

The Peele Community College

Inspection report

Unique reference number	120645
Local authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	380081
Inspection dates	11–12 January 2012
Lead inspector	Martin Cragg HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Modern (non-selective)
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	674
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Grooms
Headteacher	Ian Charles
Date of previous school inspection	14 January 2009
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Age group	11–16
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Introduction

Inspection team

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Her Majesty's Inspector

Deborah Vaughan-Jenkins

Her Majesty's Inspector

Lynn Lowery

Additional inspector

Kathleen Yates

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed 29 lessons, including four joint observations with members of the senior team, taught by 29 teachers. They also made short visits to a further 38 lessons, spending a total of 18.5 hours observing learning. Inspectors met with senior leaders, four groups of students, governors and staff. They observed the college's work, and looked at its improvement plan, data on students' progress, minutes of the governing body and records of students' attendance, behaviour referrals, exclusions and records of any bullying. They reviewed responses to questionnaires from 225 parents and carers, 136 students and 55 staff.

Information about the school

The college is smaller than average. It is a non-selective school in an area where around 30% of students attend grammar schools. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. Most students are White British but around 3% speak English as an additional language. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The college exceeds the current government floor standard measures, which set the minimum expectation for attainment and progress.

The college specialises in science and was awarded 'most improved' status by the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust for its 2010 results. It has achieved Healthy Schools status and the International Schools Silver award.

Childcare and out-of-school care are provided on the site, managed by a private provider.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness	3
Achievement of pupils	3
Quality of teaching	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils	3
Leadership and management	3

Key findings

- This is a satisfactory school. It has improved steadily over the last three years. Most of the 225 parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire are positive about the college and feel that their child is kept safe and makes good progress. The attainment of Year 11 students has improved and is in line with the national average, including for English and mathematics. Students make at least satisfactory progress from their starting points, and some groups make good progress.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall and an increasing amount is good. The college has worked hard to recruit specialist teachers and to provide good quality training to help teachers improve their use of modern technology, assessment of students and management of behaviour. However, these developments are not consistently effective in all lessons.
- Most students behave well and inspectors noted good behaviour around the college. In a few lessons, a minority of students did not concentrate and learning slowed because teaching lacked clear objectives and pace. Students are courteous and most respect each other. A review of the college's detailed records of any bullying and conversations with students indicate that almost all students feel safe and effective systems are in place to deal with any concerns.
- Senior staff and the governing body set a clear vision for the college based on improving teaching and students' achievement. They review performance thoroughly and know the college's strengths and areas for development. Increasingly, senior and middle leaders take full responsibility for driving specific improvements but their experience, skills and effectiveness still vary too much as seen in the wide range of outcomes across subjects. The college has developed the curriculum well to meet students' needs and increasingly uses its specialism in science in effective links with primary schools.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring

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visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise students' attainment and achievement by:
 - reducing the variation in performance between subjects by improving results in science, design technology and the arts
 - ensuring that teachers implement consistently the strategies for improving students' literacy skills across the curriculum
 - challenging more students to achieve the highest GCSE grades.
- Increase the proportion of teaching which is good to over 75% by ensuring that all teachers:
 - match work carefully to students' differing needs so that they are challenged at the right level
 - use questions effectively to consolidate students' understanding and develop their ideas
 - provide students with clear and helpful guidance on how to improve their work
 - use the college's behaviour management procedures consistently to maximise students' concentration and learning.
- Ensure that all leaders, including middle leaders, have the skills to identify relevant priorities, set challenging targets and drive improvements.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

The college's results in Year 11 have improved steadily so that they are in line with the average nationally. Three quarters of Year 11 achieved five GCSE grades A* to C in 2011 and over half achieved this with English and mathematics though fewer than average achieved grades A* and A. However, performance in subjects such as science, design technology and arts is not as strong. Students enter the college with attainment which is below average and make satisfactory progress by the end of Year 11. Several groups make better progress because the curriculum is carefully matched to their needs and they receive effective additional support. This includes those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are eligible for free school meals. The small number of students who speak English as an additional language make very good progress.

