

# Castle Manor Business and Enterprise College

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 124788           |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Suffolk          |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 359771           |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 7–8 October 2010 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Roderick Passant |

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>                      | Secondary                              |
| <b>School category</b>                     | Community                              |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                 | 13–19                                  |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                    | Mixed                                  |
| Gender of pupils in the sixth form         | Mixed                                  |
| <b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b> | 455                                    |
| Of which, number on roll in the sixth form | 139                                    |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                     |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Alan Pearson                           |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Madeleine Vigar                        |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 6 December 2007                        |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Eastern Avenue<br>Haverhill<br>CB9 9JE |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01440 705501                           |
| <b>Fax number</b>                          | 01440 714050                           |
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|--------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Age group</b>         | 13–19            |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>  | 7–8 October 2010 |
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried by four additional inspectors. They visited 26 lessons and teachers, three tutorials and an assembly. They held formal meetings with small groups of Year 9, 11 and sixth form students. In addition they met with members of the senior leadership team, a group of governors, faculty heads and key stage coordinators. They looked at the college's work and a range of policies and documentation, including the school improvement plan. They scrutinised the questionnaire responses from 168 parents, 248 students and 53 staff.

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

- The opportunities for students to show their initiative take responsibility and develop their independent skills.
- The strategies the school is using to raise boys' achievement.
- The impact of the school's specialism.
- How effectively the school develops students' cultural awareness.

## Information about the school

This specialist college is much smaller than the average secondary school. Almost all students are White British, with a small number of students from other European, Bangladeshi, Caribbean and African backgrounds. The proportion of students for whom English is an additional language is broadly average and a few of these are at an early stage of language acquisition. There are also a few looked after students. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is average. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average. The college is used by the community, including for adult learning and as a conference and training facility for local businesses. It operates a playgroup facility for children aged 3-5 which has been separately inspected.

West Suffolk College currently has a satellite unit based on the site although it is in the process of moving to a site in the town centre. There are extensive links to extend the curriculum provision for 14-16 year-olds. There is a collaborative sixth form provision with Samuel Ward Arts and Technology College to extend the learning opportunities for students in both colleges. It is in partnership with other local education providers to establish The Two Counties Learning Trust to further strengthen the provision for 14-19 year olds across the town.

Four middle schools in the Haverhill area are due to close in July 2011 as part of the local authority's school re-organisation. In September 2011, the College will admit Year 7 and 8 pupils for the first time.

In September 2008, the College federated and assumed leadership responsibilities for Castle Hill Community Middle School. Currently, both schools retain separate governing bodies. The formal collaboration between the two schools is known as The Castle Partnership and the Principal of the college oversees this with other senior leaders. Place Farm Primary School joined the partnership in September 2010.

The college is a low-risk National Challenge School. The college gained Healthy Schools status in 2009.

**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?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

This is an outstanding college. It has improved a great deal since it was last inspected. This is because the leadership and management of the college are outstanding. Staff and the governing body share and shape the college's very clear vision: 'to improve the life-chances of all students'. High quality management ensures that there are extremely rigorous systems, structures and processes in place to monitor the college's effectiveness and identify where support is needed for individual students and departments. The college's self-evaluation is extremely accurate and this means that it identifies with precision what it needs to do next in order to improve. It sets about tackling these priorities in a systematic, highly effective manner. As a result, the college's capacity for sustained improvement is outstanding.

Leaders and managers have established a powerful college ethos. At its heart is the college's commitment to the individual students who form its very cohesive community. Students feel valued and recognised. This fosters their academic confidence and self-esteem. Staff and students work together very effectively so that learning is seen as a partnership. The college's provision is a mix of powerful ingredients. This includes: skilled staff; good teaching and a highly effective curriculum that is underpinned by outstanding care, guidance and support. As a result, students make good progress, enjoy learning and achieve well; aspects of their personal development are outstanding.

Good leadership in the sixth form is bringing about improvements. Standards are broadly average and students make satisfactory progress. They do well in the applied vocational courses. On occasions in the sixth form, teachers do not have high enough expectations of the students, and students, in turn, could challenge themselves to aim at a higher level.

Students' behaviour is outstanding in lessons and around the college, with the result that they reported that they feel exceptionally safe. Students are helped in this by the all-age tutor groups. There are strong informal networks because students provide each other with mutual support. Students make an outstanding contribution to the college community. They show courtesy, respect and, through their charity fundraising, compassion for others. They are confident, mature and develop a thoughtful personal response to ethical and moral issues. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Cultural development is not as strong relative to the other elements. Students are aware of the diverse nature of society through their work within the curriculum, including the school's developing international and national links.

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

- Lift the aspirations and expectations of both teachers and students in the sixth form, to aim at a higher level of work.

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

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**1**

In lessons, students are keen and want to do well. They are confident to ask for help if they do not understand something. They show good independent skills and work well with their partner or in groups. No time is lost because of behavioural issues; pupils concentrate well and work at a good rate. Year 9 students talked about the fact that, on transfer to the college, they knew that they had to 'raise their game' and 'knuckle down' because the 'examinations are important'. Across the college students 'knuckle down', working with their teachers and, consequently, they make good progress.

