

# Brockington College

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120302
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	358737
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 October 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Clive Kempton HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Middle deemed secondary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–14
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	870
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Gary Spencer
<b>Headteacher</b>	Chris Southall
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 May 2008
<b>School address</b>	Blaby Road Leicester LE19 4AQ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 19 lessons and 19 teachers. They held meetings with the senior and middle managers of the college, the chair and vice chair of the governing body, a group of parents, six outside professionals associated with the school, and met a representative from the local authority, formerly the school improvement partner attached to the school. They spoke to 15 groups of pupils in all year groups. They observed the college's work, looked at the college improvement plans and the specialist college development plan. Evidence was also provided from the 287 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, and those from staff and pupils who completed questionnaires to express their views of the college.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the college's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- The progress made by different groups within the college.
- Assessment of pupils' progress and how well data is used by all staff.
- The extent of improvement in teaching quality since the last inspection.
- The consistency of subject leadership across the school.
- The quality and impact of self-evaluation at all management levels.

## Information about the school

Brockington College is situated in South Leicestershire. The new ?20m college building opened in November 2007, with an all terrain football pitch completing the building work in June 2010. The learning environment is shared with the community and adult learners, who make regular use of the facilities. The college is increasing in pupil numbers and will be full in September 2011 with 900 pupils. The college specialises in technology, alongside its partner schools, Lutterworth High School and Lutterworth College, gaining designation in 2008 and re-designation in 2010. There is a high percentage of pupils that are White British, as well as pupils from a range of ethnicities, attending the college. The proportions of students claiming free school meals and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities are below average. Most pupils live in the surrounding villages, although a growing number travel from outside the catchment area. The college has a number of awards including, Eco School Green Flag, National Healthy School Status, Financial Management Standard in Schools (FMSIS), and Career Mark.

**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: how good is the school?****2****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****2**

## Main findings

Brockington College is a good school where pupils attain above average standards in their academic studies and make good progress in their personal development. They support local and international charities, learn to empathise with others and develop a strong understanding of others with lifestyles different from their own. For example, strong links have been made with a school in Kenya and also with coffee growers in the Philippines. These experiences, along with the school's strong links with the local church as part of its Church of England Voluntary Aided status ensure that the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Another strong feature of the school is the extent and quality of care, guidance and support provided for pupils. All pupils are valued, well supported to succeed and want to come to school which is why attendance is above the national average.

Pupils enter the college with attainment that is broadly in line with the national average. By the time they leave in Year 9 they attain standards above the national average. This demonstrates the good progress that pupils, regardless of gender, ethnicity or ability make as they move through the school. The school is working hard to ensure that the most able pupils reach their full potential, as currently there are not enough pupils attaining the higher Level 7, in some subjects. However, some able pupils now take GCSEs two years early in Year 9 due to their rapid progress. Excellent partnership links have been made with other local schools so when the pupils start or leave the college, the transition is seamless and pupils settle quickly. One parent commented that her child had reported that the transition to the upper school was, 'not like changing schools, but more like changing buildings'.

The new principal, who took up post only five weeks before this inspection, and other senior staff have already made a difference. They have an accurate self-evaluation of the college's strengths and have identified the key areas for improvement in the college. Together, leaders and managers at all levels have a good capacity to make the improvements identified in this report. However, there is still work to do as the senior management team is not structured with sufficient clarity to ensure that all leaders and managers are leading on the right issues or have sufficient accountability for raising attainment and improving the quality of teaching and learning.

The quality of teaching and learning was judged to be good at the last inspection in 2008 and this remains the case. The best lessons consolidate previous learning, make good use of information and communication technology (ICT), use every minute of the lesson to develop purposeful learning opportunities, and result in good engagement from the pupils. However, in too many lessons, whilst pupils are always well behaved and attentive, the teacher talks too much and directs a series of activities, rather than engages pupils in

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active learning. There are not enough probing questions to challenge learners and pupils' work is not marked regularly.

The specialist technology college status is beginning to have an impact on raising whole school attainment, especially in mathematics and science.

