

Stradbroke Business and Enterprise College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124814
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	359779
Inspection dates	30 September 2010–1 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Gulshanbir Kayembe

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	320
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Smith
Headteacher	Andrew Bloom
Date of previous school inspection	28 November 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 29 lessons and observed 21 different teachers. They held meetings with governors, staff and groups of students. They observed the school's work, and looked at a variety of documents including policies, notes from governors' meetings, the school's assessment data and students' books. The inspection team also analysed 27 staff questionnaires, 250 pupil questionnaires and 106 parent and carer questionnaires.

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

- Whether all groups of students make equally good progress especially girls, able students and those identified, and being monitored, by the school as potentially having learning difficulties.
- The effectiveness with which students with complex moderate learning difficulties are being taught in mainstream classes.
- The extent to which the school's specialism contributes to learning and achievement in other subjects.
- The accuracy of the school's view of how well it is performing.

Information about the school

This smaller-than-average sized school draws its students from Stradbroke and the surrounding area. Many students come a long way, some from as far as Lowestoft so that they can attend the on-site specialist support centre (SSC) for students with complex moderate learning difficulties. The SSC had the capacity to provide for up to 17 students, however, the phased closure of the SSC led to the school taking the decision to further integrate students with multiple and complex needs into the main school from September 2010. The overall proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. Those with a statement of special educational needs is well above average. All students in the SSC have statements. Nearly all students are of White British heritage and a very small number from minority ethnic backgrounds speak English as an additional language. The proportion of students who are looked after is comparatively high. The school has a business and enterprise specialism.

A relatively high proportion of students join the school after the start of Year 7, many of whom come because they have not settled into other schools locally. The current headteacher took up post in April 2010. A number of other staff joined in September 2010.

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

Stradbroke Business and Enterprise College is a good school which provides a good, rounded education to its students. There are some outstanding features such as exceptionally good care, guidance and support which results in a safe, warm and supportive ethos. Consequently, students develop into confident young people who feel secure enough to express their views and ask questions of their teachers when unsure. Students feel, and are, exceptionally safe. They develop an excellent understanding of how to lead healthy lives. The small size of the school enables a strong sense of community where each pupil is an individual and is well known to staff. This is well encapsulated in the following observation by one parent: 'The school offers my child a learning environment that is both happy and supportive'.

Students make good progress and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make exceptionally good progress in their learning. Standards are broadly average by the end of Key Stage 4 but are rising steadily. Performance is particularly good and above average in the proportion of students who gain five or more GCSEs at grades A* - C including English and mathematics. This is because students' progress is carefully tracked in English and mathematics, they are set challenging targets and supported to achieve them. Systems for tracking progress in other areas, however, are not always as effective in identifying and helping to address the slower progress, or the greater potential, of some students. This results in a little unevenness in the performance of different subjects and small pockets of less good performance amongst middle and higher attaining students. Nonetheless most students achieve well and many able students reach, or exceed, the challenging targets set for them. A good curriculum supports learning well. A purpose-built skills centre that is run jointly with other schools locally, the North Suffolk Schools Partnership, is a particularly outstanding feature. It provides excellent opportunities for accredited vocational and skills-based training and ensures all students leave with relevant qualifications that support their next steps in education, further training or employment. Students' computer skills are good.

Good teaching makes a significant contribution to the achievement of students. Lessons are calm and orderly and, especially where teaching is good or better, students are given varied and interesting tasks. In the small minority of teaching that is satisfactory, tasks are often not sufficiently well matched to the differing needs of students. At times, work provided is not challenging enough, especially for the more able. In these lessons, tasks are not as varied as in the best lessons and opportunities are missed to assess students' learning even more thoroughly.

The school's specialism of business and enterprise makes a positive contribution to its success. Business studies is a popular option in Key Stage 4 and students who take the subject achieve well. The specialism promotes business-related activities well, such as the

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monthly Farmers' Market run by students, thus enabling students to develop a wider understanding of the world of work. However, business and enterprise themes do not feature overtly enough in other subjects.

