and make a major contribution to its life, work and success. Their attitudes to school and work are excellent, and they enjoy outstanding relationships with staff and each other. As a result, they are very actively involved in their learning and provide support and challenge for each other. Students also respond very well to the learning and social environments provided for their exclusive use.
23. The students' commitment to, and involvement in, the life of the school, is an unselfish response to the opportunities provided for them to grow as people and learners. They are prominent role models and work with younger students as mentors. They are also heavily involved in the organisation of charity events, as well as in coaching, managing and supporting in a variety of sports teams and cultural activities. Those who have gained the Sports Leaders' Award take an important role in sports within the wider community, including work in partner primary schools. The leadership roles and responsibilities undertaken by these very courteous and unassuming young people enable them to grow in maturity and gain wide experience of school life, as well as experience of the wider local, national and international community.

24. Attendance is satisfactory, and is better in Year 12 than in Year 13. While the overall monitoring of attendance is good, other procedures, such as following up lateness or absence from a lesson, are less secure. Despite this, students are very punctual to lessons.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided is very good. Teaching is of very good quality and students are highly motivated learners. Their academic progress and personal development are very well supported by very good procedures for care, support and guidance. The curriculum provides outstanding opportunities and is complemented by an excellent programme of activities beyond the school day. The school has an excellent ethos, and inclusion is outstanding. Students' views are regularly sought, and they contribute significantly to the running of the school.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are very good. Assessment is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consistency of quality across all subjects leads to sustained progress and high achievement
- Students are highly motivated learners.
- There is some excellent teaching, and a very high proportion of very good and excellent teaching in the sixth form.
- Expectations of students' work and behaviour are high, clearly communicated and followed through, resulting in high levels of concentration.
- The teaching and learning improvement plan has had a strong impact in developing high quality practice.
- Very effective use is made of video resources.

Commentary

25. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. The amount of teaching which is very good or excellent has nearly doubled, and there is now hardly any which is unsatisfactory. Overall, over two fifths of the teaching seen was very good or excellent, with all departments having some teaching of this quality. This consistency of quality leads to the sustained progress and achievement over time, evident in the school's improved results and the standards which students are reaching. The quality of teaching is very good in Years 7 to 9 and in Years 10 and 11.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 169 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very poor |
|-----------|-----------|----------|--------------|----------------|--------|-----------|
| 11(7%) | 65 (38%) | 69 (41%) | 21 (12%) | 3 (2%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) |

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

26. An important characteristic of the teaching is the ability of teachers to adapt to need and to pitch the work correctly. In the excellent teaching seen, these were often key

features in the success of the lesson. There were also examples of adventurous methodology (English) or the expert use of innovative technology to raise achievement (PE). In dealing with issues of sexual health in a Year 7 science lesson, very sensitive topics were approached with decorum and maturity, so that students not only learned the specific content of the National Curriculum, but also made significant progress in their personal development. A common feature of all the excellent teaching and learning was the high level of demands made on students and their total engagement with the lesson.

27. Students are highly motivated learners. Potentially disaffected students are engaged by appropriate courses, skilfully taught, such as the Prince's Trust group described in the example of outstanding practice below. Students respond enthusiastically to the demands of the teaching. Strong motivation and excellent relationships are evident, in lower as well as in higher attaining groups. Behaviour is not passive or compliant, and expectations of behaviour and attitudes need to be high, clearly set and followed through to obtain the levels of concentration seen. On the very rare occasions when this does not happen, learning can become unsatisfactory. Engagement and encouragement of students are particularly strong features of the teaching and are usually successful. The school has created a very strong ethos for learning.

Example of outstanding practice

A group of potentially disaffected boys are enabled to achieve highly and make an excellent presentation

Students were carefully selected for the Prince's Trust course. They were chosen initially because they lacked self-confidence or self-esteem, showed little interest in academic studies, had weak interpersonal skills or indulged in challenging behaviour. The inspection coincided with a presentation by the students on the work they had done, which they had put together themselves in a PowerPoint presentation. They were mature and confident as they made a well-structured and informative presentation. Their enthusiasm for the varied courses which they had undertaken was almost tangible. One aspect of the course was work done with the local fire brigade. A video showed students as they handled fire-fighting equipment, and practised using it, culminating in a race between two teams assembling the equipment to tackle a simulated blaze. Their teamwork, ability to work to instructions and attention to safe working practice were excellent, and an outstanding achievement for these students. In discussion afterwards they showed that they all had clear ideas about their future employment or training and could talk about how they had reached their decisions. Their progress and learning on the course were outstanding.

28. The quality of teaching is very good in mathematics, English, science, art, geography and PE. It is good in ICT, design and technology, modern foreign languages, history, music and RE. Teaching in citizenship is satisfactory. There is very effective work by highly skilled learning support assistants. The high quality practice is supported by excellent arrangements for induction, continuous professional development and performance management which are evaluated within the leadership and management section. The work of the teaching and learning group and the implementation of the teaching and learning improvement plan have also had a strong impact on improving quality and disseminating good practice. The teaching and learning group is a particularly effective mechanism for sharing practice. The use of video and other forms of ICT, for example, is evident in many departments, and is often a powerful tool for learning. The impact of sports college status is also important in improving the quality of practice, as reported in the standards section.
29. The staff from the learning support department provide detailed information on students with special or additional educational needs so that subject teachers can plan

their lessons appropriately. Work is mostly well matched to learning requirements. Very good support is provided both to individuals and groups of students enabling them to participate fully in lessons. When students are withdrawn to the learning support centre from subject lessons, they receive very focused and targeted teaching, enabling them to make very good progress. However, most support takes place appropriately in subject lessons. The quality of teaching for students with special or additional educational needs, in both the learning support centre and the school as a whole, is very good.

30. Students who have English as an additional language receive very good in-class support when this is required. All newly qualified teachers and graduate trainees receive as part of their induction a session on suitable teaching for these students, and a teaching assistant and the literacy tutor have received additional specific training. For students who are gifted and talented, the provision is good, and it is very good in PE, geography and modern foreign languages. Good teaching takes place when tasks and activities matched to ability extend learning. This is currently happening in most subjects, but is not fully developed in all. Plans are in the process of implementation to address this.
31. Overall, the quality and use of assessment is good. In most subjects, assessment is good or very good; in citizenship it is satisfactory and in art it is excellent. There is a very good system for using the outcomes of assessment to set targets for students, and to track progress and achievement. Some marking does not identify sufficiently what students need to do to improve their work. Assessment for learning, including the use, quality and consistency of marking, is currently a focus on the school improvement plan.

Sixth form

32. The quality of teaching and learning in the sixth form is very good. All the teaching observed was at least good, and nearly half was very good or excellent. Examples of excellent teaching were seen in PE and geography.
33. In the subjects inspected in detail, teaching and learning were good in mathematics, science and psychology and very good in English, business education, ICT and PE. Post-16 courses, especially A level courses, make very high demands on many students and they achieve well and often very well, as a result of high quality teaching. Achievement is best in vocational courses such as ICT where very good teaching, combined with a very suitable course, leads to high achievement. Sampling across the whole curriculum confirmed the picture of very good teaching. In history, film studies and design and technology, the teaching and learning seen were good. In drama, art, photography GCSE and law, the teaching and learning seen were very good, and in geography they were excellent.
34. Assessment is good. As in the main school, there is a very effective system of progress review. Assessment is good in mathematics, science, PE and psychology, and very good in English, ICT and business education.

The curriculum

The curriculum is of outstanding quality, and is complemented by an excellent programme of extra-curricular and enrichment activities. Accommodation and resources are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum in Years 7 to 11 enables students to benefit from learning within National Curriculum subjects, RE (philosophy and religion) and a range of other experiences; it caters for the learning needs of a wide range of students and provides equality of access for all.
- The placing of students in different groups or sets enables them to benefit fully from the learning at a level that helps them to make progress and achieve very well.
- Provision for students who have special or additional educational needs is excellent.
- The programme of extra-curricular and enrichment activities broadens the learning experiences for all and provides opportunities at local, national and international levels.
- The re-building of major areas of the school has transformed the quality of the learning environment in many subject departments.

Commentary

35. The outstanding quality of the curriculum ensures that it: has teaching and learning at its heart; provides progression and continuity from Year 6 through to Year 11 and beyond; meets the learning needs of an increasingly diverse range of students, nearly a third of whom have special or additional education needs; is complemented by a comprehensive programme of extra-curricular activities; and is broad and balanced. These principles and values are adopted in the governors' curriculum statement and are clearly followed in the making of provision for all students.
36. In Years 7 to 9 students experience all subjects of the National Curriculum, including French or German, various aspects of technology, as well as citizenship and RE (which is called by the school philosophy and religion). Provision is also made for drama and PSHE that includes a study of personal relationships and education about sex and drugs. Within the curriculum, students also have opportunities to improve their basic skills in literacy and numeracy. In addition to foundation (basic skills) groups and one for accelerated learning, other students can be placed in different sets or classes so that they too benefit fully from the learning at a level that helps them to make progress and achieve very well.
37. In Years 10 and 11, students follow courses in English, mathematics and science as well as ICT, RE, PE and PSHE. In addition students can select a programme that, with guidance, can prepare them for further education, training or employment. The options offer opportunities to select subjects included in the creative arts, humanities, modern languages, technology and vocational areas. Some are GCSE courses while others may be for national vocational qualifications, or through the Prince's Trust and work related experiences. All students have a wide range of subject and course options from which to construct their own study programme. As a result, the school is able to provide each student with learning appropriate to their individual needs.
38. Provision for students with special or additional educational needs is excellent. The school provides a very well considered range of inclusive learning opportunities. The

curriculum has been skilfully adapted to meet more appropriately the learning requirements of these students so that they can achieve very well. Provision in the learning support centre helps individuals or groups of students who have poor literacy, numeracy, or social skills. The school monitors carefully alternative curriculum activities provided off-site.

39. Provision for those that are gifted or talented is made through subject areas and within out-of-hours learning programmes. The current focus is on developing a structured approach to students in Years 7 to 9. In most subjects, extension work is planned and regularly offered to gifted and talented as well as higher attaining students. The programme for students who have English as an additional language, especially those in the early stages of acquisition, is systematically monitored. Students make rapid progress and achieve very well.
40. The school's specialist status, as a sports college, has greatly influenced learning across the curriculum. Many sport-related examples, illustrations, achievements and venues are integral to schemes of work in all subjects, including modern languages and citizenship.
41. The school offers an outstanding range of opportunities for the enrichment of the curriculum. Most noteworthy are the activities offered in PE and sport and the level of support they attract from the students. In addition to this, however, there is also outstanding support for learning outside the school day. There are examination booster sessions in most subjects, homework clubs, and an extensive programme of trips and visits. There is a very good level of participation in the arts with regular drama productions, musical activities and visits to theatres and art galleries. Participation in other activities is also very good including the very extensive local, national and international links that the school has developed. Life and learning across the school has been enriched as a result of student visits to, and contact with, partner schools in New Zealand and, most recently, Thailand.
42. The overall quality of accommodation and resources is very good. Since the last inspection, the remainder of the school has been rebuilt – a project that has provided high quality specialist provision across a range of curriculum areas, with indoor and outdoor PE and games facilities to a high specification. There is much improved access for wheelchair users and risk assessment is very well documented. Day-to-day maintenance, undertaken by an in-house team, is of a high order.
43. Currently there are no teaching staff vacancies: the match of teachers to the curriculum is very good. The recruitment of staff is supported by a “grow your own” programme and training through the training school initiative. The provision for learning resources is very good, including those for ICT, subject specialist equipment and a high quality learning resources centre with an extensive range of books, magazines, periodicals and computers.

