

Ibstock Community College

Inspection report

Unique reference number	120242
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	379985
Inspection dates	6–7 March 2012
Lead inspector	Trevor Riddiough HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–14
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	596
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Brian Davies
Headteacher	David King
Date of previous school inspection	04 December 2008
School address	Central Avenue Ibstock LE67 6NE
Telephone number	01530 260705
Fax number	01530 265831
Email address	icc.admin@ibstockcollege.leics.sch.uk

Registered childcare provision	226219 Ibstock Community College Nursery
Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision	61
Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision	4 December 2008

Age group	11–14
Inspection date(s)	6–7 March 2012
Inspection number	379985



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Introduction

Inspection team

Trevor Riddiough

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ann Behan

Additional inspector

Wendy Roderick

Additional inspector

Peter Lawley

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. Inspectors observed 27 lessons taught by 27 teachers, of which six were joint observations with members of the senior leadership team. They also sat in on four tutor groups and two assemblies. Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders and other staff, groups of students, and members of the governing body. They observed the college's work and looked at the tracking of students' progress, performance data, students' work, whole-college and subject development plans, numerous policies, college documents, incident logs, and case studies. Provision at the day nursery was also visited. Completed questionnaires from 310 parents and carers, 100 students and 31 staff were received and analysed.

Information about the school

This college is smaller than the average-sized secondary school and mainly serves Ibstock and the surrounding rural areas. The college is part of a three phase system and works collaboratively with two upper schools in the local area. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. Most students are from White British backgrounds, and the proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is very low. The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is broadly average. The college is a designated specialist technology college. It holds a number of awards including Investors in People, Sportsmark and Healthy School Status. The college offers day care for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage. The day nursery shares its facilities with an independently run children's centre, which was inspected separately. The college also provides educational and recreational opportunities for adult learners and other members of the community.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- The college provides a good education. It offers a caring and supportive environment for students. The recently formed senior leadership team has made headway in making improvements in many aspects of the college’s work. The impact is evident in students’ above-average attainment and good progress in most subjects. The college is not outstanding because some students do not achieve the highest levels of which they are capable, particularly those of higher ability.
- Teachers’ expectations and the positive relationships in college enable most students to work hard and achieve well in most subjects. The progress of almost all disabled students and those who have special educational needs is also good. In a minority of subjects the teaching does not secure the progress that could be expected, particularly for students of higher ability. Sometimes students are not sure how to improve their work.
- Students’ good behaviour in lessons contributes to their learning and the orderly college environment. The large majority of students behave well most of the time helping to ensure that students feel safe. In most lessons they show positive attitudes to learning.
- Provision and outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage are satisfactory. These lay secure foundations for their personal development. Assessments lack the precision and accuracy needed to ensure that all children make the progress of which they are capable.
- The principal and senior leaders have worked hard to overcome instability in staffing and subject leaders have been given increased responsibility for their areas. Effective staff development activities have worked well to ensure that most teachers teach consistently good lessons. The college manages performance well and knows its strengths and areas for development, but occasionally is not rigorous enough in evaluating the impact of its actions.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Consolidate and further improve achievement by ensuring that:
 - lessons consistently challenge students of all abilities, particularly those in the high-ability band within classes
 - effective marking and feedback to students is provided consistently in all subjects so that all students know what they need to do to improve and meet their targets.
- Evaluate the strategies that are in place to bring about improvements so as to demonstrate the impact of these more clearly to staff and governors.
- Improve the achievement of children in the College Nursery by:
 - ensuring that accurate assessments of children’s achievements are used to track their progress and ensure that they reach the highest possible levels
 - ensuring that planning is more effectively focused on next steps in children’s learning and progress.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Students start in Year 7 with attainment that is just below average. By the end of Year 9, students’ attainment based on teacher assessments is above average in most subjects. The college has sustained above-average levels of attainment in mathematics and science over the past three years, but in English levels of attainment have been below average. Attainment in the college’s specialist subjects of science, mathematics and design and technology is above average.

Overall, students have made good progress over recent years in most subjects as shown by the college’s assessment and value added data. In the past, students have made less progress in English, but steps have now been taken to improve the situation and the college’s tracking system shows that students are expected to make good progress in English this year, in line with mathematics and science. Disabled students and those who have special educational needs generally make good progress because of the close tracking of their progress and the associated support designed precisely to meet their needs. Almost all groups of students make similarly good progress. Last year, assessments showed that higher ability students in some subjects did not reach the levels that could be expected of them, notably in English. Current tracking data and other inspection findings show that this gap is now closing.