The new headteacher has made an excellent start. He has engendered a strong sense of collective purpose and gained the wholehearted support of staff, students, parents and carers and governors in his drive to raise standards further and make the school even better. The senior leadership team is evolving a strong partnership with staff which is ensuring they embrace new initiatives and developments targeted at improving the school. Effective systems for monitoring the quality of the school's work, including teaching and learning, ensure that the school has an accurate picture of its relative strengths and weaknesses. Senior staff have identified issues across the school in the quality and use of tracking systems to monitor students' progress. However, they have yet to ensure that these are sharp enough to identify swiftly any pupil who may be making slower than expected progress and to provide the right kind of intervention and support. Nonetheless, the improvements in teaching and standards and the maintenance of high achievement for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities demonstrate the school's good capacity for further improvement. Excellent governance sets, and guides, the school's strategic direction very positively so that the school is forward looking and confident to take further innovative steps to offer even more to its students while safeguarding all the benefits of a small school.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that all lessons are consistently good by:
 - ensuring that students are actively engaged with varied tasks that are well matched to their learning needs
 - making sure that able students are sufficiently challenged
 - ensuring all teachers are using a range of methods for assessing students' progress so that they can fine-tune their teaching to meet learning needs.
- Address the small pockets of underperformance amongst higher and middle attaining students by:
 - ensuring that senior and middle managers work together to fine-tune systems for tracking students' progress so that any underperformance is rapidly identified
 - providing swift and well tailored support to ensure all students are performing at their best.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Students join the school with a wide range of attainment but, on balance, standards are a little below average when they begin. Those who join after the start of Year 7 often arrive with low prior attainment but settle in quickly and achieve well. Girls have in the past performed less well at the end of Key Stage 4 than boys but in 2010 they outperformed boys. Evidence from the inspection indicates that boys and girls are achieving equally well, as are the very small number who speak English as an additional language. Looked after students make good, and often very good, progress. This is helped by their excellent attendance. While many able and middle ability students are highly successful, there are

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pockets of less good performance amongst these groups. This is due to an element of unevenness in their learning in different subjects when expectations are not as high as they could be. At times students are passive recipients of information in lessons rather than active participants. In the main, though, students work hard in lessons. They concentrate and cooperate well with their teachers showing eagerness to answer questions and are often willing to ask questions themselves. Students very often help one another in class and enjoy group work. For example, in a history lesson, students gained a great deal from discussing evidence for Guy Fawkes' guilt in the gunpowder plot. The opportunity to look at the findings from other groups generated a healthy debate about the different points others had seen in the evidence. The good, and often excellent, support received by students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those being monitored by the school, ensures they make significant progress. Those in the SSC and with statements make exceptional progress to gain relevant and very creditable results at the end of Key Stage 4. Their learning in mainstream lessons is very well supported.

Students make a good contribution to the school and wider community through, for example, the active school council, the energy they put into fundraising, their interactions with the local parish council and good behaviour in lessons and around the school. Students are reflective and thoughtful. They have a strong sense of right and wrong. In their behaviour towards one another, they show high levels of respect and tolerance. The fuller integration of SCC into mainstream lessons and all school activities is as much a tribute to the pupil body as a whole as it is to the support provided by staff. Students empathise easily with others and this is illustrated well in the moving account of life in their partner school in Kenya by students who recently visited it. Despite the school's rural location, students readily grasp opportunities to learn about and appreciate those from social and cultural backgrounds different to their own. However, they do not always have opportunities to develop their knowledge from first hand experiences.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
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	1
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ 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?

While most teaching is good, and some is outstanding, the small minority of satisfactory teaching means that students' progress is not as consistently good as it could be. Teachers generally use resources well and support staff are very well deployed in lessons. Pace is good and lessons begin briskly, usually with a quick starter activity that engages students well. In better lessons, questioning is good and teachers use a good range of methods to assess on-going progress. This is less evident in satisfactory lessons. Students work is generally well marked and most students are clear about how to improve their work. Where teaching is satisfactory, assessment information is not used enough to provide a range of work to meet individual needs. While, in these lessons, teachers monitor students as they work and provide individual support as and when necessary, some students find the work either too difficult or too hard and this slows their progress.

A good curriculum supports learning well. Opportunities for extra-curricular activities are very good especially so for sports, thus encouraging healthy lifestyles. Additional courses are provided for more able students such as drama and AS in history. Setting by ability helps to meet differing needs in subjects such as English, mathematics and science. The school is reviewing the structure of the day to get more out of it and so better meets students' needs.