Sixth form

44. The very good quality curriculum provides a range of courses that can be certificated at a variety of levels in order to meet the needs and aspirations of sixth form students. The range of courses provided – 13 GCE AS and A level subjects, one GCSE and three AVCE courses – are complemented by a core of specialist teaching of Key Skills, PE and PSHE. Access to provision at West Kent College and another local school enables

some students to follow courses not offered within the school. Students from other schools also attend courses at The Hayesbrook. There is a high take up of ICT across both Years 12 and 13 and of English, history, sports studies, psychology and film studies. The statutory requirement to provide religious education for all students post-16 is not met.

45. All sixth form students benefit from the wide range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities as do other members of the school. Sixth formers respond well to this and take an active role in supporting and managing activities. The visit to Thailand by those doing the Community Sports Leader Award (CSLA) has had a major influence on their learning and personal development.
46. The quality of accommodation and resources is very good. Sixth form students have a dedicated study room, including computers, to support their learning. There is a very good match of specialist teachers to the courses taught and of resources to support students' learning.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for students' care, welfare, health and safety is very good. Students receive very good support, advice and guidance. They have very good opportunities to express their views, and to contribute to the running of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are excellent relationships between staff and students.
- A very good system of tracking supports students' academic progress.
- There are very good procedures for child protection and health and safety.
- Very good induction arrangements smooth the transition to secondary school.
- Staff respond well to students' views.
- There is very good guidance on career opportunities or further study.

Commentary

47. Students are very clear about their academic performance and their targets, which they can quote readily. They receive very good encouragement and advice from their subject teachers. There is a very good system of tracking progress and setting targets. Form tutors monitor the personal development of students and they, together with heads of year, are swift to deal with any issues that arise and help students who are facing problems. For instance, students readily agree that any incidents of bullying that arise are rapidly dealt with. The most vulnerable students are well cared for.
48. Much effort is made to prevent permanent exclusions, through counselling, anger management and special supervision. In particular, a pupil support centre has recently been established to give students an intensive period of focused support and to help them to moderate their behaviour sufficiently to enable them to rejoin mainstream classes.
49. The manager for inclusion, and staff in the learning support department, very effectively organise the process for the identification and assessment of students'

individual needs. Records are comprehensive, accessible, and helpful, and students' progress is very effectively tracked, monitored, and recorded. The procedures for annual reviews fully meet statutory requirements. The support staff are friendly, approachable, and readily available to discuss issues of concern with parents. Liaison with partner schools is excellent. When students with special or additional educational needs transfer to the school arrangements are very well thought out and implemented.

50. Health and safety is ensured by a very efficient system for making risk assessments; for example, on external visits, and by carrying out regular safety inspections of the school. The site manager very efficiently manages the school buildings and swiftly remedies unsafe situations. The child protection officer has been well trained, knows the local procedures and agencies and is highly committed to keeping staff well informed on signs of abuse and how to react to disclosure. Vulnerable students receive high levels of care.
51. Provision for students' welfare is very good. The school nurse holds a weekly drop-in session for students with health problems, and the counsellor is in school for three days a week to help those who are experiencing problems in the family or at school. The local youth crime reduction police officer is a frequent visitor, giving guidance, support and, occasionally, warnings to students.
52. Students comment on how well they were introduced to the school. The school gathers good information on students to ensure that they are individually known on arrival. There are good familiarisation procedures and many students will have attended sports, science lessons or other events at the school prior to entry. Primary schools are asked to name those students who are likely to find secondary transfer difficult, and at the end of the summer term approximately 40 prospective students attend for a whole week of timetabled lessons, with an emphasis on learning routines, organisation and familiarisation. This ensures a smooth transfer.
53. Students' views are sought through questionnaires, ranging from the comprehensive annual one arranged by the school to occasional ones on a specific subject organised by the school council. Students feel that the school listens to them. Two highly committed Year 10 students run the school council and there is a nucleus of about eight others who regularly contribute to discussions. The school council has been instrumental in bringing about a number of changes, such as an improved summer uniform, a better bicycle shed, healthier contents in vending machines and procedures to reduce vandalism in toilets. They are currently carrying out a questionnaire on bullying and have drawn some initial conclusions.
54. Guidance on careers and further education is well established in all years and is comprehensive. For example, students in Year 9 are expected to research two careers, find out as much information as they can, assemble it into a PowerPoint presentation and deliver it to their fellow students. The best one gets a prize. In another initiative, a dozen or more parents have volunteered to talk to groups of students about their jobs. The development of positive attitudes to careers by the students attending the Prince's Trust course is an excellent achievement.

Sixth form

55. Arrangements for the monitoring of students' academic progress and personal development are very good, as are those for providing well-informed advice and guidance. Students' progress and achievement are systematically tracked and monitored by subject teachers. Detailed marking and assessment provide regular guidance on what has been done well but also on what students need to do to improve their academic performance. Students appreciate the access they have to their course teachers, value the advice and support that they offer, and respond positively to the high expectations and the degree of detail offered in both written and oral feedback on their performance.
56. Form tutors monitor students' personal development well – including their attitudes, the effectiveness of their organisation and management of their work and assignment deadlines, and their regularity of attendance and punctuality.
57. The school offers comprehensive guidance on choices and planning for the future. On entry to the sixth form, guidance about courses and the level of study appropriate are reviewed and account taken of GCSE and other external results. The flexible use of entry requirements means that courses and workloads can be planned, which are appropriate for each individual student. As a result, retention rates are good.
58. Very good arrangements are in place to hear and respond to students' views. Their opinions and views are sought, not only through questionnaires, but also through access to form tutors and the head of sixth form and her deputy. They give a considered response to these views and students welcome the opportunity to improve things, for both current and future members of the sixth form.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

There are very good links with parents. There are excellent links with the community and with other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are provided with very good quality information.
- Parents support the school in a variety of ways.
- The views of parents are sought, and they are informed of the results.
- The school makes an outstanding and innovative contribution to wider educational partnerships.
- Thriving partnerships with schools and colleges enhance the curriculum and many other aspects of school life.
- Wide-ranging links with local and international communities provide many opportunities for students to widen their experiences.

Commentary

59. Information for parents is of very good quality, and includes a very attractive broadsheet that is produced annually which outlines the progress and ambitions of the school with especial reference to its sports college status. As well as providing written information, staff also organise meetings at which parents can learn about aspects of the school's work - for example, changes to assessment. These meetings are well attended, as are parents' consultation evenings. Parents receive very good information

on their sons' progress, through two interim monitoring reports and a full report. The full reports, which are very good, are succinct, highlight both strengths and weaknesses, and give targets for improvement. Parents are able to discuss reports and individual education plans at two progress evenings, one focused on subjects, and another when form tutors are available to discuss progress. There are good arrangements for joint plans to tackle poor attendance or behaviour when these are necessary. The attendance officer works productively with parents and seeks information from them for unexplained absences.

60. Parents support the learning of their sons by monitoring homework and regularly reading the students' record books. They also support sports fixtures, help with coaching, participate in school trips, and support events put on by the school, for example by making scenery or costumes.
61. Parents have just responded to a comprehensive questionnaire and have been told about the main findings. Parallel questionnaires were answered by students and staff and the three together await comprehensive analysis by the school. The response to the parental questionnaire showed that parents were very satisfied with the school.
62. The manager for inclusion and the staff in the learning support centre have developed strong links with the parents of students with special or additional educational needs. Parents are welcome to visit the department to discuss issues or problems concerning their child. Requests for help and guidance are promptly addressed. A high proportion of parents attend annual reviews and they are kept fully informed of their child's work and progress. The learning support department's involvement with partner schools, the local college, and the wider community is very positive. Students with special or additional educational needs are very well prepared for their entry to secondary school through the excellent transition arrangements designed by the school, based on close liaison with partner schools. The manager for inclusion has negotiated with the local further education college the provision of vocational courses. This has provided opportunities for a number of students to follow courses that more closely match their learning requirements. Attendance at local clubs allows students with special or additional educational needs to develop further their interests and expertise.
63. Links with the community are outstanding. There is an extensive range of ways in which the school has initiated, and is developing, educational partnerships for the benefit of the school, students and the community. Membership of the West Kent Learning Federation provides continual professional development opportunities for staff and supports the school improvement process through collaborative and innovative practices. The school was the initiator of a training school partnership and continues to make an outstanding contribution to this excellent initiative which has established a professional mentoring system and produced initial teacher training materials.
64. Creative partnerships with universities, the independent sector and local schools and colleges, utilise the school's specialist sports status very effectively. The school provides an excellent resource for the community in sport and leisure pursuits and actively promotes involvement of students in local, national and international educational links.

Sixth form

65. Students' learning benefits from the very strong links the school has with a range of organisations and agencies in the locality, as well as nationally and internationally. Work experience provides links with partners in the Education Business Partnership and with other local schools, including those in the West Kent Learning Federation. Students have visited, and continue to benefit from strong links with, schools in New Zealand and Thailand. Senior students also act as ambassadors for the school in the local community; the head boy is a co-opted member of the local Rotary Club.
66. Students who have the Community Sports Leaders Award (CSLA) are very active in working skilfully with a range of local primary and secondary schools, on activities which include golf, basketball and football. They also provide coaching for students in their own school as well as organising and managing sporting events, at home and abroad – most recently through their very successful contribution to the British Council's "Dreams and Teams" initiative at Chiang Mai in northern Thailand.
67. Important educational links with local universities, including Christ Church Canterbury University College, provide students with insights into the world of higher education.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the headteacher and associate headteacher is outstanding. Key staff give very good leadership, and the effectiveness of management is very good. The work of the governing body is excellent.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Outstanding leadership is provided by the innovative co-headship model.
- A clarity of vision and a consistent commitment to inclusion and raising achievement underpin all improvement work.
- Work on school improvement is coherent and strategically very well planned.
- Self-evaluation is excellent and is informed by rigorous analysis of data.
- The work of the governing body in supporting improvement is excellent.
- The learning environment has been transformed since the last inspection and key issues on standards, quality and achievement have been very successfully addressed.
- Arrangements for induction, continuous professional development, and performance management are excellent.

Commentary

68. The school has made excellent progress since the last inspection, and currently has a high level of consistency of quality across all subject departments and other areas of its work. This is the result of a coherent approach to strategic planning which enables a wide range of initiatives to be pursued, all to the common end of raising achievement. The training school partnership, the West Kent Learning Federation, the school's specialist status and its international links are all creatively and imaginatively used for the benefit of students and the improvement of their learning. Everything is underpinned by excellent use of data to analyse outcomes of all kinds and to inform future planning. Very effective review, based on a wide range of high quality information, supports improvement. The school development plan has been substantially revised, transformed into an

improvement plan, and strong links have been made with departmental planning and whole school foci. The coherence of planning is impressive.

69. The joint leadership of the headteacher and the associate headteacher is extremely successful, and is a model of outstanding and innovative practice. Both headteachers have had as their focus for school improvement the implementation of the teaching and learning plan. The implementation of this plan has been strategically extremely well managed and monitored by them, and by other leaders and managers.

Example of outstanding practice

An innovative model of co-headship enables improvement within the home school as well as having a wider impact on the local educational community

The model of co-headship was originally introduced as a means of allowing the headteacher to work with other schools in the local area, which were in difficulties. The model has evolved over time and now provides an outstandingly successful example of “the whole being greater than the sum of its parts”. The impact of leadership, both within The Hayesbrook School, and in the wider educational community outside it, is enhanced by the joint working. Values and priorities are shared and approaches are complementary, and always towards the same end – the raising of achievement for every student in the school and in the wider community. There is a very high level of co-operation and communication which enables improvement work, including major building programmes, to be undertaken seamlessly. This has been of immense benefit in leading school improvement. In addition to their joint role, both the substantive headteacher and the associate headteacher make a major contribution to leading other initiatives. The associate headteacher has led the training school bid, which has impacted very positively on staff development, and the substantive headteacher chairs a local learning federation and continues to work with schools in special measures or challenging circumstances. The two partners working individually could not do as much as two separate individuals as they have achieved by working together. The impact of the work of this partnership is therefore wide-ranging, and goes well beyond the school.