In lessons, most students settle to work promptly and enjoy practical tasks which require them to apply their knowledge and skills, for example, using sketches and graphs to practise using Pythagoras's theorem. They work together well, for example, organising tasks in groups to prepare an experiment exploring chemical reactions. Most parents and carers felt that their children make good progress.

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Inspectors found that progress was satisfactory over time but good in just over half the lessons observed.

The college recognises that literacy skills are weak for an increasing number of Year 7 students. Staff have introduced a specific literacy programme for these students and a literacy strategy across other subjects. Both show some impact on students' achievement. However, not all teachers routinely identify common spelling, punctuation or grammatical errors in students' work and help them to correct them. In English and mathematics lessons, students are aware of the need to practise and develop their basic skills but this is more variable across other subjects.

Quality of teaching

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and improving. There is a comprehensive programme of training, coaching and support to help teachers improve their skills, especially to secure good progress for students. Over half of teaching is now good and very little is inadequate. However, despite the support provided, not all teachers use the college's procedures and recommended approaches consistently.

Most teachers plan lessons well with clear objectives and support students' spiritual, moral social and cultural development well. They have good subject knowledge and introduce concepts clearly. They ensure through the curriculum that students receive a broad and balanced programme. Teachers often set specific expectations for students of differing abilities but the ensuing work is not necessarily matched closely enough to their current attainment, resulting in all students doing the same level of task.

In the best lessons, teachers engage students through lively presentations or challenging problems, broadening their understanding of social and cultural issues. For example, in English, students viewed two short, contrasting film clips which immediately prompted discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the speakers' presentation skills. Teachers show students how to apply their knowledge, as in an art lesson where students observed the teacher recreate a famous art work in the specific style they were studying. They use questions to assess their understanding and give them responsibility for organising their learning.

Most parents and carers felt that their children were taught well but some commented on particular subjects where they felt provision and progress were not as good. Inspectors found some variation. Although almost all lessons were satisfactory, some teachers missed opportunities to challenge students sufficiently. They did not follow up questions to establish exactly what students knew or to develop their thinking further. Therefore, they misjudged the pace of the lesson, allowing learning to slow. As a result, some students lost concentration. In these cases, although most teachers used the college's behaviour policy effectively, some did not issue the appropriate warnings and sanctions.

Teachers mark students work regularly and, in the best examples, provide them with

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clear guidance on how to improve their work, often linked to achieving a particular level or grade. However, some teachers focus more on effort and presentation than on practical advice on improvement. This is also the case with basic skills and reflects the early stages of the introduction of a new literacy strategy in the college.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

In questionnaires, 91% of students said that they felt safe and this was endorsed by 95% of the 225 parents and carers who responded. However, parents and carers were less confident about behaviour in some lessons. Inspectors made short visits to 38 lessons and also spoke to a range of students. These activities confirmed that behaviour is satisfactory overall. Inspectors saw very few occasions where lessons were affected by behaviour and these were almost always linked to the quality of teaching and inconsistent use of the college behaviour policy. Students confirmed that this was the case over time. The rate of student referrals for behaviour is declining as is the number of exclusions. Most students behave sensibly and move around the college in an orderly way.

Most students felt that the college dealt with bullying effectively but a few did not feel that incidents had been resolved. Inspectors reviewed the detailed records of recent incidents and compared these to the comments that students had made. They also spoke to a wider range of students to gauge whether these concerns were widespread. The almost unanimous response was that college staff follow up any reports and that any issues are usually resolved. The records are very comprehensive and show that the college takes any reports seriously. Students confirmed that they knew how to keep themselves safe. They enjoyed events which broaden their understanding of social and moral issues, such as the 'Crash' day staged by the emergency services and 'Prison, me, no way' which deals with the outcomes of offending.

