

# West Craven High Technology College

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119725
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	358614
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 October 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Elaine Taylor 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>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	617
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Malcolm Sterratt
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Arnold Kuchartschuk
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 March 2008
<b>School address</b>	Kelbrook Road Barnoldswick Lancashire BB18 5TB
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. They observed 31 lessons and made some shorter visits to classes; 35 teachers were seen teaching. Meetings were held with groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at policies, development plans, records of meetings and 86 questionnaires returned by parents, 37 from staff and 115 from pupils.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The consistency of teaching across key stages and subjects and how effectively teachers promote enjoyment and good progress for all groups in lessons was a focus.
- The effectiveness of systems to guide and support pupils especially in relation to their attendance and behaviour was investigated.
- The rigour with which leaders at all levels monitor outcomes in their areas of responsibility and hold members of their teams to account was evaluated.

## Information about the school

The school is a specialist technology college serving the two small towns of Barnoldswick and Earby, along with several surrounding villages. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Virtually all the pupils are from White British backgrounds and the number of pupils who speak English as an additional language is very low. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below the national average. The school is smaller than the average secondary school and the number of pupils on roll has been falling.

**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?**

**4**

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

**3**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the effectiveness of school leaders in accelerating the rate of improvement, attendance and the way pupils are supported to lead healthy lifestyles.

Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Their attainment is broadly in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 4. Attainment has been rising slowly with the exception of a dip in 2009, from which the school successfully recovered through decisive action and the implementation of a range of new initiatives. One of these initiatives involves tackling the exceptionally low attendance. This is starting to have an impact, but attendance is still too low and the number of pupils who are persistently absent is too high. This has an impact on how well pupils are prepared for the world of work.

Pupils feel safe at the school and parents raised only one concern over safety, which was in relation to the large number of pupils who leave the premises at lunchtime in order to purchase less-than-healthy food, spurning the very good offer in the school's canteen. Inspectors confirmed the parents' view that more could be done to discourage this behaviour and the school has already started to tighten procedures.

Since the last inspection the quality of teaching has improved. While it remains satisfactory overall, a growing proportion is good or better. The support given to teachers whose practice was causing concern has been effective, and inadequate teaching is rare. The quality of teaching is still variable, both between and within subjects, and the proportion of good or outstanding teaching needs to rise if pupils' progress is to become securely good. Systems to share best practice are in place.

The curriculum is satisfactory and adequately matched to pupils' needs. There are opportunities for pupils of all levels of ability to pursue suitable pathways. The small size of the school and the challenge of managing reducing numbers make it difficult to meet all pupils' preferences, for example those wishing to study more than one language in Key Stage 4. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are cared for satisfactorily and they are given satisfactory support to achieve equally with other groups of pupils. The gap between the achievement of boys and girls is closing. The support for pupils who do not attend regularly has only recently started to be effective and the guidance pupils receive on how to lead a healthy life is ineffective. As a result of these weaknesses and the issue of the choices pupils make at lunchtime, care, guidance and support are judged to be inadequate.

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The leadership and management of teaching and learning are satisfactory and gradually bringing about improvements. However, the ambition and drive engendered by leaders have lacked urgency and improvements are happening too slowly. Recent initiatives are only just gaining momentum. There is a lack of formal structures in line management procedures which results in a lack of regular professional discussions between middle and senior leaders that would enable the vision and ambition for the school to be shared and developed. Staff feel there is a lack of direction. Self-evaluation is accurate, but does not take sufficient account of the views of stakeholders, especially the pupils. Nevertheless, the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis and pupils and parents are generally satisfied. The governing body has ensured that safeguarding and other statutory requirements are met. Despite the weaknesses, the whole-school community has demonstrated a commitment to improvement which is starting to have a positive impact on pupils' attainment. The school exceeded its statutory targets in 2010 and current data on pupils' progress show strong evidence that targets that would place the school in the top 25% nationally will be met this year. Changes to the structure of the senior leadership team are increasing capacity; staffing difficulties of previous years have been overcome and the school is being supported through productive partnerships with external organisations. Plans are already in place to reduce this support. The school has a satisfactory capacity to make the necessary improvements, as seen by the improvements made already in the attainment and progress of pupils in 2010.

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

- Improve the development of pupils' workplace and other skills by raising attendance levels to at least 93% by summer 2011 and reducing persistent absence.
- Improve the support for pupils to lead healthy lifestyles by:
  - encouraging greater numbers to take advantage of the healthy options available in the school canteen
  - improving the facilities for pupils to socialise at lunchtimes on the premises so they want to stay in school.
- Ensure good or better progress in lessons by:
  - improving the way teachers use a range of activities, tasks and approaches in their lessons to meet the individual needs of the pupils
  - strengthening systems to monitor and evaluate lessons in order to reduce the variability in the quality of teaching between and within subjects.
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - providing clear strategic direction and increasing the drive and urgency with which improvements are made
  - taking more account of the views of stakeholders, particularly in relation to outcomes for pupils other than their academic achievement.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****4**

From broadly average attainment on entry, pupils make satisfactory progress and leave with attainment that is broadly average. They generally enjoy lessons and are happy at

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school. In 2010, the school had its best ever results, and the proportion of pupils gaining five or more grades A\* to C including English and mathematics was higher than ever before. Other data indicate that pupils across all ability ranges improved their performance, as did boys. There was a big improvement in the outcomes for pupils identified as needing additional support with their learning, and also in science. The school tracks the progress of those known to be eligible for free school meals and those from minority ethnic backgrounds and has ensured it is at least as good as that of other groups. Progress is particularly good in science.