70. There is very effective leadership at all levels within the school. In all subjects, leadership and management are at least good; they are very good in mathematics, English, science, ICT, design and technology, business education, modern foreign languages, geography, history and RE. In art and PE, leadership and management are excellent. The manager for inclusion provides outstanding leadership to a very well organised and managed department. Support staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and they are deployed very effectively and efficiently to assist students, both in subject lessons and in the learning support centre. Following a detailed review, the manager for inclusion is fully aware of the strengths of the department and the areas where improvement is necessary, and has produced a well founded action plan.
71. Arrangements for staff induction, continuing professional development and performance management are excellent. The gaining of training school status has brought together a number of very successful procedures for supporting and developing staff. There is

excellent support for newly qualified teachers, very detailed guidance on lesson observations which benefits the overall quality of practice more widely, and very detailed documentation which ensures consistency across the six schools within the training partnership. The planning of continuous professional development is excellent, based on a thorough audit of needs, and performance management is well linked into support and development. Training school status has had a very strong impact on raising standards, improving teaching and learning, on recruitment and retention and on developing links with other schools, universities and colleges.

72. Governors are extremely knowledgeable, and work very effectively through well-structured committees. They provide challenge to the headteachers and senior managers, and their minutes demonstrate the thoroughness and rigour of their work. There is meticulous monitoring of the achievement of students from ethnic minority groups, and governors are also very active in key areas such as health and safety and financial monitoring.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

| Income and expenditure (£) | | Balances (£) | |
|----------------------------|-----------|--|----------|
| Total income | 3,320,618 | Balance from previous year | 159,387 |
| Total expenditure | 3,711,996 | Balance carried forward to the next year | -231,991 |
| Expenditure per student | 4,081* | | |

* This includes considerable funds generated by the school itself

73. The school had a deficit according to the 2004 accounts. However, these accounts did not show monies subsequently received which brought the school back within a balanced budget. The deficit originally arose because of three factors: during continuous expansion of student numbers, funding was received after the numbers had already increased; there was an ongoing building programme; and in 2003 there was a drop in sixth form numbers (which was reversed in 2004). The school also contributes significantly from its own budget to provision for students who have special educational needs.
74. The school is extremely successful at generating additional funding - for example income generated from support, advice and training to other schools. This makes a significant contribution to the overall budget. Financial management is meticulous, and the headteacher and bursar work very closely together to ensure that the principles of best value are routinely applied. Finances are tightly run and the sixth form, despite its small size, operates within its budget. There is high quality information about costs to support

decision-making. Very effective use is made of in-house resources, such as the major refurbishment of accommodation to a high standard by the premises team. The management of resources is very good. Finance and administrative staff give very good support.

75. The headteachers, senior managers and teachers are extremely pro-active in overcoming barriers to improvement. Obvious examples are the policy of “growing your own” staff to overcome recruitment difficulties, the successful completion of an extensive building programme funded through the school’s own efforts, and the provision of an in school support unit for those students at risk of exclusion. An above average amount is spent on staffing and on learning resources, but this expenditure has been extremely effective in raising standards. Similarly, very effective use has been made of additional funding resulting from specialist status. The school is very active in collaborative working which makes highly efficient use of resources.

Sixth form

76. The governing body has a clear strategic view of the sixth form and a commitment to its success. Together with the leadership team, they provide a robust framework within which this aspect of the school’s work can operate. The provision made within the curriculum is of very good quality and enables students with modest prior attainment to be successful learners.
77. Leadership and management of the sixth form are good. The day-to-day operation ensures that students are well supported and have access to a range of staff who provide guidance and advice. The vision and strategy for the further development of the sixth form is less clear. Discussions about the development of consortia arrangements are being undertaken. Meanwhile a review is underway of issues relating to broadening the appeal of the sixth form, the range of courses, and the routes to success required in order to meet the increasingly diverse range of needs of those in the post-16 age group.
78. Form tutors are effective in undertaking their pastoral role, and in supporting and nurturing students, especially those in Year 12, who grapple with the responsibilities of independent learning. The process for wider monitoring and tracking is largely informal, except in the case of students causing concern, where the support and route for the resolution of the problem is lengthy but clearly defined.
79. Leadership and management of courses inspected in detail are very good. They are excellent in PE, very good in English, mathematics, ICT and business studies and good in science and psychology. There are very effective systems in place to monitor and track students’ progress and achievement and provide high quality feedback.
80. The governing body and senior leadership team keep the cost effectiveness of the sixth form under review. Currently, the curriculum operates within its budget. Its cost effectiveness is good, given the number of post-16 students on roll, the range and nature of curriculum provision, the relative group sizes and the extent to which students achieve well and target grades are met or exceeded.

Statutory requirements

81. Although a daily act of collective worship is not provided for all students, there are regular assemblies for different year groups. These provide good opportunities for spiritual development through reflection on significant themes and topics. Other subjects also contribute to the spiritual development of students, which is good. Tutor time, however, is not making a sufficient contribution to spiritual development and thought for the day is not well used. There is currently no RE for post-16 students. The headteacher and governing body should continue their efforts to meet statutory requirements in full.

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN SUBJECTS AND COURSES

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN KEY STAGES 3 AND 4

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students achieve very well in the subject.
- Lessons are well planned to give pace, variety and purpose to learning.
- Teachers have high expectations of themselves and of their students.
- There is excellent collaboration between staff and learning support assistants to give students the best chance of success.
- Occasionally students are given insufficient direction in lessons or through marking as to how to improve their standards of work.
- Some classes have been negatively affected by staff turnover.

Commentary

82. Students' attainment when they enter the school is well below average. Standards in tests taken in 2004 at the end of Year 9 were below the average for all schools (although in line with boys' attainment nationally), and above average compared with boys in modern schools. At GCSE, results in both language and literature were well above the national average for A* to C grades in 2004 and substantially in advance of the average for boys in modern schools. Students therefore make extremely good progress over their time in the school, and achieve very well. This positive picture was confirmed by the inspection. Work seen in Years 7 to 9 was in line with expectations for students of a similar age nationally, and work seen in Years 10 and 11 was above expectations.
83. Teaching is very good throughout the school and leads in turn to very good learning. Teachers plan lessons with great care and close knowledge of students' needs. There is exemplary collaboration with learning support assistants to foster the achievement and self esteem of students who might in other circumstances struggle to do well. For example, a lesson with a Year 8 class containing many students with special educational needs was outstanding for excellent relationships, clear objectives (to use extended sentences in a narrative about sharks) and team teaching which led to writing of exceptional quality. Similarly, in a very good lesson with a potentially volatile Year 10 class, literary terms were matched to definitions and used to interpret and comment upon poems from other cultures. Here again expert teaching, and high expectations of commitment and behaviour, gave students a real purchase on the texts in question and offered them manageable challenge. Only occasionally were these very high standards not maintained, although no teaching was observed that was unsatisfactory. Sometimes lessons lacked the insistent pace and purpose of the best work, and marking and target setting were not as sharp and helpful as was more typically the case.

84. The department is very well led. The head of department gives a strong lead through her own teaching, and the attention given to matters of planning, assessment, and 'boy friendly' approaches and materials. For instance, schemes of work and students' writing show the beneficial impact of the school's sports college status on the English curriculum. Management is also very good. Newly qualified teachers are well supported. Literacy development is at the heart of the department's approach to teaching. The monitoring of the department's work is well developed. The negative consequences of staff changes have been minimised by careful deployment of teachers and by the willingness of a dedicated staff to put students' interests first. Staffing has nevertheless been a recent difficulty for the department, and the effects of discontinuity are still apparent for some classes.
85. Improvement since the last inspection has been very good. From being well below average, students' attainment is now in line with national averages by the end of Year 9, and is above average by the end of Year 11. This is achievement of a high order and is testimony to the very good teaching from which students of all abilities benefit. Literacy was judged at the last inspection to receive too little attention. It is now central to all schemes of work and is a crucial element in students' accelerated progress.

Drama

86. Drama was sampled as part of the inspection. Provision is very good. Students are able to opt for the subject at GCSE (where results were outstandingly good in 2004) on the basis of a well-planned curriculum in Years 7 to 9. Two lessons were observed in the main school and one in the sixth form. Standards of teaching and learning are very good overall. The subject makes a major contribution to students' extra-curricular opportunities through theatre visits and regular school productions. Opportunities for high achievement, particularly for lower attaining students, are best provided in classes where all abilities work together. The current arrangements where drama classes mirror the sets for French are therefore not ideal.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

87. The development of students' literacy was a key issue for action arising from the last inspection. Provision is now very good. Extensive in-service training has raised staff awareness. The implementation of the Key Stage 3 Strategy and the work resulting in the award of the Basic Skills Quality Mark are examples of initiatives which have significantly raised standards of reading, writing, listening and speaking. This is particularly so for those many students who enter the school with literacy skills which are well below average. By the end of Year 9, standards are in line with national expectations, a position which is maintained over Years 10 and 11. This shows that the school's focus on literacy development across all departments has been impressively successful.

Modern foreign languages

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school teaches modern foreign languages to most students from Years 7 to 11, and achievement is good.
- The relationships with students are very good and facilitate collaborative learning.
- The very good leadership of the department results in very good guidance and support to other teachers and in everyone working towards common goals.
- Marking is regular and very positive, but comments do not always help students to improve the standard of their work.
- Lack of regular access to ICT prevents teachers from presenting and practising new language electronically.
- The department's wide range of extra-curricular activities makes a significant contribution to raising standards.

Commentary

88. Since 2002 teacher assessments in modern foreign languages at the end of Year 9 have risen year on year and in 2004 they were in line with the national average.
89. Results in GCSE French in 2002 and 2003 were average when compared to all schools and in 2004 these standards were maintained. When compared to the results of boys in modern schools results in French over the last three years were well above average. Results in German in 2002 and 2003 were below the national average for all schools and they were well below in 2004. When compared to the results of boys in modern schools they were above average in 2002 and 2003 and average in 2004. These results are particularly impressive, taking into account the students' wide range of ability, and the fact that the school enters nearly all students for GCSE in a modern foreign language, whereas nationally languages are options usually taken by predominantly higher and middle attaining students.
90. Standards are in line with national expectations in Year 9 in French and German lessons and in students' written work. Higher and middle attaining students in Year 9 ask and answer familiar questions and express their opinions using simple expressions. Students' pronunciation of French or German enables them to communicate satisfactorily. Students consolidate their oral work satisfactorily in writing, using basic structures and vocabulary. High attaining students write short compositions and dialogues containing past, present and future tenses and some more complex sentences with few errors. Many high attaining students have a satisfactory understanding of grammar. Most students understand lessons conducted largely in the foreign languages. Many find it difficult, however, to pick out details from recorded texts. Lower attaining students and students with special educational needs use short phrases and words that they have learned off by heart. They also understand classroom instructions and can pick out simple details in short texts, when well supported by the teacher. This represents good achievement for the vast majority of students in both languages in Years 7 to 9. A small number of students, however, underachieve in French in Year 9, because they are easily distracted and do not focus sufficiently on their work.
91. Standards of work in French and German in lessons and in written work are in line with national expectations in Years 10 and 11. Standards in German are improving and are better than recent GCSE results suggest. By the end of Year 11, most high and some middle attaining students produce work of GCSE grade A* to C standard. Generally these students understand the spoken language well and their pronunciation is good.