Students' attendance has improved steadily over the last three years and is in line with the national average. Staff monitor absences closely and provide prompt notification of any concerns and effective support for families. Students whose circumstances make them vulnerable at times spoke very highly of the guidance and assistance they had received which helped them to improve their performance and their learning. The college has effective links with a wide range of services and agencies which provide good additional support to students.

Leadership and management

The college has improved in the last three years because senior staff have focused action on improving the quality of teaching and raising students' achievement. Almost all staff are now teaching subjects in which they are qualified. Regular training and coaching for teachers are targeted at developing particular skills and engaging students' interest. An increasing amount of teaching is now good or better. Students' attainment, including English and mathematics, has improved steadily so that it is now broadly average. Results in science are improving but not as strongly.

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The college promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination well, closing the gap in achievement between different groups of students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those eligible for free school meals. Students from a range of backgrounds mix well together. Their attendance has improved to be broadly average. Senior staff review performance regularly, identify accurately those areas where further improvement is necessary and carry out appropriate actions effectively. Middle leaders are increasingly accountable for performance in their areas but their experience and skills vary in effectiveness. The college has thus demonstrated that it has capacity to improve.

The curriculum is satisfactory and has some good features which engage students' interest. The Year 9 vocational programme is very popular with students and provides them with early qualifications. Early assessment of the progress of some Year 7 students in reading and literacy indicates that the programme is effective. Action to improve the quality of the curriculum in Key Stage 3, for example, in the humanities subjects and modern foreign languages, has increased the numbers choosing these subjects in Year 10. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. The college uses thematic days to focus students on particular aspects of their learning, such as safety. It also offers a range of extra-curricular activities and trips which broaden students' experience, some of which are carefully targeted at students who would benefit from improving their social skills or behaviour. Almost all students progress into education, employment or training when they leave the college.

Members of the governing body meet with senior staff regularly to review the college's performance. The governing body holds the college to account and asks challenging questions. The college meets its statutory requirements and the main procedures are in place to keep students safe. The systems for identifying and supporting students whose circumstances may put them at risk are effective. Students, parents and carers who responded to the questionnaires confirmed that the college is a safe environment.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	46	8	0
Primary schools	8	47	40	5
Secondary schools	14	38	40	8
Special schools	28	48	20	4
Pupil referral units	15	50	29	5
All schools	11	46	38	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 August 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



13 January 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of The Peele Community College, Long Sutton PE12 9LF

Thank you for the welcome you gave us when we visited your college. We enjoyed talking with you in lessons, meetings and at breaks. Thanks also to those of you who filled in a questionnaire. Your views helped us find out about the college.

The college provides you with a satisfactory education. It has improved steadily in the last three years. The attainment of Year 11 students in 2011 was in line with the national average, including English and mathematics. Students made satisfactory progress overall and some made good progress. Your attendance is now average and improving. The number of referrals for behaviour is falling although there are a few lessons where some of you do not concentrate as well as you could, often because those teachers do not challenge you enough. The curriculum is broad and you benefit from a wide range of courses which help you to choose subjects which interest you and prepare you for further study or employment. You told us in questionnaires and meetings that you generally feel safe and that most of you get on well together. Although your literacy and numeracy skills are improving, some of you still require additional help and the college has recently encouraged all teachers to focus on these skills across different subjects and in their marking of your work.

We asked the college to improve some areas of its work. These were to:

- improve your attainment and progress further by reducing variation in results between subjects and ensuring that all teachers help you with your basic skills
- provide more good teaching by matching tasks to your abilities so that you are challenged effectively, giving you clear guidance on how to improve your work and managing your behaviour more consistently
- ensure that all leaders drive improvements in teaching and achievement.

You can all help by improving the quality of your reading and writing, and ensuring that you maintain your concentration and try hard in all lessons.

We enjoyed our visit to your college and wish you success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Martin Cragg
Her Majesty's Inspector

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