## **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Improve the quality and consistency of learning in lessons so that 90% are judged to be good or better by:
  - planning lessons that focus more on the intended learning for each activity and use data to meet the needs of individual pupils
  - devising a questioning strategy to be used in lessons that checks and develops pupils' understanding of their learning
  - ensuring that all pupils are more actively involved in their learning
  - devising a whole school marking policy that provides regular feedback to pupils on how they can improve their work.
- Review the management structure to have a stronger focus on accountability, and raising attainment, and ensuring that development planning at all levels has clear and measurable success criteria.

## **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**2**

Inspection evidence from lesson observations confirms the college's judgment that achievement is good overall. Pupils enjoy college and are keen to do well. They engage in their learning, behave well and have good relationships with their teachers and each other. This was seen particularly in an outstanding Year 8 history lesson where pupils were studying children's working conditions during the industrial revolution. Pupils enter the college with attainment that is broadly average and by the end of Year 9 their attainment is above the national average in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. They also do well in other subjects in comparison with other schools in the county. This shows that they have made good progress. There are no differences in the performance of different groups of pupils and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities also make good progress and achieve well. However, the number of pupils achieving the very highest levels is not as high as the school would like.

Pupils feel safe in the college. However, at times during the day there is congestion on the corridors and staircases around pupils' lockers. This can be daunting to some new pupils in Year 7. Pupils' behaviour is managed well however and the few incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with quickly. Pupils have good opportunities to develop as leaders through mentoring and sports leaders schemes. Through these they gain valuable skills and gain confidence and satisfaction through taking on responsibility. The proportion of pupils participating in sport is increasing, as is the proportion eating healthy meals at lunchtime. Pupils gain good workplace skills in activities and events, some organised outside college and some that involve whole year groups for a day. Other events, such as the Year 7 Africa Day, have a lasting impact on pupils' views of other cultures. As one pupil expressed it, such events are, 'life changing'.

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*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

## How effective is the provision?

Teachers display good subject knowledge which provides a solid platform for good levels of achievement. In all lessons, teachers employ a variety of strategies and resources to motivate students. The most successful have inspiring starter activities, effective questioning and lively pace. Most lessons are well planned with good progression between different activities. The best lessons offered effective opportunities for pupil engagement, team work and independent learning. However, this good practice does not yet permeate all lessons. Pupils with different capabilities are well supported in their learning and all make good progress. The majority of pupils are aware of their current learning levels and their targets in most subjects. They enjoy their lessons and want to do well, saying that lessons are interesting and fun. They particularly enjoy lessons in art, design technology, English and modern foreign languages as lessons are exciting and this helps them to learn. Pupils say they enjoy the broad range of learning opportunities at lunchtime and after school.

The curriculum provision provides well-organised opportunities for effective learning through a broad and balanced range of experiences. A very large majority of pupils enjoy their education because they are well-served by the curriculum which encourages both their academic and personal development. Enrichment days provide new ways of learning and opportunities to work creatively as part of a team on real life challenges with both

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teachers and visiting professionals. The curriculum is effectively modified to meet the needs of learners through a significant range of alternative provision. This is provided through projects such as 'Accelerate' and the 'Allotment Project' which re-engages and re-energises pupils, and the South Leicestershire Partnership of schools which provides opportunities for gifted and talented pupils to enhance their learning. The college's technology specialism is beginning to extend curriculum opportunities and plays a significant role in supporting curriculum transition when pupils join and leave the school.

The care, guidance and support the school provides is outstanding because of the detailed attention adults pay to meeting the needs of all individuals. This includes those pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. For example, special fire evacuation arrangements take account of all pupils including those with specific needs and disabilities. The school works with a wide range of agencies to secure targeted support and, as a result, pupils feel valued, cared for and able to make good progress. Transition arrangements are very effective, both from primary and to upper schools.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The new principal and senior staff have clearly communicated their ambitions to drive improvement in the college through a detailed college improvement plan that highlights the key priorities and a vision for the future in the motto, 'Learning to live life to the full'. Middle managers are well-supported by senior staff and are very effective in the way they evaluate and highlight key areas to develop within their subject. A cycle of departmental reviews, similar to mini-inspections, allows senior staff to monitor the effectiveness of subject leaders and their impact on raising attainment.

Promoting equality and tackling discrimination is a strong feature of the college. Not only is the new building designed to enable all students regardless of their circumstances to access all areas, but pupils with specific health issues are accommodated well. Staff support vulnerable pupils very well. All pupils can access trips and visits and funding is available to support individual cases. An enrichment and college trips data base records those who have or have not accessed the wide range of opportunities the college provides.