The improvements that have been made are largely the result of the better use of assessment information across all areas of the college. The college now systematically tracks students’ progress to ensure that teachers are able to support students who are behind in their work, so they catch up in good time. These

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interventions are having a positive impact on attainment and progress.

Lower- and average-attaining students make the most rapid progress because work in lessons is pitched at the right level of challenge for them and there is good quality support available if needed. Students were observed working at a good pace and showed interest in their work and a determination to succeed. Parents' and carers' views suggest that most of them are rightly happy with the progress that their child is making. This is typified by one parent, representing the views of many others, who said, 'My child is happy at the school and is making good progress'.

Quality of teaching

Responses from parents and carers were extremely positive, with the majority saying that their children are taught well at the college. This is increasingly the case. College records show that teaching and learning have improved recently and most lessons are good or better with much that is outstanding. This judgement is endorsed by inspectors through their own observations. In these good lessons teachers have high expectations of all students. Teachers plan activities that are interesting and engaging and consequently most students achieve well over time and enjoy their learning experiences. Teachers' subject knowledge is used to good effect to challenge students to extend their learning. For example, in a Year 7 science lesson, students' understanding of investigative science was extended by the teachers' knowledge of forensic science. The outstanding teaching seen by inspectors was well-paced and captured students' interest and imagination. Often, opportunities for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development were planned for. For example, in a religious studies lesson the teacher used local source material regarding animal welfare to introduce a session on animal rights. This resulted in mature and thought-provoking responses in the discussion that followed.

Assessments are rigorous and, in most lessons, are used effectively to ensure that teachers plan lessons at the right level of challenge. Feedback from teachers is sufficiently detailed so that students are clear as to how they might improve their work. However, these practices are not consistent across the college. In some lessons assessment information is not used precisely enough to plan work which matches different students' needs and capabilities, especially those of higher ability. In a minority of subjects students do not have a clear idea of how they are progressing and what they need to do to improve their work. This is because success criteria are not shared or reviewed with students regularly during the lesson and advice given in marking is patchy or too general to enable the students to improve their learning.

Students of lower abilities are generally well supported in their lessons through a range of strategies including modified activities and resources, targeted support by teaching assistants and an emphasis on the use of key words in the classroom. Opportunities for developing students' literacy, including speaking and listening skills are planned for and subtly facilitated. The cross-curricular emphasis on literacy has helped to boost students' skills and to raise reading standards.

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The planned curriculum makes a positive impact on learning. The 'Specialisms Curriculum' in Year 9 has been designed to develop the creative, learning and thinking skills of students and contributes well to their enjoyment. The college technology specialism has done much to promote students' interest in mathematics, science and design and technology.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Students behave well in classes. They respond positively to good teaching, work cooperatively with one another and show respect for teachers and other adults. There are good strategies in place to track behaviour and attendance so that effective support can be provided for individuals and groups of students. These have resulted in improved behaviour and attendance and have also reduced the need for exclusions. Students are punctual to school and in lessons.

In unsupervised situations around the college, a small minority of students display boisterous behaviour which shows a lack of self-discipline and respect for others. This aspect was followed up and discussed with students who said that they would welcome more opportunities to be allowed further responsibilities. Students have a good understanding of different types of bullying, and have been especially well prepared to deal with those aspects concerned with cyber bullying. School records and conversations with students indicate that instances of bullying are rare; on the rare occasion when this happens, the college deals with it quickly and well. Most students say they feel safe and that behaviour is generally good and this is supported by the majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire.

Attendance levels are above the national average and where there are gaps in the attendance for different groups of students, for example those entitled to free school meals, these gaps are narrowing.

Leadership and management

Improvements since the last inspection were initially slow to take off while the college was facing budget reductions and staffing turbulence. However, the recently formed senior leadership team has established a renewed and shared sense of urgency to drive the improvements that are needed. Staffing difficulties in English have delayed improvements in this subject. Nevertheless, in the past year, following stability in the budget and staffing, further improvements have been seen in a number of key areas. Teaching has improved, attendance levels have risen, behaviour is better and exclusions have reduced. Achievement levels have improved, particularly in English and precise tracking of individual students' progress is now established and used by teachers to support their planning. These features place the college in a strong position to improve further. The college promotes equal opportunities and tackles discrimination well, narrowing the gap in achievement between different groups of students, including disabled students and those who have special educational needs as well as those eligible for free school meals.

