

Crookhorn College of Technology

Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Unique reference number | 116428 |
| Local authority | Hampshire |
| Inspection number | 379256 |
| Inspection dates | 22–23 February 2012 |
| Lead inspector | Christine Jones HMI |

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

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|--|--|
| Type of school | Comprehensive |
| School category | Foundation |
| Age range of pupils | 11–16 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 754 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr V Petherick |
| Headteacher | Mr Grahame Sammons |
| Date of previous school inspection | 17–18 September 2008 |
| School address | Stakes Hill Road Waterlooville PO7 5UD |
| Telephone number | 02392251120 |
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Introduction

Inspection team

Christine Jones

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jenny Usher

Additional inspector

Noureddin Khassali

Additional inspector

John Collins

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed a total of 36 lessons taught by 33 teachers, of which two were joint observations with a member of the senior team. In addition, inspectors made short visits to nine lessons where students were receiving extra support and visited a number of other lessons, accompanied by a member of the senior leadership team, to focus specifically on the quality of assessment and marking. Meetings were held with groups of students, the Chair of the Governing Body and other governors as well as college staff, including senior and middle managers. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, observed the college's work, and looked at key documentation provided by the college, including improvement plans, analyses of the attainment and progress of students currently in the college, records related to the behaviour and safety of students and 198 responses to Ofsted's questionnaire for parents and carers.

Information about the school

Crookhorn College is smaller than the average-sized secondary school. It is a non-selective school, serving the local area. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is just below the national average. Most students are from White British backgrounds and the proportions of students from minority ethnic groups, or who speak English as an additional language, are small. The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is in line with the national average.

The school is a specialist technology college and meets the government's current floor standards. Crookhorn has gained the Investors in Careers and People awards and has just been awarded International School status for the second time.

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

- Crookhorn is a satisfactory school. Since the previous inspection, inconsistencies in teaching and learning contributed to underachievement by some groups of students, including girls and some disabled students and those with special educational needs. Therefore, this is no longer judged to be a good school.
- Recent concerted efforts to address these issues are succeeding, especially in the key areas of attendance and girls' performance in mathematics. The percentage of students attaining five or more A* to C GCSE grades including English and mathematics in 2011 was below the national average; this represented satisfactory progress as students' prior attainment on entry to the college was very low. Current achievement is improving as students make satisfactory and occasionally good progress.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations. They make good use of assessment to challenge and support individuals and reinforce this with good oral feedback. In other lessons, teachers talk too much and do not always use questioning well to challenge and include all students. Lesson planning takes little account of the varying needs of the learners and, because of this, some students become inattentive and restless.
- Behaviour is satisfactory overall. Students feel safe and well cared for, with few concerns regarding bullying. A third of the parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire felt that some lessons were disrupted by bad behaviour. During the inspection, there were occasional instances of students becoming distracted and misbehaving in lessons where the teaching did not engage them with their learning.
- The leadership and management of teaching and learning are satisfactory and promote satisfactory outcomes. Senior leaders have a sound understanding of the college's strengths and areas for development and support this with appropriate performance management of staff. This, combined with recent improvement strategies, is having a positive impact on students' achievement. The college acknowledges there is more work to be done to improve the consistent use of these strategies, especially among middle leaders.

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

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Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the rates of progress for all groups of students, especially girls, thereby raising achievement to good, by ensuring that all learning activities are precisely matched to the needs of students of differing levels of ability.
- Improve the quality of teaching to good so that, over time, it enables all students to achieve well and engage with their learning by ensuring that:
 - teachers enable students to develop as independent learners by planning activities that rely less heavily on large amounts of input from the teacher
 - teachers extend their use of effective questioning strategies that challenge and include all groups of students, enabling them to develop their learning and support this with good quality oral feedback.
- Enhance the effectiveness of leadership by ensuring that all leaders, particularly middle leaders, are more consistent in their monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of students' achievement and take quick action as a result to secure improvements.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Students' attainment on entry to the college has, until recently, been consistently well below average. The prior attainment of current Year 7 students is higher and more in line with that expected for their age. The percentage of students gaining five or more A* to C GCSEs including English and mathematics has varied and been below average for the last two years, although with some improvement in 2011. Achievement is satisfactory as the students last year made satisfactory progress from their very low starting points. Achievement was not better than this as girls underperformed in mathematics, and disabled students and those with special educational needs receiving specialist intervention on the 'school action' level did not do as well overall as they should have. The achievement of this particular group of students with special educational needs is now improving significantly, with the rigorous and effective focus on their individual needs currently in place. Similarly girls' performance in mathematics is improving, as shown by the outcomes of external tests already taken and in the lessons observed by inspectors. The progress seen in lessons of both girls and boys was at least satisfactory and, in some cases, good where they were making better than expected progress. Most parents and carers were happy with the progress their children make in the college.

In lessons observed during the inspection, most students displayed positive attitudes to learning, had good relationships with their peers and teachers and contributed well to collaborative work where those opportunities were given. Where the quality of learning is not as strong, this is often because students are not engaged and

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motivated by the content and activities in lessons. In addition, the work is not always matched precisely to the needs of those with different levels of ability. Disabled students and those with special educational needs make overall satisfactory progress and some individuals with specific needs make good or better progress in their personal as well as academic development. This is largely as a result of appropriate interventions and support that are carefully tailored to each student's needs. A strong emphasis on improving students' low reading skills is also having a significant impact on raising achievement and students are increasingly able to apply literacy skills in different subjects. Numeracy is less well developed and students sometimes struggle to apply their learning in mathematics to other subjects such as measuring in design and technology.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is judged to be satisfactory because, over time, students make satisfactory and not good progress when compared to all students nationally. Most students, parents and carers were satisfied with the teaching in the college. There are examples of good and outstanding teaching, with few inadequate lessons. In the best lessons visited during the inspection, learning proceeded at a fast pace with no opportunities for distraction. Expectations were high and students' attitudes and opinions challenged. For example, in a history lesson looking at attitudes to women in the 1920s, students concentrated on controversial issues for extended periods and their independent learning skills were enhanced. This lesson also made a significant contribution to students' moral and social development. In the best lessons, good curriculum planning ensures that activities are viewed by students as relevant and interesting. Teachers are able to use their good subject knowledge to pose probing questions that challenge and motivate students to explore issues in depth. Students' work is generally well marked and gives sufficient feedback on the standards they are reaching and how to improve. Strategies for tracking attainment and progress are improving as teachers make better use of this information on monitoring students' performance to plan future lessons.