Many use present, past and future of tenses and more complex sentences. The French of some students, however, is weak and they have many gaps in basic structures and vocabulary. Lower attaining students understand simple questions, vocabulary items in context and simple short texts. Their pronunciation is satisfactory. Overall students' achievement in French and German in Years 10 and 11 is good. Students with special educational needs also achieve well because of the step-by-step approach in lessons, the good use of mime, visuals and the individual support from the teachers and learning support assistants.

92. Teaching and learning in French and German in Years 7 to 11 are good. Within this overall judgement, there is a lot of very good teaching and a little unsatisfactory teaching. Teachers' good linguistic skills, good subject knowledge and good awareness of National Curriculum and GCSE requirements have a very positive impact on learning. The use of the foreign language is generally effective in developing listening and speaking, but in a few lessons too much English is used. Students generally respond well to well-structured lessons, which are brisk and which make use of interesting activities and resources. Most students learn well in pairs, although some students occasionally lack concentration and consequently underachieve. The marking of students' work is regular and comments are encouraging, but do not always provide advice on how to improve. The very good relationships between teachers and students have a very positive impact on learning and students are generally keen to participate orally, accept correction of errors and ask questions for information or clarification. ICT is used effectively in some lessons to practise and consolidate language, but lack of regular access to computers, prevents teachers from using ICT to present and practise new structures.
93. The leadership of the department is very good and the management is good. The head of department has a very clear vision and teachers work hard to achieve their agreed goals. Many of the targets on the departmental development plan have been achieved. Support for new teachers is very strong. There is effective monitoring by the head of department. The department's trips abroad and the exchange link with Germany motivate students.
94. Improvement since the last inspection is very good. The department continues to offer modern foreign languages to most students in Years 7 to 11; students' achievement, which was previously satisfactory in Years 7 to 9 and unsatisfactory in Years 10 and 11, is now good. Teaching and learning have improved.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment at the end of Year 9 and GCSE are above the national average for all maintained schools and well above that of boys in modern schools.
- The progress made by students throughout Years 7 to 11 is very good.
- The quality of teaching is very good.
- The expectations of teachers for students to succeed and of their good behaviour are very high.
- Students' attitudes to learning are excellent.
- Evaluation by the department of its own strengths and areas for improvement is very good.

- There are insufficient opportunities for investigational work.

Commentary

95. Attainment on entry is below average. The results in the national tests at the end of Year 9 in 2004 were above the national average and above those schools with a similar level of attainment on entry. The trend in results over the three years up to 2003 has been improving with a slight decline in 2004, although a larger proportion of students attained the higher grades in 2004 than in previous years. In the work seen during the inspection the attainment of students in Year 9 was in line with national expectations. Lower attaining students establish good skills in numeracy, including multiplication tables and ratio and proportion. Higher attaining students develop a good understanding of algebra, including sequences and graphs. All students have a good understanding of statistics and the properties of shapes. They are able to apply their knowledge to problems, but are, at this stage, less confident with mathematical investigations.
96. In 2004 the GCSE results were well above the national average for both A* to C and A* to G grades, and well above the average for boys in modern schools. Although the proportion of the highest grades A* and A was below national averages it was high when compared with similar schools. GCSE results have improved considerably since the last inspection with a peak in 2003. In the work seen during the inspection the attainment of students in Year 11 was overall in line with national expectations. Higher attaining students demonstrated attainment above national expectations, for example in trigonometry and algebra. Lower attaining students continue to develop their numeracy skills. They have a good understanding of geometry and of using co-ordinates to plot graphs. All students are able to apply ICT effectively in their work.
97. Students, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well throughout Years 7 to 11. Lower attaining students achieve particularly well in both key stages and students make particularly good progress in Year 8. Students with special educational needs achieve as well as other students.
98. The quality of teaching and learning are very good throughout Years 7 to 11. Some lessons are excellent. There is a good learning environment within the classrooms. Most lessons are well constructed using a range of teaching methods that engage and motivate students by taking account of the different ways in which students learn. Teachers are beginning to make creative use of the interactive whiteboards. They engage students in discussion to draw out understanding and use practical examples, often drawn from sport to illustrate mathematical ideas. In some lessons there is insufficient time spent in summarising the learning and the setting of homework is sometimes rushed. In some lessons there are insufficient opportunities for students to explain how they work things out. There is a lack of constructive comment in some marking of books. Students with special educational needs are particularly well supported by the pro-active approach of the learning support assistants. Regular testing is well used to assess students' attainment and to inform the teaching.
99. The leadership and management are very good, providing clarity of vision and high aspirations for all students. This is translated into practice through good quality self-evaluation in which the strengths and areas for development are accurately analysed and acted upon. The teachers share a set of principles for the teaching of the subject and

work co-operatively to achieve their aims. The deployment of teachers in areas of their strength makes a positive contribution to achievement.

100. The improvement since the last inspection has been very good. The department has been recognised as a leading department in the county. There is improved quality of teaching and assessment, with greater challenge leading to improvement in standards. There is a well thought out self-review process that informs continuing improvement.

Mathematics across the curriculum

101. The development of students' numeracy skills is sufficient to enable them to have full access to the school curriculum. The school has a policy stating the principles for numeracy across the curriculum and the use of mathematics is made clear in the planning of other subjects. Teachers in other subjects have been trained in the development of numeracy. Students are able to draw and interpret graphs in English, science, history, geography and physical education. They apply their basic numeracy skills to interpreting scales in geography and design and technology. They are able to understand and use formulae in science. They calculate tax rates in citizenship. There are puzzle booklets that enable students to practise their numeracy skills during tutor group time.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching leads to very good learning and achievement.
- Very good leadership sets a high standard for the work of the department.
- The teaching and support staff work very well as a team.
- The standard of students' experimental and investigational skills is high.
- Very good tracking and monitoring of the students' progress and effort support achievement.
- An interesting and stimulating curriculum motivates students.
- The staff know the students well and provide very good support.

Commentary

102. On entry to the school, standards of attainment in science are below national expectations. In tests in 2004, at the end of Year 9, results were above the national average. In GCSE examinations in 2004, the percentage of students achieving A* to C grades was in line with the national average for all schools, and well above those for similar schools. Almost all students achieve a pass; a much higher percentage than is the case nationally. This represents high achievement for the lower attaining students in the cohort.
103. The inspection confirmed this very positive picture. Standards in Year 9 are at least in line with national expectations. The top set is working to a standard that is above that which is expected nationally. Older students are coping well with the more demanding work of Key Stage 4, and reaching standards in line with national expectations.
104. Very good teaching, setting high expectations and engendering positive attitudes to learning, results in very good achievement. Students with special educational needs

achieve as well as their peers because of the extra help and attention they receive and the work of the learning support assistants. The very good achievement of older students is particularly evident in their development of very good experimental and investigative skills.

105. Teaching is very good. The department ensures that the students get off to a very good start through good communication with the primary schools and an excellent induction programme. The teachers instil in students the confidence to achieve highly and this enables students to achieve much higher standards than might be expected from their prior attainment. The quality of learning is very good. A wide range of multimedia teaching aids is used skilfully to capture interest and to engage the students. Many students enjoy their studies, and this strong motivation also underpins the very good achievement seen in this subject.
106. An enthusiastic and experienced co-ordinator provides leadership and management of very good quality. All the teachers and support staff work very well as a team to ensure consistency and continuity. The technicians make a very valuable contribution to supporting the students' learning through practical work. The scheme of work is exemplary and offers a broad and interesting course. Study guides are used very successfully to help students to record their observations and their learning. These study guides also support the development of skills in literacy and numeracy. ICT is used very effectively particularly in gathering, processing and comparing data from experiments. Students can also get extra help and information outside lessons from the school's internal web site. Assessment is to a very good standard. Students are fully aware of how they are progressing and what they need to do as individuals to improve their work
107. Since the last inspection there has been an improvement in the standards of teaching that has led to even higher achievement and a further rise in the standards. Improvement is very good.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in assessments at the end of Year 9 are in line with the national average, and achievement is very good.
- Standards at the end of Year 11 are in line with the national average.
- The quality of ICT teaching is good overall.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- Computer facilities are of very good quality.
- The use of ICT to support learning is now well developed across many subjects.
- Results in GNVQ Intermediate ICT in 2004 were weak.

Commentary

108. In 2004, teacher assessments at the end of Year 9 show attainment to be generally in line with the national average. This standard has been maintained over the last three years and current standards are in line with the national expectation. Achievement is very good. When students enter Year 7 their attainment in ICT is below average. They make very good progress in weekly ICT lessons, and benefit from effective setting arrangements in Years 8 and 9. They develop their knowledge and skills in the use of a range of software including spreadsheet, graphics, search engine and desktop publishing packages, in a variety of activities such as information handling, presentation, and modelling.
109. The pass rate in GNVQ Intermediate ICT in 2004 was a disappointing 11 per cent. This situation has been effectively addressed by making the GNVQ course available to Year 10 students within their options, and broadening the range of vocational courses delivered by introducing a new BTEC 'IT @ Work' course. In Years 10 and 11 current standards are in line with the national expectation. Achievement is good. Current student work demonstrates good progress, for example, in the use of a variety of graphics software to produce appropriate solutions to users' requirements, and the development of relatively sophisticated multimedia presentations and relational databases.
110. Teaching and learning are good overall, and very good in over half of lessons observed in Years 10 and 11. Throughout the main school, teachers have high expectations of all students and provide high levels of individual support to ensure that they make progress. Students with special or additional educational needs are fully included in lessons and receive effective additional assistance from learning support staff. Teachers make consistently good use of questioning to check individual levels of understanding and challenge the more able. High quality on-line student materials, teacher presentations, and wall displays stimulate interest in learning. For example, there was a particularly effective use of a presentation on the school's links with Thailand in a lesson which considered the value of hypotheses in exchanging information. Students enjoy working with computers and demonstrate high levels of concentration, commitment, and independence in their work. Relationships with staff are very good.
111. Leadership and management are very good. The head of ICT is committed to ensuring the highest possible standards in all areas of the department's work and provides clear direction to a professional, enthusiastic, hard working and committed team. His wider outreach work as an advanced skills teacher adds to the breadth of experience he brings to the department. Responsibilities are well devolved, leading to the development of high quality teaching materials which incorporate relevant national strategy resources throughout Key Stage 3, and the effective delivery of a new vocational course at Key Stage 4. Departmental development planning and review procedures are very effectively implemented. High quality network support is provided by a dedicated team of technical staff who ensure that the extensive school network functions effectively and reliably.
112. There have been very good improvements since the last inspection in achievement, in the provision of substantial ICT resources, and in the comprehensive and effective planning and

delivery of updated courses at Key Stage 3 and new vocational courses at Key Stage 4. The capacity to improve further is good.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

113. Provision for ICT across the curriculum is good. Since the last inspection very good progress has been made in the use of specialist software in PE. Good progress has been made in the use of ICT to support teaching and learning in other subjects and courses, including mathematics, science, history, modern foreign languages, design and technology, geography, and alternative curriculum courses such as the Prince's Trust. In history, for example, good use is made of the Commonwealth War Graves Internet site to research local men who died in the Great War. In science data logging software is used particularly effectively to record, plot and compare data in experiments. In some other subjects, such as art, English, and music, the use of ICT is currently too limited, and provision of staff training and increased access to facilities will be needed as subject requirements continue to develop. Increasing the range and effectiveness of the use of ICT is a major focus in the current improvement plan.

HUMANITIES

History

Provision in history is **good**.

- Students' achievement is good.
- Results at GCSE improved significantly in 2004.
- History is a popular option choice.
- Very good use is made of ICT.
- Assessment is thorough and focuses on what students need to do to improve.
- There is insufficient challenge for students in some teaching groups.