The level of care for students is second to none. They and their families are exceptionally well supported. A significant range of partnerships especially benefit students who may be

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vulnerable so that their needs are exceptionally well met. The school and staff are prepared to go the extra mile to support individuals and this is reflected in the highly positive responses from parents and carers to the questionnaire, all of which agree that the school keeps their child safe. Procedures for attendance are rigorous.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

All staff returning their questionnaires indicate that they are proud to be part of the school and feel that their contribution is valued. This reflects the clarity of purpose in the school's agenda for change and improvement. The headteacher, senior leaders, staff and governors are ambitious to make the school the best that it can be. The core senior team, comprising the deputy and assistant headteachers, provides strong and enthusiastic leadership. Other senior roles are developing well, especially in relation to monitoring and providing support for teaching and learning. This is helping to raise everybody's game. Middle managers provide an effective lead in their areas but there is a little unevenness in the quality of leadership at this level, for example, in the effectiveness of tracking of students' progress. The governing body provides robust challenge based on its incisive monitoring and analysis of the school's performance, thus sharpening the focus on areas for improvement.

Safeguarding procedures fully met requirements at the time of the inspection. Policies and procedures are detailed. The governing body has a very good understanding of safeguarding and closely monitors the effectiveness of arrangements. Partnerships with other agencies to keep students safe and to ensure their well-being are outstanding, as are partnerships with parents and carers. There are some innovative partnerships with other local schools that enhance the school's curriculum and, hence, the learning opportunities for students. However, the school has yet to make links with schools in other parts of the United Kingdom to provide its students with relevant and meaningful first-hand opportunities to learn about those different from themselves. In other respects, community cohesion is very well promoted and the school's plan addresses this gap. Students gain considerably, for example, from the strong links with a school in Kenya. Equality of opportunity is well promoted, outstandingly so for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, there are small pockets of less good performance amongst some groups that are yet to be fully addressed. Overall, the school targets its resources well to support students' learning and progress.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Views of parents and carers

Parents and carers are very positive about the school and what it provides. They particularly appreciate the sense of community and the care that their children receive. Questionnaire responses are overwhelmingly positive about leadership and management. The large majority of parents and carers are happy with their child's experience at school. A few are concerned that the school does not help their children to develop healthy lifestyles or help them to support their child's learning. The inspection evidence indicates that students are taught very well about healthy living and that there is good support for parents and carers. In their written comments, a number rightly praise the transition arrangements from primary to secondary making points such as: 'The school has done an excellent job in the transition from primary to high school' and 'A smooth transition into high school. My daughter is very happy and growing in confidence already.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Stradbroke Business and Enterprise 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 106 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 320 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	51	48	50	47	3	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	55	52	51	48	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	33	31	61	58	3	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	36	52	49	3	3	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	35	33	61	58	2	2	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	36	34	49	46	8	8	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	28	26	64	60	8	8	0	0
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)	38	36	51	48	4	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	42	40	53	50	3	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	47	44	42	40	5	5	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	40	38	47	44	3	3	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	50	47	48	45	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	57	54	43	41	2	2	2	2

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	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). 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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



4 October 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Stradbroke Business and Enterprise College, Eye, IP21 5JN

Thank you for your help and for taking the time to give us your views during the recent inspection. I am writing to you to tell you about our main findings. We think that the college provides you with a good education. Most of you achieve well and those with special educational needs make outstanding progress. Some of the key strengths of the college are listed below.

The warm and friendly ethos in the college which gives you a strong sense of community.

The outstanding care, guidance and support you receive which help you to feel very safe and ensure that your worries and concerns are dealt with very effectively.

The wide range of extra-curricular activities, especially in sport, which you enjoy and appreciate.

The way in which your new headteacher has established good working relationships with staff, parents and carers, governors and the local community to get all working together for the benefit of the school.

The skills centre which ensures that you have a wide choice of courses at GCSE.

In order to make the school even better, I and the team have asked the school to work at improving the quality of teaching and learning by making sure that all lessons provide challenging work and teachers check even more carefully how well you are learning. We have also asked the school to iron out the small differences in performance in different subjects by making sure that your progress is carefully tracked and the right support provided quickly where necessary.

Keep working hard and asking for help when you need it. We wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Gulshanbir Kayembe

Lead inspector

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