Attainment on entry is below average. Students make good progress over their time in college to reach broadly average attainment. The proportion of students gaining five A\* to C grades is significantly above the national average because students do particularly well in applied courses. These courses tend to carry the equivalent of two or more GCSEs. Performance in more conventional subjects is broadly average. It is below average, but not low, in mathematics and English. Attainment shows year-on-year improvement, including in mathematics and English. In some subjects, students do particularly well because their choice of courses is tailored to meet their needs. Most students gain at least five A\* to G grades and almost all gain at least one pass at GCSE or equivalent. The result of this is that there is a steady reduction in the number of students, currently very few, who leave the college at the age of 16 who are subsequently not in education or training.

Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. This is because their progress is monitored closely and the interventions made to support them are targeted well. The broad choice that students have within the Year 10 and 11 curriculum means that students are guided into courses where they can succeed. Able students are challenged in lessons. The college provides many opportunities where they can take responsibility and show their initiative. Students with English as an additional language, students known to be eligible for free school meals and looked after children all make good progress in relation to their starting points. Current school data indicates little difference in the performance of boys and girls. Within lessons, there is no discernable difference. Developments within the curriculum to make learning more relevant plus the active teaching styles used by staff suit boys and help raise their attainment.

Attendance is above average. The college prepares students well for the next steps in their education because it develops students' very positive attitudes to learning and maturity, coupled with broadly average academic skills. Students have a good understanding of what goes to make up a healthy lifestyle and respond well to college initiatives to promote healthy living.

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

*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:<br>Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>   | 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                      | 2        |
| <b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>   | <b>1</b> |
| <b>Pupils' behaviour</b>  | <b>1</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>1</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:<br>Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>   | 2        |
| <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?

There is a good rapport and mutual respect between students and teachers. This ensures that there is a very positive ethos in lessons so that students are able to query something or own up to not understanding without fear of ridicule. There is a very strong sense that students see themselves as partners in their learning. Teachers do not have to 'push' students along but because students show a good degree of self-motivation they are able to work with them. Teachers show strong subject knowledge and are therefore confident to set up learning in an open-ended, creative way. This provides additional levels of challenge and supports students' independence. Good learning is promoted by teachers using a variety of approaches within the long lessons.

The college uses sophisticated national assessment information to predict its success based on students' initial attainment. It sets challenging targets for itself and for its students. It exceeds these in many areas of its work. The key reason for this success is the careful monitoring of all students' progress. This allows the college to identify students who are slipping behind and who need additional support and help to catch up. Year 11 students are very positive about the fact that they can ask for and receive additional help in their examination year. Students say that they know how well they are doing because they know their targets. There is often good use of grade level criteria in lessons but this is not always sharp enough or written in student-friendly language. The best marking

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indicates how well students have met the requirements of the assignment and shows them how to improve their work.

The curriculum provides excellent opportunities for high quality learning and personal development. Assemblies, 'thought for the day', life-skills courses, which includes citizenship activities, along with religious education and ethics make a powerful contribution to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is a particularly good range of vocational programmes. These provide challenging contexts for applied learning and meet the needs of a wide range of students. The extensive range of clubs and enrichment activities has a high level of student participation and provides memorable life experiences. The college's specialist business and enterprise status is increasing the range of opportunities for students to develop their understanding of the world of work and reinforces the links with local businesses.

Students are known and valued as individuals and, because the college keeps a very close eye on them pastorally and academically through the form tutors and key stage coordinators, interventions are both timely and effective. Students facing particular challenges in their lives are supported extremely well. There are extremely good transition arrangements from the middle schools so that Year 9 students settle in the college very quickly. Careers guidance is very good because it is focused on the needs of the individual and presents the full range of options available and not simply what the college offers.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

The college's commitment to embed its vision and drive through improvement is manifest in the rising levels of attainment and in students' outstanding personal development. Across the college, there is a shared sense of purpose. Staff display very high levels of care and commitment to the students. They are accountable for the progress students make and any issues are tackled in an open, honest and supportive way. Because it monitors and evaluates its work very thoroughly, the college is very able to judge the effect of its work in ensuring equal opportunities. The promotion of equal opportunities lies at the heart of the college's philosophy and vision. The leadership and management of teaching and learning are extremely thorough. There are comprehensive arrangements for enhancing staff's professional skills. The partnership and federation arrangements are extending staff's expertise in teaching younger age groups: a recent letter by Her Majesty's Inspectorate to a federated school, noted the additional leadership capacity provided by the college. Other partnerships are extremely strong, helping to broaden students' choices and making very significant contributions to their learning.

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The governing body is insightful and provides highly effective monitoring through its members being linked to specific departments. It takes its responsibilities with regard to safeguarding extremely seriously so that safeguarding is excellent. Great care is taken in checking visitors to the site, recruitment, and ensuring that all staff on and off-site are appropriately checked. The governing body provides highly effective challenge to the college. It is playing a major role in stitching the community of schools together through its federation and partnerships.