Commentary

114. In 2004 students' GCSE results were below the national average, but they were well above the results of students in similar schools. These results represent a very good improvement on the disappointing results of 2003, and demonstrate the significant improvements that have been made. For the 77 students entered in 2004, their results represent good achievement. From the current Years 10 and 11 over 60 per cent of students have opted for history. It is a popular subject. Standards seen in the current Years 10 and 11 are higher than results would suggest, with the exception of students in one Year 11 teaching group whose learning has been adversely affected by staffing changes. Overall standards are in line with expectations. The majority of students have a very good knowledge and understanding of the course content. For example, students were able to discuss the contributions to medical developments of a number of individuals and were able to explain the influence of factors like war and religion on the pace of change. Achievement overall is good.

115. Standards in the current Year 9 are in line with national expectations. This represents very good achievement for the majority of students from standards on entry which are well below expectations. There is underachievement in some teaching groups where

teaching has been insufficiently challenging but the majority of students demonstrate increasing knowledge and understanding of historical events. For example, Year 9 students can explain why Britain, France and the United States of America disagreed about how to treat Germany in 1919 and why the treaty they signed was unlikely to bring lasting peace. Students' historical communication skills are under-developed. These are being improved by teachers' emphasis on oral work, on improving writing and on extending history vocabulary.

116. The quality of teaching is good in Years 7 to 9 and very good on the GCSE course. Relationships between students and teachers are very good. Lessons are very well planned to interest students. There are short and varied activities, strong visual sources, lots of discussion and teachers make very good use of the students' own experience. For example, in an excellent Year 9 lesson the teacher started by asking students to explore a fictional bullying situation. The students were then able to transfer their thinking to the historical situation in the 1930s when Germany threatened to take over Czechoslovakia. This deepened students' understanding of why British leaders decided to appease Hitler. At GCSE, teaching is equally varied. Students work hard in lessons and make good notes, although greater focus could be given to their usefulness for revision purposes. The GCSE scheme of work is organised around questions but lacks focus on what students should learn. By Year 11, students are increasingly aware of the assessment demands of the syllabus. Teacher assessment is a great strength; it is very thorough and ensures that students know what they have to do to improve.
117. The leadership and management provided over the past year by the teacher temporarily in charge is very good. Very good measures have been taken to minimise the negative effects of recent staffing changes. The teachers of history work very hard and have made some good improvements since the last inspection. There is now a set of common tasks in place across Years 7 to 9 that support accurate teacher assessment and effective use is being made of information and communication technology, such as the research task using the Commonwealth War Graves on line database.

Geography

Provision in geography is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Given the very low starting points of many students on entry to the school, achievement is very good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good for students in Years 7 to 9 and is very good for those in Years 10 and 11.
- Leadership and management are very good and give a clear direction for the future work of the department.
- In Years 7 to 9 marking and assessment are inconsistent and occasionally fail to provide sufficient guidance on what students need to do to improve their work.
- Some students lack the literacy skills to enable them to analyse text, scan and select information quickly and report concisely in short answer questions in examinations.

Commentary

118. Attainment on entry in geography varies, but is overall well below expectations for students of a similar age nationally. As they move through the school students make rapid progress so that by the end of Year 9 standards are in line with national expectations. This represents very good achievement. Most students develop good levels of knowledge and understanding of physical processes in relation to, for example, weather and climate. They also acquire good map skills and begin to address important questions as part of their approach to geographical enquiry.
119. At the end of Year 11, results in GCSE examinations are in line with the national average for A* to G grades, although they are well below the national average for those gaining A* to C grades. However, results are above average overall when judged against averages for boys in modern schools. Work seen is in line with expectations, and indicates that standards are rising in Year 10, more quickly than in Year 11. Students have good knowledge and understanding of the economic performance and of similarities and differences between less and more economically developed countries. Achievement is good in Years 10 and 11, and very good from Year 7 to Year 11.
120. Between Years 7 and 11, literacy skills develop well from a low baseline. Most students have adequate reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. However, they often lack techniques to: scan and analyse text quickly; select information and write a concise summary that encapsulates key ideas; respond appropriately to “trigger” words and commands in an examination question. ICT and numeracy skills develop well and students use both intelligently as part of their learning.
121. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is very good and occasionally excellent. The high quality of teaching enables students to achieve well and, in Years 7 to 9, very well. Teachers have high expectations of students and provide consistent levels of demand and challenge. Meticulous lesson planning is supported by very good subject knowledge that is integral to the detailed schemes of work. Well-designed tasks, use of a range of teaching strategies, resources, media and field studies provide opportunities to explore learning; they inject pace, energy and excitement into lessons and ensure that students achieve very well. Relationships and attitudes to learning are of a high order. Excellent time management results in very good behaviour and high levels of concentration.
122. Leadership and management are very good. The department is comprehensively documented and strategic planning, with appropriate priorities, is excellent. Work is generally well marked. However, greater consistency would enable students to recognise what has been done well and what needs to be done to improve the standard and quality of their work. This department has improved significantly in all aspects of its work since the last inspection. Improvement is very good.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good and contributes well to students' learning and their good achievement.
- Students' very positive attitudes support their learning.
- Very good leadership and management ensure that standards are improving.
- Marking of assessments does not always make clear what students need to do to improve.
- There are limited opportunities for ICT to enhance learning.

Commentary

123. This is a subject in which standards are improving, and are likely to improve further due to rigorous teaching, and the changes which have been implemented by the department.
124. Students enter the school with well below average attainment in relation to the expectations of the Kent agreed syllabus for religious education. They are now achieving very well in Years 7 to 9 so that by the end of Year 9 their standards are in line with expectations. Students, including those with special educational needs, improve their knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs and practices as well as developing the ability to evaluate the impact of beliefs on actions. This represents very good achievement.
125. In 2004, there was a small entry to the RE full course. Results, in so far as these could be compared with national averages, were well below the national average for all schools and the average for boys in modern schools. However, all students gained a pass grade, which is better than results for similar schools.
126. The school has made several effective changes in the last year to RE courses in Years 10 and 11. These changes, including the introduction of the GCSE short course in Year 10, are having a positive impact on standards. Standards in the current Year 11 core RE course are below those expected; the subject leader is aware of this and this course is being replaced by all students taking the short course in RE. Standards of work seen in the current Year 10 GCSE short course represent good achievement. In the current GCSE full course, Year 11 standards are below national expectations, but represent good achievement given students' prior attainment at the end of Year 9. Standards are improving and current achievement is good.
127. Teaching and learning are good and sometimes very good. Teaching is very well planned with good use of discussion and questioning enabling students to express their opinions and form clear judgements about religious and philosophical ideas. The very good level of challenge and expectation, together with teachers' subject expertise, ensures that students, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. Students' very positive attitudes and high levels of motivation help support their learning. There are limited opportunities in lessons for ICT to enhance learning and marking does not always make clear what students need to do to improve.
128. Leadership and management are very good. The co-ordinator has a very clear vision for the subject and the determination to raise standards further. A recent innovation to change the subject's name on the timetable has contributed to improving its status with boys. Standards are improving because of very good leadership and consistently good teaching from a team of specialist teachers. This represents good improvement since the last inspection.

TECHNOLOGY

Design and technology

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good and very good teaching lead to students achieving very well.
- Good relationships contribute to a positive response from students to the subject.
- There is very good leadership of the department.
- Standards of practical work are good in all areas.
- Formal monitoring of teaching and learning is not sufficiently rigorous.
- The lack of a dedicated ICT or graphics area within the department adversely affects the range of work undertaken.
- Curriculum time in Years 7 to 9 does not allow the completion of some projects to a high standard.

Commentary

129. In 2004 the GCSE results were broadly in line with the national average for all maintained schools for A* to C grades and above average for boys in modern schools. In food technology, results were above average. They were below average in resistant materials and graphics, but overall students achieved at least as well as in their other subjects. Results were above average in 2002 and average in 2003.
130. Current standards in Year 9 are in line with expectations. Attainment on entry is well below average in terms of design and technology experience and this therefore represents very good achievement. Good work is seen in each area, as in the structures module in Year 7 where good drawings helped students' understanding of forces, or well annotated sketches in the clock project in Year 9, and good development of ideas in the watch project also in Year 9. In the best work, there is good use of ICT, including the internet, and good photographic evidence in the research. Weaker work has poorer presentational skills, untidy written work in pen, limited research or work which is incomplete.
131. Current standards in Year 11 are in line with expectations overall. All specialisms are maintaining the good work seen in the recent examinations with current work showing further improvement. A gift wrapping set project in graphics and a special dietary project in food technology were well researched and presented with good annotated sketches, good use of colour and good development of ideas. The use of scale models in resistant materials supported the learning and understanding of design ideas before the making of the final product. Where the work is not as good there is limited research and development of ideas, weaker presentations, work which is incomplete and coursework deadlines which are not adhered to. Practical work is usually of a good standard. The use of computer aided design (CAD) is not featured strongly in design folders.
132. The quality of teaching and learning is good with much that is very good. Subject expertise is very good. Lessons have appropriate challenge and expectations, make very good use of learning support assistants, and engage students in their learning.

For example, a Year 7 lesson increased students' learning about simple electronics in a steady hand game project, a Year 9 graphics lesson developed good understanding of how to use CAD packages when generating ideas for designs for watch straps, and a Year 11 food technology lesson enabled the students to develop and increase practical skills when making a cold dessert. In a Year 11 graphics lesson, peer assessment was used to support learning. Students increase their understanding to a good level because of the range and appropriateness of teaching styles used. In most lessons teachers use good questioning skills to reinforce learning. Homework was not always set in lessons. Occasionally students can be lacking in concentration and rather noisy, resulting in a slower rate of progress. However, students' attitudes and behaviour are usually good or better and this has a positive effect on their learning.

133. Leadership and management are very good. A new head of department has been appointed since the last inspection and has a clear vision for the future development of the subject. An experienced team of staff work and support each other well and give of their time generously for the benefit of the students. Assessment procedures are good and data is being used to target improvement. A system of tracking students' progress and attainment more readily is being developed. Marking is undertaken and is usually supportive and helpful to improving the work. Informal monitoring is a regular feature within the department, but the formal monitoring of teaching and learning is not sufficiently rigorous.
134. Technician time and support are good. Curriculum time imposes some restriction on the development of skills, knowledge and understanding in Years 7 to 9. Accommodation is satisfactory but some rooms are rather cramped when full classes are present and there is a shortage of storage space for large items. There is no dedicated ICT room in the department and no specialist graphics area, as was the case at the last inspection. The department supports the development of key skills well with good use of ICT in some areas. Display of work is good and the multicultural food display particularly was of a good standard. There are no foot safety-stops on items of machinery in the workshops and some of the chairs and stools are unsuitable for use.
135. Improvement since the last inspection is very good. Progress is now good in food technology, mixed ability groups make good or very good progress especially when support is present, attainment is in line with expectations by the end of Year 9 and there are specialist teachers in each area. Further developments have taken place including greater numbers taking the subject to examination level, revised assessment procedures and the introduction of A-level product design.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Art and design

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

- Teaching and learning are very good and students achieve very well as a result.
- Assessment is excellent and students know how to improve.
- Excellent leadership and management are very effective in raising standards.
- A very good enrichment programme enhances students' experience of art and design.