Safeguarding is outstanding. Procedures for safeguarding are rigorously implemented and policies are regularly reviewed. Training is appropriate, up to date and ongoing. Safety has high priority on this well-maintained site.

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Community cohesion is strong. The college is the centre for vibrant community and adult education programmes in the evenings and at weekends. The college knows its community well and strong links have been forged with schools in different areas and in other countries to ensure that pupils grow up with good global awareness of different faiths, ethnicities and cultures. Governance is good. The governing body holds the college to account and governors regularly take part in learning walks around the college with senior staff to monitor the college in action. Partnership work with outside agencies and with other local schools is a significant strength of the college and contributes to many areas of provision. For example, the exchange of pupils' data when they change schools, the collaborative planning and staff training events, and the sharing of good practice and resources. One partner described the college as, 'a buoyant, collaborative, open, responsive and pro-active college who are key partners in the Christian community'.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Views of parents and carers

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire were very positive about the education provided at Brockington College and were happy with their child's experience at the school. One described the school as, 'friendly, inclusive, progressive, safe and just like one big happy family'. Ninety four percent agreed that their child enjoys school. A similar high percentage felt that the school kept their child safe. On the other hand, the two questions that elicited the most negative responses were: 'the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour' (15%); and, 'the school helps me to support my child's learning' (14%). Inspectors investigated these concerns during the inspection, spoke to a group of parents, and discussed the issues in depth with pupils. Inspectors judged behaviour to be good in lessons and around the school. All staff and pupils are aware of the behaviour policy and sanctions (available on the upgraded college website). Many parents and carers expressed their appreciation of



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the college in the comments section of the inspection questionnaire for how the school had responded to their rare concerns about inappropriate behaviour and acted swiftly with the perpetrators.

Regarding the second issue of how the college can help parents and carers support their child's learning, the principal has suggested that the college publishes the list of topics to be covered in various subjects before the start of each term so that parents and carers can support their children at home. The college also intends to make these available on the new college website.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Brockington College to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 287 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 870 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	107	37	164	57	13	5	3	1
The school keeps my child safe	114	40	155	54	13	5	2	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	68	24	167	58	24	8	3	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	67	23	176	61	18	6	3	1
The teaching is good at this school	71	25	185	64	10	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	50	17	171	60	36	13	5	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	54	19	193	67	20	7	2	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	64	22	169	59	12	4	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	67	23	183	64	17	6	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	66	23	149	52	35	12	9	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	35	12	175	61	20	7	5	2
The school is led and managed effectively	68	24	180	63	9	3	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	108	38	155	54	16	6	2	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## 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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on 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 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
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.

**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.**



15 October 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of Brockington College, Leicester, LE19 4AQ**

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave to me and my colleagues when we visited your college earlier this term. We enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and watching you learn. I thought you would like to know the outcome of the inspection and what you could all do to make the college even better.

You go to a good college which has some outstanding features such as your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; the way the college looks after all of you; and the way it works with other local colleges to support your learning and make the move to the upper school easy. Other strong features include the community work you do in school for each other and within the local and global community for others. These skills are helping to develop empathy and tolerance towards others. The standard of your work is higher than most schools in this county, although there are still things to improve. Your teachers and all the other adults in the college work hard to prepare interesting lessons for you. Those of you who need extra help get outstanding support from a large number of adults within and outside college. Your new principal is really good and has already started to make a difference. There are also many other good leaders in the college too. There are lots of clubs for you to get involved in and over half of you go to at least one a week. All of you should try to join a club of some kind, learn new skills and make different friends. Your behaviour around college and in lessons is good.

In order to further improve your school, I have suggested to your new principal and the senior staff that they do the following things.

Make sure your teachers involve you more actively in lessons; ask more challenging questions to check if you have understood the work; ensure you learn something in every lesson activity; and ensure that your work is regularly marked and you are told how you can improve.

Make sure that all the senior staff and subject leaders have a target to improve your test results and that the plans they write lead to outcomes that can be measured.

Best wishes for the future and make the most of the opportunities the college provides.

Yours sincerely

Clive Kempton

Her Majesty's Inspector

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