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Middle leaders are rigorously held to account by the senior team through structured line management meetings. Teachers have been able to develop their expertise through professional development courses and through opportunities to observe the best practice of their colleagues in the school. Subject leaders are clear about their priorities and how they are progressing. However, aspects of evaluation and monitoring by senior leaders are not always rigorous enough.

The college promotes a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of all students, thereby contributing to their good achievement. The recent introduction of specific lessons to develop literacy skills in Years 7 and 8, coupled with the 'Specialisms Curriculum' and the personal, social and health education programmes, further enhance students' ability to achieve their full educational potential and make progress. Planned opportunities for the development of all students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development further enhance students' experiences of learning and good progress. The new arrangement of vertically aged tutor groups is showing early signs of success in promoting care and consideration for others as well as preparing students for the next phase of their education.

The governing body is very supportive of the college and fulfils all its statutory duties. It has a good understanding of the needs of the local community and is committed in meeting these fully through the establishment of the community college with its associated provision for young children and adults. It is becoming increasingly effective at holding the college to account for students' achievement. Procedures for the safeguarding of students are secure and the college's approach meets statutory requirements.

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The Early Years Foundation Stage delivered in the registered childcare provision

The Early Years Foundation Stage provides full day care provision for 61 children aged from birth to five years in a safe and supportive environment. Babies are well cared for and receive individual attention. They are held and comforted throughout the day supporting their sense of security. Staff ensure that their individual needs are met, providing them with a stimulating, welcoming and warm environment. Older children settle down and engage themselves readily in activities which interest them. Most children start with skills and understanding that are below those expected for their age and make satisfactory progress. Their behaviour is always good, relationships are strong, and their social, moral and spiritual development is a particular strength. Disabled children and those who have special educational needs progress in line with their peers because staff draw out their understanding and know how to encourage them, building on their strengths and interests as individuals.

Staff are well qualified with strengths in their ability to structure role-play situations to develop language and social skills. For example, one group acted out an extended enactment of life in a doctor’s surgery, with receptionist, doctor and nurse and taking a patient’s pulse. There is a good balance of activities led by adults or those chosen by the children themselves, but adults do not always ensure that the child-initiated activities promote all aspects of learning. All welfare requirements are met. Partnerships with parents and carers are good and the college has acted upon the previous inspection report to ensure that they take an active role in assessment by adding to the children’s learning journey logs. At the same time, assessment lacks the detail, regularity and analysis to ensure that all children are fully challenged to achieve their full potential. In addition, assessment procedures lack the precision needed to fully inform curriculum planning and tackle areas for improvement such as problem solving, reasoning and numeracy.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage of the registered childcare provision, inspected under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage for the registered provision	3

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.



8 March 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Ibstock Community College, Ibstock, LE67 6NE

Firstly, thank you for the warm welcome you gave us during the inspection. We found it very helpful to talk with you, look at your work and visit your lessons. You helped us to understand what it is really like to be a student at your college. We found your responses in the questionnaires particularly useful. We also enjoyed visiting the nursery provision to see the younger children at work.

Inspectors judge that you go to a good school. Standards over the past three years have been above average in most subjects and our observations show that this trend is set to continue. You are making good progress in most of your lessons and we note that your progress especially in English, has improved recently. Staff work hard to support you in your work and your good behaviour and attitudes in lessons reflect the college's drive to help you learn as much as possible. You told us that occasionally lessons are distracting and we noted that a few students do not act responsibly when not under the direct supervision of your teachers. We have asked the school to work with you to improve this and I know that your principal is keen to hear your views so please help him. You enjoy school and this is one of the many reasons why we judge your college to be good. You show a positive approach to your work and your attendance is good. In the nursery, children make satisfactory progress and develop sound personal skills that will really help them when they start school.

Your college is led well by your principal and his team of leaders and managers, who are determined to ensure that it provides the best for every one of you. To help improve your college further, we have asked your principal, the staff and the governing body to continue to raise your achievement in all subjects by:

- improving some aspects of teaching so that you are all challenged to produce your best, especially those of you of higher ability
- giving you good advice on how to improve your work and reach your targets during your lessons and through the day-to-day marking of your work.

You have a part to play and you can really help your college by ensuring that you do not settle for anything other than your best, that you act responsibly at all times and that you follow up the comments and suggestions that your teachers make to help you to improve your work. I wish you all success in the future and hope that you continue to enjoy your time at Ibstock Community College.

Yours sincerely

Trevor Riddiough
Her Majesty's Inspector

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