Commentary

136. On entry to the school students' standards in art are below average. By the end of Year 9 standards are in line with expectations, which represents good achievement. In Years 10 and 11, students make rapid progress and in GCSE examinations in 2004 they achieved A* to C results above the national average for all maintained schools, and well above average for boys in modern schools. This is very high achievement. Standards of work seen during the inspection were in line with expectations at the end of Year 9 and above expectations in Years 10 and 11.
137. Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers are all specialists in art and design and, in addition, each has their own areas of expertise which add to the breadth of teaching in the department. Lesson planning is very detailed and informative and shows how teachers take account of all students and their varying needs including those with special educational needs. Sketchbooks are used effectively and students and teachers can see the progression over the various projects undertaken each year. The projects set for Years 7, 8 and 9 are exciting and directed towards boys' interests, and consequently they are well motivated, behave well and learn well.
138. The work of artists is used to inspire students in all years and they are able to evaluate artists' work and share their personal responses with their peers in a very confident manner. Expectations of good attitudes and high standards ensure students produce high quality work. Teachers have very good questioning techniques and this reinforces students' knowledge and understanding of the work being studied. Teachers have very good relationships with students and are good role models. In lessons, teachers give clear instructions to students which ensure that they produce the high standard of work expected. Students studying for GCSE are given detailed information about the marking criteria and are able to develop and improve their work to gain the higher grades.
139. Leadership and management are excellent. The strong work ethos and vision for the future of the department inspire the whole team to work together and this is reflected in the very good attitudes of the students. A very good range of enrichment activities, community links and visits to galleries and museums contribute strongly to students' personal development. Assessment is excellent, the systems in place for marking and recording students' work are exemplary and the data collected is used well for lesson planning and target setting. Teachers ask Year 7 students to complete a survey to assess their views on art provision and this enables them to develop further the schemes of work. Self-evaluation in the department is thorough and ongoing. All staff are enthusiastic about continued personal development and undertake training and courses whenever they can, in their own time as well as through school based training.
140. Accommodation is very good and the art rooms are well equipped with good resources. The sports college status is reflected in the art department by including projects based on sporting activities, both in drawing and photography.
141. Improvement since the previous inspection is very good. GCSE results have risen steadily. There are now a few computers in each art room but this area is targeted in the department's development plan to play a larger part in teaching art and design. Teaching is now very good overall.

Music

Provision in music is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Lessons are well prepared with very good use of resources to engage the students.
- Achievement is good.
- Marking is very good and keeps students well informed as to their progress.
- Work is challenging but accessible to all groups of students.
- In some lessons there are insufficient activities to fully exploit the time available.
- There is insufficient use of ICT in all years.
- The students have very good attitudes and behave very well.

Commentary

142. There were no entries for GCSE in 2004; results prior to that indicate standards which were below average when compared with all schools but above average compared with similar schools. In work seen during the inspection, standards of attainment are in line with expectations. By Year 9 students read notation but are still heavily dependent on using letter names. They control keyboards well and perform melodies with average fluency, many using simple fingering systems. There is a good sense of rhythm and the ability to hold independent parts, keeping well in time. Singing standards are above average and classes sing in two parts. Composition standards are weak in melodic terms and hampered by a lack of notation skills. However there is imaginative use of rhythms to create textures of sound. In Years 10 and 11, standards are in line with expectations overall, with listening and performance being stronger than composition. Most of the students play guitar or percussion and find that the lack of keyboard and notation skills hampers their composing. Standards are better than in the most recent GCSE results because staffing has stabilised and the new head of department is introducing improvements.
143. Achievement is good both in Years 7 to 9 and in Years 10 and 11. Students enter with below average standards and do well in achieving standards in line with expectations by Year 9. The current Year 10 and 11 groups are also achieving well, in relation to their prior experience, in attaining standards in line with expectations. Students with special educational needs make as much progress as their peers, helped by good individual support from teachers and support staff. Gifted and talented students also achieve well as a result of additional tasks and extra-curricular opportunities such as the regular vocal workshops for gifted and talented students.
144. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is good. In most lessons, teaching is good and sometimes very good. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. The teaching shows very good subject knowledge. Lessons are well prepared with very good use of a variety of resources including very effective use of visual stimuli and links with art. Expectations are high and the work is challenging. Marking is very good; it is detailed and keeps students well informed on ways to improve. There is very little use of ICT, which particularly affects students' composition work. Attitudes and behaviour are very good, resulting in productive working. Students work well in pairs and groups and learn well independently. Students with special educational needs are well integrated into all the activities. Time is not always used efficiently; in some lessons more activities are required. The use of homework to consolidate learning is not exploited in Years 7 to 9.

145. Leadership and management are good. A newly qualified teacher has taken over after a period of disruption due to lack of staffing continuity and has already created a positive ethos in the department. Resources are well managed and the instrumental teaching is well co-ordinated. The schemes of work are being effectively revised to give good coverage of the National Curriculum. The department makes a good contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Lack of equipment is hampering the use of ICT. The school has begun to address this problem with the provision of two computers but these are insufficient for the needs of the larger groups in Years 7 to 9. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. GCSE results have improved and teaching is more consistently good with no unsatisfactory teaching.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is highly effective leadership and management of the department.
- The department has a very influential role in helping and supporting local schools through the sports partnership scheme.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge, expertise, and enthusiasm.
- Very good teaching and learning lead to very high levels of achievement.
- The quality of extra-curricular physical activities and games is outstanding.
- In all areas of the curriculum a focus on physical activities and sport helps to engage students in learning.
- The effective use of ICT helps students to analyse and document their work.
- There are highly effective strategies for the recruitment and retention of specialist teachers.

Commentary

146. On entry, students' attainment is below the national expectation, and their experiences of physical activities and games are very varied. The school's involvement in the sports partnership scheme is proving very influential in raising the expertise and confidence of teachers in the partnership schools, and in consequence, improving the achievements of their students. Throughout their time in the school, students develop the understanding, skills, techniques, and strategies that enable them to participate in a range of physical activities and games. They make significant progress in all areas and achievement overall is excellent.

147. In response to the high quality teaching from knowledgeable and enthusiastic specialist staff, and to the focus on physical activities and games throughout the school, the standards of attainment for Year 9 students in 2004 were well above average. The 2004 GCSE results were above the national average for all schools, and were well above those of similar schools. These results are a reflection of the measures introduced by the department following an in depth review and analysis of students' progress. Standards of attainment for those students who are not studying for GCSE are good overall and their level of achievement is very good. There is an emphasis on providing some individual choice of activities for students in Year 11 with

the intention that they may retain an interest and continue to participate after they have left the school. In a few activities, there is insufficient teaching of the skills that would allow the students to perform to a high standard. A number of students in all years have developed well above average skills, as evidenced by the success of individual students at local, regional, and national level, and by those who play for successful school teams.

148. The quality of teaching ranged from good to excellent and was very good overall. Learning is also very good. Teachers provide interesting and challenging lessons, develop very positive relationships with the students, and have high expectations of the students' work and behaviour. Activities are planned very effectively in order that students improve their performance by building logically on previously learned skills and strategies. Students enjoy the subject and participation rates are high. The expertise of the teachers and specialist coaches working in the school provides very well informed and specialised teaching. A strong feature of most lessons is the emphasis on students becoming independent learners and developing leadership skills as shown by the number of Year 11 students gaining the Junior Sports Leader Award (JSLA).
149. ICT is used to very good effect. Students analyse their performance and adjust their technique accordingly by observing themselves in action. In a badminton lesson for Year 9, students made significant progress by this means. In many lessons, video clips show the students examples of good practice so that they know what is expected. Assessment procedures are effective providing students with the information they need to improve their performance.
150. In most areas of the curriculum the school's specialist sports' status is having a strong impact. The physical education staff have supported other subject departments in developing a range of activities linked to physical activities and games that help to interest and motivate students. For example, a project examining the development and progress of a professional basketball club had links to mathematics, English, and business studies.
151. Leadership and management of the department are excellent. The procedures for planning, organising, and documenting activities within the department are of a very high calibre. All staff work very closely together in organising and managing the tasks necessary for the smooth running of the department. Improvements to the subject are meticulously identified, targeted, and addressed through the department's action plan and the school's improvement plan. All teachers in the department have very clear roles and responsibilities. Opportunities for their professional development are very good and they are well supported by the director for physical education and sport and by the subject leader. The initial teacher training status of the school and its very strong links with higher education establishments not only provides the school with additional support in some lessons but also provides opportunities for the school to identify potential high quality teachers for any vacant posts. Staff give freely of their time, both at lunchtime and after school, to provide an extensive range of physical activities and games where students can further develop their interests and expertise. Visits to places of sporting interest, both in this country and abroad, have a significant impact on students' progress and achievement. All these activities reflect the very high commitment teachers make to the students and the department.

152. The school makes excellent use of its specialist sports status to help to improve and maintain interest and participation in physical activities and games, both in the school itself and in the local and wider community. The collaborative work with local primary and secondary schools in sharing expertise through a programme of demonstration lessons is highly valued by all participants. Improvement since the last inspection is excellent.

BUSINESS AND OTHER VOCATIONAL COURSES

Business education was sampled. One very well prepared Year 11 lesson was observed. The teacher's expert use of ICT, and the positive attitude of the students, ensured that they made good progress in understanding the impact of the European Union on business. Students with a wide range of ability were supported well with patient and constructive encouragement. Teaching and learning were good.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) was sampled in Years 9, 10 and 11. Four lessons were seen.

153. In Year 9, a well-planned activity led to relevant discussion and increased students' understanding of the link between salaries and level of education. Salary was also linked to market forces via a sporting example which captured students' attention (left backs can currently command enhanced financial rewards). There was a real "buzz" and a very good contribution to numeracy. Teaching was very good.
154. In Year 10, good teaching involved all students in an exploration of how to avoid drug use. There was an effective and well-managed role-play with a group containing students who were potentially disruptive.
155. In Year 11, two lessons were seen covering bedsit survival and living away from home. Teaching was satisfactory in one and good in the other. In one lesson, students made good gains in their knowledge of the practical workings of the taxation system – material that was very demanding but that was made accessible by the teaching. In the other lesson, the subject content was pitched rather high for students' understanding and some chat and noise resulted at times. Despite this, all students managed to construct a household budget successfully and learnt what a direct debit was.

Citizenship

Provision in citizenship is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good opportunities are provided in the curriculum and enhancement activities for students to improve their citizenship knowledge and understanding.
- A good scheme of work supports teaching and learning.
- There is no monitoring of teaching to ensure standards are raised.

- There is limited opportunity for students to record the breadth of their achievements.

Commentary

156. The school provides a wide range of experiences in the taught curriculum and throughout the school for students to improve their knowledge and understanding of citizenship. Standards in written work seen in Years 7 to 9 are broadly in line with expectations and achievement is satisfactory. Standards in Years 10 and 11 remain in line with expectations. Year 10 and 11 students are confident working both independently and collaboratively and this supports their learning. Opportunities for active citizenship are extensive and make a significant contribution to achievement being good in Years 10 and 11. Students of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs, are participating, and taking responsible action both in school and through participation in community activities.
157. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Topics are covered in depth and a range of different teaching approaches is used to provide stimulus and interest. Good teaching materials are used to support learning. Participation in activities which extend students' knowledge and understanding of citizenship is well promoted by the school. There are many opportunities to assume responsibility, and be involved in wider community activities, which ensure that the subject makes a good contribution to the students' moral, social and cultural development. The students' citizenship folders, however, are not recording the full extent of their involvement and achievement in citizenship activities. Homework is not being used to reinforce learning.
158. Leadership and management are good. The subject is well led by a specialist and there is a clear vision for its future. Rapid progress has been made in developing the subject, although some work remains to be done. A good scheme of work supports teaching and covers the National Curriculum requirements. Assessment, recording and reporting arrangements are in place. Current strengths and weaknesses have been identified in the departmental plan and are being addressed. Currently, monitoring of teaching and learning is not fully in place to ensure that the citizenship learning outcomes are being met. Training and support for teachers who have little experience or expertise in teaching the subject have not been provided. Citizenship was not included in the last inspection.

Work-related learning

159. Work-related learning (WRL) was sampled. It is a very effective feature of the curriculum, and has a very strong positive effect on students' achievement and readiness for work. Statutory requirements are met. Key strengths are:
- There are good procedures for enabling students to benefit from their work experience.
 - The excellent Prince's Trust course in Years 10 and 11 provides a rich alternative curriculum that includes work-related experiences.
 - In Year 11, students can participate in a construction course at a local college for one day per week.
 - Work-related learning is very well managed and is being continuously improved.