The college knows its community well. It is a focal point in the locality and the college community is very cohesive and inclusive. Students gain a good understanding of the diverse nature of society through the work within the curriculum, developing links with a partner school in Milton Keynes. There are established links with a school in Ghana which are being further developed to include student exchanges.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>  | <b>1</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>The leadership and management of teaching and learning   | 1        |
| <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>1</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>1</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>1</b> |

## Sixth form

Good leadership and management are bringing about improvements ensuring that the building blocks of good curriculum, strong care and guidance, and quality teaching are in place. These elements are leading to improving standards. The quality of provision is judged satisfactory because currently standards are broadly average and students make satisfactory progress. They make good progress in vocational and applied courses. Students' personal development is particularly good. Students contribute well within the college, providing informal and formal support to younger students, and they participate in a wide range of performing arts and sports events inside and outside the college. The sixth form offers a broad range of AS and A2 subjects. There is an increasing provision of vocational courses which provide progression from Year 11. There is little difference in the quality of teaching in the main school and the sixth form. In a few lessons, there is too



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much teacher direction. On occasions, staff and students are not ambitious enough in their work; sometimes students settle for pitching their work for the grade they know they can achieve rather than a higher one.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b> | <b>3</b> |
| Taking into account:                           |          |
| Outcomes for students in the sixth form        | 3        |
| The quality of provision in the sixth form     | 3        |
| Leadership and management of the sixth form    | 2        |

## Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers express positive views. Some disagreed that the college helps their child develop a healthy lifestyle, takes into account their suggestions and concerns and that it met their child's particular needs. Inspectors judged that students have a good understanding of what goes to make up a healthy lifestyle; the importance, for example, of a balanced diet and exercise. The college conducts periodic surveys of parents' and carers' views which are taken into consideration in identifying the college's priorities. In addition, there is a parents' forum, a website, and newsletters to keep parents and carers informed. The inspectors judged that the school's systems of care, guidance and support are excellent.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Castle Manor 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 168 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 455 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements  | Strongly agree |    | Agree |    | Disagree |   | Strongly disagree |   |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|---|-------------------|---|
|   | Total          | %  | Total | %  | Total    | % | Total             | % |
| My child enjoys school  | 61             | 37 | 95    | 57 | 9        | 5 | 2                 | 1 |
| The school keeps my child safe  | 61             | 37 | 104   | 62 | 1        | 1 | 1                 | 1 |
| My school informs me about my child's progress  | 62             | 37 | 91    | 54 | 4        | 2 | 1                 | 1 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school   | 61             | 37 | 92    | 55 | 5        | 3 | 0                 | 0 |
| The teaching is good at this school   | 53             | 32 | 99    | 59 | 4        | 2 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning  | 45             | 27 | 104   | 62 | 6        | 4 | 1                 | 1 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle   | 34             | 20 | 107   | 64 | 13       | 8 | 1                 | 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) | 52             | 31 | 102   | 61 | 5        | 3 | 2                 | 1 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs  | 52             | 31 | 98    | 59 | 8        | 5 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour  | 57             | 34 | 100   | 60 | 4        | 2 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns   | 33             | 20 | 106   | 63 | 12       | 7 | 0                 | 0 |
| The school is led and managed effectively   | 66             | 40 | 94    | 56 | 3        | 2 | 0                 | 0 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school   | 74             | 44 | 83    | 50 | 0        | 0 | 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

| 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](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.**



11 October 2010

Dear Students

**Inspection of Castle Manor Business and Enterprise College, Haverhill, CB9 9JE**

Thank you for making me and my colleagues so welcome in your school. My particular thanks go to those students who gave up part of their lunchtime to talk to us. What you had to say was very helpful in the process of coming to judgements.

This is an outstanding college in which you achieve well and make good progress. Excellent leadership and management by staff ensures that you work in partnership with skilled teachers, take full advantage of the excellent curriculum and opportunities it provides and respond extremely positively to the college's outstanding care, guidance and support. In combination, these factors account for the fact that aspects of your personal development are outstanding. I was impressed by your friendly courtesy, smartness and your confidence and maturity. Your behaviour is excellent; you told us that there is little bullying so that you feel exceptionally safe. The school is an extremely strong, cohesive community where you get on well with each other. Your attendance is above average and the college prepares you well for the next steps in your school career and for the world of work. You show excellent respect, compassion, care and consideration for others and, within your work, show that you think about and reflect on difficult ethical issues.

Students in the sixth form make good progress in the practical curriculum and overall students make the progress seen in many sixth forms. Standards and progress show improvement. This is because good leadership and management have put in place a curriculum which now provides you with an opportunity to achieve success. You do not always aim high enough in your work, however. I have asked the Principal to work with staff to ensure that this happens so that more of you get the higher grades.

The college has come a long way since it was last inspected and it has the capacity to continue this process, especially if all of you can answer in a positive way the question posed around the college, 'What have you done today to make you feel proud?'

Yours sincerely

Roderick Passant

Lead inspector

The normal convention in inspection reports is to use 'pupils' to describe 11-16 year olds who attend the school and 'students' to describe the sixth form. The school's preferred term is 'students' to describe all who attend and this has been used throughout the report, although headings have not been changed.

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