Where the quality of teaching is no more than satisfactory, the features of these best lessons are not evident. Teachers dominate lessons and this limits opportunities for students to develop as independent learners. Lessons are pitched at one level and do not meet the needs of all the different abilities in the class. While teachers may have considered the ability groups in their planning, in practice it does not always happen. Often this is because teachers are not using a suitable range of questioning strategies and ensuring that all students are drawn into contributing to the lessons. Learning support assistants provide effective individual support for disabled students and those with special educational needs. However, this support is often not built on by the class teachers who do not always adapt their strategies to meet particular needs.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Around the college site, behaviour is usually good and students get on well with each

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other. Students know there is always someone they can approach if they have any concerns or worries. They are confident that, should issues arise, staff will deal with them quickly. The wider curriculum opportunities provided by the college support students in knowing how to stay safe as well as ensuring they are well informed about the risks they may face. Students have a good understanding of different types of bullying and are confident that, on the rare occasions when this happens, staff deal with it quickly and well. A few parents and carers raised concerns about individual bullying incidents in college but most were positive about the care and support their children receive.

Most students have positive attitudes to learning and behaviour in many lessons is good. There is evidence of low-level disruption in some lessons where teaching does not engage the students. This supports the opinions of the one-third of parents and carers and some students responding to questionnaires who expressed this concern. Despite this, the students interviewed during the inspection indicated that this behaviour was not a major problem in the vast majority of lessons. Attendance is improving through the rigorous way the college follows up absence. For example girls' attendance in Year 11 is currently good and their learning is improving as they now attend regularly. Students show good levels of respect for others in their community and the college environment. The college council has had a drive to reduce litter and, as a result, the site is largely litter free.

The college does not tolerate extreme behaviour and, in the few incidents where students are excluded, strenuous efforts are made to reintegrate them back into school. Some students have significant issues in their lives outside of college and receive considerable support from many staff, including the matron and counsellor.

Leadership and management

To address the decline in achievement, the senior leadership team introduced a rigorous tracking system for monitoring performance. This allows for the progress made by each individual student towards his or her targets to be carefully evaluated and appropriate intervention provided. As a result, achievement is now improving. Satisfactory capacity to continue to improve is demonstrated by the progress made by disabled students and those with special educational needs and by the current improving achievement of girls in mathematics.

A sound approach to monitoring the quality of teaching and learning gives the senior leadership team an accurate view of strengths and weaknesses in different curriculum areas. Middle leaders are developing their expertise in monitoring and evaluating the quality of education in their areas but not all have had the time to demonstrate the impact of their work on students' achievement.

College staff work hard to support their local primary schools through direct work in the schools and college events such as the very successful 'Professor Cranium' competition for Year 2 pupils. Whole-school and increasingly personalised professional development is developing teachers' skills and sharpening their focus on

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learning. Teachers' improving awareness of the progress being made by groups of students and individuals is resulting in more timely and effective interventions to remedy underachievement. Responses to Ofsted's staff questionnaire were resoundingly positive and confirmed they were proud to be a member of the college and understood what the college is trying to achieve.

The governing body is aware of the college's strengths and weaknesses and priorities for improvement. They maintain a satisfactory commitment to ensuring equal opportunities and tackling discrimination through their critical support and challenge of the college leadership team. Safeguarding procedures, particularly the required staff checks and child protection training, are robust and meet requirements. The college places a high priority on pastoral support and care of the students. Through this commitment, and supported by satisfactory curriculum planning, the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developing well. The curriculum is being carefully adapted to meet students' needs and prepare them for the next stage in their education. The success of this approach is illustrated by the fact that only a very few students do not move on from the college into education, employment or further training.

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 college 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 college'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.



24 February 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Crookhorn College of Technology, Waterlooville P07 5UD

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave to the inspection team when we visited your college recently. We enjoyed meeting you and being in your lessons. This letter is to tell you what we found.

- Crookhorn is a satisfactory college.
- Your achievement is satisfactory and you make satisfactory progress.
- Your teachers try to plan lessons that keep you interested and help you to learn, although some lessons are not suitable for all your needs.
- You tell us you feel very safe and enjoy college, attend regularly and on time.
- You feel that bullying is not a problem and, on the rare occasions where it does happen, you know what to do and that the staff will deal with the issue promptly.
- Although most of you behave well around the college, some of your lessons are disrupted by students.
- The satisfactory curriculum gives you opportunities to take interesting courses.
- The headteacher and staff are committed to making sure you are always well cared for and able to fulfil your potential.

We have asked the college to look at the following areas:

- Helping you make better progress in all your subjects by planning interesting lessons that are suitable for your needs.
- Improving teaching so that you are more independent learners, where teachers ask challenging questions that make you think and also give you good feedback during lessons.
- Making sure that subject leaders are monitoring your progress very carefully and helping you to improve quickly.

You can help in this by listening to your teachers and acting on the advice they give you and working hard in your lessons.

Yours sincerely

Christine Jones
Her Majesty's Inspector

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