160. The school provides a carefully co-ordinated series of work-related activities. In Year 8, students play a simulation game, and they follow this in Year 9 with participation in a business challenge to enter a stand for the school's summer fund raising event. This involves questions of marketing, costing and product evaluation. This year's winners made high quality ceramics in their own time, which they will sell at a profit, to be shared with the school.
161. In Year 10, a day is devoted to shadowing someone at their place of work, usually a relative or a family friend. This acts as a forerunner to Year 11, when work experience is provided in collaboration with a local business partnership. The partnership augments the opportunities provided by the school and assesses health and safety practices at the placements. Before students attend their work experience they are well briefed and fully understand what is expected of them. Afterwards, debriefing of students is used to pull together their experiences of the world of work and draw conclusions. This is good practice.
162. There are also alternative curriculum opportunities for selected groups of students. These include the Prince's Trust course which is the example of outstanding learning in the teaching and learning section of this report. Some Year 11 students attend an extended college placement in construction. Because the funding arrived late, this year's construction course is not well integrated into the timetable, but from next year, three courses will be on offer including BTec and GNVQ. These are already included in the planning. The current course is designed for students who are unlikely to be able to cope with the full range of GCSE subjects and who have an interest in practical work. Course participants are chosen carefully by senior managers, and very close liaison with the college ensures that there is good progress and challenge.

SUBJECTS AND COURSES IN THE SIXTH FORM

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

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

Level 3 GCE AS level courses

| Subject | Number entered | % gaining grades A-E | | % gaining grades A-B | | Average point score | |
|---------|----------------|----------------------|---------|----------------------|---------|---------------------|---------|
| | | School | England | School | England | School | England |
| Biology | 4 | 25 | 63.5 | 0 | 10.4 | 5 | 19.8 |

Note: AS results listed here are those "cached in" and may differ from those referred to in subject paragraphs, where inspectors take account of the full range of AS results. It is the school's policy that no results are cached in at the end of one year's study.

Level 3 GCE A level and VCE courses

| Subject | Number entered | % gaining grades A-E | | % gaining grades A-B | | Average point score | |
|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------------|---------|----------------------|---------|---------------------|---------|
| | | School | England | School | England | School | England |
| Art and design | 2 | 50 | 98.3 | 50 | 50.2 | 50 | 87.1 |
| Biology | 5 | 80 | 96.6 | 0 | 40 | 56 | 79.3 |
| Film studies | 7 | 100 | 99.2 | 42.9 | 40.4 | 85.7 | 83.5 |
| English literature | 9 | 100 | 99.4 | 22.2 | 44.9 | 75.6 | 85.5 |
| Geography | 4 | 100 | 98.8 | 50 | 46.4 | 95 | 85.2 |
| History | 10 | 80 | 99 | 10 | 45.6 | 50 | 85.1 |
| Mathematics | 3 | 100 | 96.8 | 66.7 | 56.6 | 80 | 89.5 |
| Other social studies | 9 | 77.8 | 97.4 | 22.2 | 42.5 | 53.3 | 81.6 |
| Religious studies | 5 | 80 | 99.1 | 0 | 49.5 | 48 | 87.4 |
| Sports studies | 10 | 100 | 97.8 | 10 | 30.9 | 60 | 75.4 |
| Business AVCE | 15 | 93 | 91.6 | 13.3 | 24.1 | 64 | 67.9 |
| ICT AVCE | 29 | 93.1 | 88.3 | 59 | 26.9 | 90 | 67.8 |
| Leisure and recreation AVCE | 6 | 83 | 90.7 | 0 | 18.3 | 40 | 64.6 |

ENGLISH, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION

The focus in this curriculum area was on English. No provision is made on-site for modern foreign languages post-16, but students can do French or German A level in conjunction with a local specialist language college.

English

Provision in English is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching leads to students' evident progress and to good achievement over time on a demanding course.
- Approaches to planning for teaching and the curriculum take effective account of students' interests and aptitudes.
- Assessment is used well to indicate students' current standards and what they need to do to improve.
- Teaching methods that optimise students' involvement in learning are not used in all lessons.

Commentary

163. Results in GCE A2 level literature examinations in 2004 were below average but a significant improvement on the previous year. Students achieve well because the majority of them do better than might be predicted from their prior attainment.
164. The inspection confirmed this positive picture. Current work is in line with expectations. Students are co-operative, motivated, and make good contributions to lessons. For example, comments in a lesson on film versions of *Hamlet*, were focused, perceptive and indicative of keen involvement. Although a number of students need help to use critical terminology with confidence, their good attitude and willingness to tackle demanding texts and ideas stand them in good stead and lead to demonstrable progress. This is clear in the development in their writing. From uncertain beginnings, by Year 13 (as in commentaries on the portraits in Chaucer's *Prologue*) students are able to produce well-organised pieces to show secure appreciation of context, the writer's intention, and the effects achieved.
165. This successful learning results from very good teaching. Teachers know their subject and their students well. Expectations are high, but close attention is paid to making the challenges of the course manageable. There is much well planned group work to foster independent and collaborative learning, and students are encouraged to be creative as well as critical. For example, discussion of a variety of paintings of Ophelia in one lesson was followed by a requirement to construct a poem in response to what had been seen. Imaginative teaching of a high order led to writing of quality and insight. No lessons were observed where the quality of teaching was other than good, but where approaches required more listening than active involvement, students made less immediate and evident progress.
166. The approach to assessment in the department gives significant support to students' developing abilities. Marking is regular, detailed, and indicates clearly what steps to

take to improve. Similarly, in lessons, teachers make constant reference to the assessment objectives to be met in particular elements of the course so that students know what they need to do and why.

167. Leadership and management are very good. Teachers are deployed according to their strengths, and students are thereby offered a curriculum that engages and matches their interests and aptitudes. Students are also provided with a rich extra-curricular programme (theatre trips, visits from authors and creative writing competitions) that enhances their experience of English. Not surprisingly, the subject is increasingly popular. Results are improving, students achieve well and teaching is of high quality. Improvement since the last inspection has therefore been good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

168. Provision for the development of students' literacy is good. Key skills are addressed through schemes of work at AS and A2 level. Where students enter the sixth form with attainment below grade C at GCSE English, a discrete level 2 Key Skills course is offered to ensure that they are not disadvantaged in their courses of study. During the inspection, teachers were seen to pay good attention to improving the quality of discussion, note taking and presentation in all subjects. As a result, standards of literacy in the sixth form are raised to meet national expectations despite below average standards on entry. Students generally have sufficient levels of competence for them to learn effectively in the subjects they are studying. However, there are weaknesses in students' higher order literacy skills in psychology which prevent them reaching the highest levels of attainment.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students are achieving in line with predictions on a demanding A-level course.
- The match of the curriculum to the needs of the students is good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Students apply themselves very well to their study of mathematics.
- Students are relatively weak in their understanding of proof and in the application of algebra.

Commentary

169. The GCE A level results in 2004 were well below the national average, but a very small number of students was involved, which makes comparisons unreliable. However, the students who completed the GCE A level course mostly gained results in line with those expected, given their prior attainment. The work of students seen during the inspection is below the GCE A level course expectation. Students in Year 13 are developing an understanding of vector algebra, but experiencing some difficulty in following the proof of theorems. They are relatively weak in algebraic methods. Students in Year 12 have established a sound understanding of basic co-ordinate geometry and readily apply this to more complex problems. They are establishing an understanding of the theory of networks. Students, including those with special and additional educational needs, are

achieving to a satisfactory level, given their prior attainment. They are making good progress in core mathematics and satisfactory progress in decision mathematics.

170. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and apply this well. Lessons are well planned and structured to provide a good pace of learning, engaging students through good questioning. They adapt their approach to working with small groups of students. They provide good individual support for students including those with special educational needs. The textbooks are well matched to the demands of the courses and the needs of students. Teachers are increasingly making good use of ICT including interactive whiteboards to enliven and focus teaching. However, students are not yet making sufficient use of ICT in their own work, particularly in core mathematics, for example, in work on graphs and functions. Students' own notes of theory and method are not sufficiently clear or well organised to support their revision and extended learning. Students are regularly tested so that teachers are able to monitor their progress accurately.
171. The leadership and management are very good. There is particularly good analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the students and teaching and courses are adapted to meet their needs. Teachers work well together to improve the quality of teaching available to the students. GCE A-level mathematics has been introduced to the school since the last inspection and good progress has been made in establishing the quality of teaching in the subject.

Mathematics across the curriculum

172. In other subjects in the sixth form, students are able to make effective use of their mathematical skills. They have well developed skills in numeracy and graphicacy and apply these well. In geography, students apply their understanding of statistical analysis particularly well to their research projects.

SCIENCE

The inspection focus in this curriculum area was on human biology.

Human biology

Provision in human biology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students of all aptitudes and interests are taught to a good standard.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good and is supported by good subject knowledge.
- Teachers know their students very well, have high expectations of them and provide good quality individualised support.
- All elements of the human biology course are taught with enthusiasm and skill.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT to process and analyse data.

Commentary

173. In 2004, students taking the GCE AS examination achieved grades that were below average, although small numbers may make the comparison unreliable. The same is true in the GCE A2 results where no students gained a higher A/B grade and the proportion gaining A to E grades was below average. There has been a significant increase in the number of post-16 students studying this subject, and there are ten in the current Year 12 group. Currently many of them are working to standards that will realise pass grades within the C to E range, similar to the below average results in previous years.
174. The achievement of students in Year 12 is good. Students of all aptitudes and interests are very well supported as individuals. The coursework and practical experiences are sufficiently challenging and thought provoking to provide a good quality experience for the higher attaining students. The students' written work shows that they have a satisfactory command of all the elements of the course. Students achieve a satisfactory standard in their practical work. They show confidence in using the microscope and other advanced equipment for monitoring and analysis. They can interpret data from observations and show an appropriate understanding of the accuracy and relevance of the data gathered. There are currently no students in Year 13.
175. The quality of teaching is always good. Teachers are good role models and have high expectations of students. They have a very good command of the subject and consequently inspire the students to work with interest and diligence. They work independently when required to, for example, in undertaking research in connection with their work. Scientific language is used appropriately and well. The students are always willing to be involved in discussions but they are less inclined to discuss challenging concepts and to think beyond the immediate course requirements.
176. Curriculum leadership and management are good, and there has been good improvement since the last inspection. The course is well planned and there is a good scheme of work. Course planning and teaching are of good quality. This ensures that students with different needs and abilities are fully included and engaged in the course. Their work is assessed regularly so the students can monitor their progress towards their targets. However, ICT is not used fully to enhance the students' understanding and interpretation of data or to monitor experiments by direct sampling through sensors.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- AVCE results for 2004 were well above national average.
- Students' current achievement is very good.
- The teaching is always at least good and is very good overall.
- Relationships between teachers and students are often excellent.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- Provision for ICT across the curriculum is good.

Commentary

177. ICT Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education (AVCE) results for 2004 were well above the national average, with half of the students entered gaining the higher A/B grades and nearly all gaining grades A to E. These standards represented a substantial improvement from the previous year's results.
178. Achievement in lessons and in work seen during the inspection is very good. Students demonstrate high levels of concentration and effort, are organised in their approach to study, take pride in their work, and are developing well in their capacity to work independently. As a result, they make very good progress in their development of knowledge, skills and understanding. Current work is above expectations. In both Years 12 and 13 technical skills in designing multimedia presentations, manipulating images, text, sound, and video are impressive. Completed portfolios on advanced graphics work from Year 13 students showed excellent achievement.
179. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Stimulating and enthusiastic teaching takes place, based upon expert subject knowledge, using well-designed schemes of work and challenging practical tasks. Questioning of students is highly effective, and the pace of work is well matched to their needs. A range of teaching techniques is employed, demonstrating awareness of differing learning styles, and work is reinforced and consolidated very effectively. Regular and thorough assessment and monitoring of progress ensure that students are well informed about their progress and know what they need to do to improve. Relationships between staff and students are good humoured, purposeful and often excellent. Students work with confidence and enjoyment, expressing very positive views about their courses. Their capacity for independent learning is very well developed.
180. Leadership and management are very good. The head of subject provides clear vision and leads the teaching team very effectively, sharing his expertise and encouraging the adoption of effective strategies for high quality teaching and learning. The teachers work well as a cohesive team in which there is increasing consistency and continuity of practice. This has had a significant impact in raising standards quickly over the past two years. The department's policies, schemes of work and other documentation are of high quality and very effective in the support they provide for planning teaching and learning.
181. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection. The vocational AVCE ICT course has been introduced with considerable success. Major investment has been made in ICT facilities, which has resulted in increased access for all sixth formers, including those on AVCE courses.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

182. Provision for ICT across the curriculum is good. The developing use of specialist software by the PE department, to analyse video frames of students' performance in order to improve the effectiveness of coaching and self-assessment, is outstanding. In other subjects, for example science and mathematics, good progress has been made in using ICT to support teaching and learning, although there is insufficient use of ICT to analyse data in science. As in Years 10 and 11, provision of staff training and increased access to facilities will be needed as subject application of ICT continues to develop.

HUMANITIES

The focus in this curriculum area was on psychology. However, work was also sampled in geography, history and law.

183. The Year 12 **geography** group was investigating the causes and consequences of flooding in both more and less economically developed countries. They were using the examination mark scheme to evaluate their own ability to gain the maximum marks for each aspect of the investigation. The teaching and learning were outstanding: teaching provided challenge and pace to the learning and structure to the task so that all students achieved very highly. In the Year 13 **history** lesson sampled, skilful teaching targeted the precise areas of weakness in students' understanding. As a result there was good learning for all five students. The focus of the Year 12 **law** lesson was to write a court report in no more than 200 words. The very good teaching enabled students to be involved in an in depth discussion that required them to draw on previous learning and their experiences of visits to a magistrate's court and The Central Criminal Court. Learning was of a high order and the outcome demonstrated that all students had achieved well.

Psychology

Provision in psychology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In recent years most students have either achieved or exceeded their target grade at GCE A level.
- Consistently good teaching and learning enable students to achieve well.
- Good quality resources and a range of media support learning.
- Current levels of literacy do not always enable students to read with understanding, or to develop higher order writing skills to analyse, evaluate and report on empirical studies.

Commentary

184. Attainment on entry to the course varies: most students have modest GCSE results, but a high commitment to the subject. Standards are variable, with no discrete national comparators. Although student performance varies at GCE AS level, results at GCE A-level show that most of them either achieve or exceed their target grade. Standards of work seen during the inspection were below national expectations, but represented good achievement.

185. Students quickly develop an understanding of psychological theory, practice and empirical method as well as good skills of analysis of the findings of research studies. All learn how to use references to research studies in their responses in an essay or assignment but some find higher order writing and analytical skills more difficult to acquire. Levels of knowledge, understanding and skills develop at variable rates, with higher attaining students showing evidence of significant progress by the end of their first term in Year 12. Some Year 13 students show real flair, especially through their insights into complex issues.

186. Most students have very good attitudes to learning, enjoy being challenged and expect to be active participants in the learning. They have very profitable and harmonious relationships with teachers and peers. They work well together in small groups or pairs.
187. Students' achievement is good and is supported by consistently good quality teaching and significant involvement in the learning. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and a range of resources and media supports learning. Questions are well used by students: to acquire knowledge; clarify information; share hypotheses; and to challenge both teacher and peers. Learning often proceeds at a good pace. When it slows in order to, for example, explore a key concept, some find it difficult to maintain their level of concentration, re-engage and consolidate their understanding of the topic. This rarely occurs, however, when case studies and other devices are used to illustrate complex ideas and concepts.
188. Work is regularly marked and comments provide guidance about what the students need to do to improve their work. Some assignments require a more detailed assessment, especially when students are learning about how to produce work that answers the examiner's question and takes account of the subject specification's assessment objectives.
189. Leadership and management are good. The course is well documented and learning outcomes are analysed in detail to inform curriculum and lesson planning as well as to enable systematic tracking and monitoring of the progress of individual students. This subject was not part of the curriculum at the time of the last inspection.

ENGINEERING, TECHNOLOGY AND MANUFACTURING

There was no detailed inspection focus in this curriculum area. However, work was sampled in the **product design** course. The Year 12 students were working on designing a practical solution to a design problem. The good teaching enabled students to consider a range of approaches to thinking about both problems and solutions. They worked confidently on their project, undertook research and considered strategies and materials for the resolution of their design problem. Some produced elegant solutions by modelling. Learning was good and all achieved well.

VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS AND MEDIA

There was no detailed inspection focus in this area. Work was sampled, however, in art, film studies and also in photography.

190. In a Year 12 **art** lesson students worked industriously throughout. As a result of very good individual tuition, all students were able to make good progress in their "portrait as identity" project. This very good teaching and learning enabled them all to achieve highly. In a Year 12 **film studies** lesson, students were analysing the genre commonly called "chick flicks" and considering the portrayal of women in film. Some interesting film clips were used to explore the theory and roused good discussion in considering "the male gaze" dimension of the genre. The teaching and learning were of good quality and enabled students to achieve well. In the Year 12 GCSE **photography** class that was observed, students were evaluating their own and

others' work. They evaluated darkroom tasks or the effectiveness of a digital camera. Reports were detailed and well presented against given criteria. Teaching and learning were very good and enabled all students to achieve highly.

HOSPITALITY, SPORTS, LEISURE AND TRAVEL

The detailed inspection focus in this curriculum area was on the sports studies course. The sixth form games afternoon was also observed, as well as work by students on the Community Sports Leader Award (CSLA) course. An AVCE course in leisure and recreation is also offered, but was not observed.

Physical education

Provision in physical education is **excellent**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The excellent leadership and management of the subject involves meticulous planning, very effective teamwork and high expectations of students.
- Teachers make expert use of ICT to deliver stimulating and very well structured lessons.
- Very good teaching and students' positive and productive approach to their studies ensure that they achieve very well.
- CSLA students make an outstanding contribution to the community and the work of the department.

Commentary

191. The school provides a wide range of sports activities in the sixth form, including GCE Sports Studies. As a level 3 course, this makes high demands on the students taking it, the majority of whom have modest GCSE results. However, very good teaching, the setting of high expectations of performance, and excellent relationships between students and teachers ensure that students achieve very well, gaining grades higher than their GCSE results would predict. In 2004, of the ten students who took the A level, all passed, including one with an A grade. This was below the national average but represents very good achievement for these students. Current students are attaining standards in line with expectations, and are achieving highly.
192. Lessons are prepared thoroughly and make excellent and expert use of a range of computer software and equipment. Particularly effective use is made of time-delay video filming to analyse and improve students' performance. In a very good Year 12 lesson, students demonstrated very good presentation skills and were able to detail a range of relevant issues on the Olympic Games, including racism, terrorism and political influences. In a similarly very well prepared and structured lesson, students gained a very good understanding of how public school education and the Oxbridge universities shaped the development of sport in the nineteenth century. The majority of students are very competent users of ICT, particularly when designing and delivering computer based presentations. There are some weaknesses in the presentation of written work, however, and feedback on written work is not sufficiently

thorough. It does not as a consequence clearly explain how students can further improve this aspect of their work.

193. The work undertaken by students doing the CSLA is outstanding. They have forged links and visited a school in Thailand to participate in and share sporting and coaching experiences. The group was observed leading a range of sports for disabled students from a partner college. In this excellent session, students worked collaboratively and with an outstanding degree of patience, skill and enthusiasm which was much appreciated by all the visiting students. The CSLA students gave very clear explanations and demonstrations, and made excellent use of praise and encouragement. All the visiting students were enabled to participate fully in the session, and the work with visually impaired students particularly was of a very high order.
194. Unusually, all sixth form students take part in a games afternoon. The provision of sports teams and clubs is very good and is expanding with the introduction of rugby into the sixth form. A range of timetabled activities is available and these are enthusiastically taken up by the majority of students. In the afternoon session observed, some students were doing trampolining, using sophisticated ICT software to analyse and improve their performance. Others were playing table tennis, or participating in football or rugby matches against other schools.
195. As in the main school, the leadership and management are excellent, with a clear vision focused on improving attainment and achievement for all students. Staff work effectively as a team, sharing good practice and spreading expertise, especially in the use of ICT as an aid to teaching. The performance of students is monitored and evaluated thoroughly and students appreciate the access to staff to discuss their progress. Despite students achieving very well on the A level course, this level 3 course does not suit all of them and a different one, perhaps including a level 2 course, would be more suitable for some, and act as an introduction to further study. There has been good progress since the last inspection.

BUSINESS

The detailed inspection focus in this curriculum area was on business studies.

Business studies

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Students' achievement is very good as a result of consistently effective, very well planned teaching.
- Students have a very positive attitude to the subject, relationships are excellent and students work productively and co-operatively in lessons.
- The subject is led and managed very effectively by an enthusiastic subject specialist.
- Students have very well developed computer skills.
- Planning for the new Level 3 course is underdeveloped.

Commentary

196. Sixth form students currently study either the single or double award AVCE business course. For the students who took the double award course in 2004, results were in line with the average. This represents very good achievement as, with one exception, all of those entered in 2004 gained at least a grade higher than predicted. Current work is also in line with expectations. All of the students benefit from carefully prepared assignments and structured tasks as well as expert guidance on accessing the assessment criteria, particularly for the portfolio units. As a consequence students often do extremely well in these assignments.
197. Teaching and learning are very good with very well prepared and structured lessons and with very clearly specified learning outcomes. The two specialists teach their lessons enthusiastically and authoritatively. As a consequence, students develop a good knowledge of business terminology and practices, for example in using primary research to analyse marketing opportunities, and they generally make very good progress. This was evident in a very good Year 13 lesson on recruitment procedures, where students were able to research and evaluate a range of forms and procedures. Similarly in a very good Year 12 lesson, students built on their knowledge of motivation theories to design incentive packages for salesmen. All students of business education demonstrate excellent computer skills and are able to produce very quickly electronic presentations that they share with the class. Occasionally, teaching is too teacher-centred and the contributions of students are not sufficiently used to check what students now know and understand about the topic.
198. Students have a very positive attitude, work productively and co-operatively in lessons and appreciate the very good access that they have to their teachers. They have very good research skills and use the Internet expertly to extract relevant information, for example on employment trends in Kent and in the United Kingdom. The department has made very good use of the school's sports college status with some highly relevant and simulating activities; this includes a visit to the London Towers basketball venue, where they interview staff and analyse business and management structures. The department regularly organises relevant business trips, for example to the BBC, and welcomes members of local businesses to the school to provide some practical input to students' learning.
199. Business studies is very well led and managed and the two teachers delivering the subject work effectively as a team, sharing good practice and monitoring and evaluating students' progress across all the units. Departmental and individual performance are analysed and used to inform curriculum development. For example, the department is now planning to offer the BTec National as an alternative to the AVCE course, as this will meet students' needs and aspirations more effectively. However, planning is currently insufficiently detailed to ensure a smooth introduction in September 2005. Business is taught in two purpose-built classrooms, which are more appropriate for sixth form groups, especially as there is access to a dedicated suite of computers in each room. The subject was not reported on in the last inspection.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AND GENERAL PROGRAMMES

No provision was sampled in this area, as timetabled sessions fell outside the inspection.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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