Pupils feel safe and their behaviour is satisfactory both in lessons and around the school. They are polite and need only minor prompting when their behaviour is a little boisterous. Exclusions have fallen but are still relatively high. Pupils' low attendance has a negative impact on how well they are prepared for the world of work, but their basic skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are satisfactory. There are few opportunities for pupils to develop enterprise skills, but a programme is starting to be delivered. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of healthy lifestyles, but many do not choose to adopt the principles. There is some smoking evident on the premises and the choices pupils make regarding food are poor. Pupils make a considerable contribution to charitable causes and some serve as prefects or representatives on the school council. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the community through work in the specialism. They have a growing understanding of their rights and responsibilities and treat others with respect. They understand cultural and religious diversity and daily assemblies support their spiritual development.

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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>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	4
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</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 plan a logical series of activities in lessons and the pace of learning is satisfactory or better. They make use of assessment information in order to build on the pupils' prior learning and in the best lessons use regular and integrated assessment techniques to adjust their teaching as the lesson proceeds. In lessons where progress is only satisfactory, there are some common weaker features. The pace of learning is allowed to slow sometimes and learning objectives often focus more on what the pupils will do rather than what they will learn. A few teachers use too narrow a range of techniques to ensure activities in lessons are finely tuned to the needs of individual pupils. In the most successful lessons teachers communicate high expectations and model what the pupils will need to do to meet their challenging targets. Pupils are given opportunities to work independently and in groups and are supported to develop the skills they need. Marking is regular, but the quality of developmental feedback is variable.

The curriculum meets all statutory requirements and has a satisfactory range of options to meet pupils' needs and aspirations. Vocational courses are available through partnerships with other providers. The specialist subjects make a satisfactory contribution through the focus on technology to support learning. A satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities is available, but the school does not analyse participation or canvas pupils' views to strengthen or improve the offer.

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Pupils are happy with the information, advice and guidance provided for them. Transition arrangements from primary schools work well. Effective support through appropriate work with outside agencies is provided for pupils whose circumstances have made them vulnerable. The strategies employed to tackle the very poor attendance and high persistent absence have been ineffective until very recently.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>4</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers do not drive improvement with sufficient urgency. Development plans lack clear and measurable success criteria that would help accelerate the rate of improvement. Although minor improvements are evident in many areas of the school's work, they are fairly recent and these aspects remain satisfactory rather than good. The school has worked in partnership with another school and improvements in academic outcomes are evident. Leaders' actions have been effective in maintaining satisfactory outcomes through some challenging times; however, they are not strongly enough focused to accelerate progress further.

The governing body is supportive of both staff and pupils and effectively discharges its statutory duties. It holds the school to account and provides an adequate degree of challenge. There are plans to improve communication and engagement with parents which are currently satisfactory. The school makes a satisfactory contribution to community cohesion; however, planning for this aspect of its work lacks rigour. The work to ensure equality of opportunity is satisfactory; the various groups within the school make similar rates of progress. The school undertakes satisfactory evaluation of the participation of different groups in school life. Assemblies and lessons across the curriculum reinforce the school's ethos of equality of opportunity for all. Despite limited resources the buildings are clean and pleasant, but best use is not made of space at lunchtime to encourage pupils to stay in school.



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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>4</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>4</b>

## Views of parents and carers

Although only a small number of questionnaires was returned, the response was generally positive. Parents and carers were most satisfied with the way the school keeps them informed about their child's progress and that their children are happy at school. Despite the concern that pupils leave school at lunchtime, parents and carers are generally happy that otherwise the school keeps their children safe. They would like more help to enable them to support their child's learning.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at West Craven High Technology 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 86 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 617 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	15	17	63	73	6	7	2	2
The school keeps my child safe	17	20	61	71	5	6	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	16	19	62	72	4	5	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	19	22	55	64	9	10	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	16	19	54	63	7	8	3	3
The school helps me to support my child's learning	9	10	52	60	13	15	3	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	14	16	54	63	8	9	3	3
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)	15	17	58	67	6	7	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	16	19	54	63	8	9	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	16	19	54	63	6	7	4	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	18	21	53	62	6	7	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	11	13	59	69	7	8	3	3
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	28	51	59	8	9	1	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.**



22 October 2010

Dear Pupils

**Inspection of West Craven High Technology College, Barnoldswick, BB18 5TB**

Thank you all for the way you welcomed us into your school. We found many things that are satisfactory and some that are improving. You are benefiting from better teaching and are achieving higher standards than at the time the school was last inspected. Your behaviour is welcoming and polite and we saw how you work well in lessons especially when asked to work in pairs or groups. You have a satisfactory choice of subjects and a range of clubs and after-school activities to choose from. The staff take care of you while you are in school and you told us you feel safe. However, we are concerned for your well-being when so many of you choose not to take advantage of the healthy food on offer in the canteen and are off the premises at lunchtime. There are also some of you who need to attend more regularly if you are to make the most of the improvements the school is making to lessons and the subjects you can study. You do a lot of work to support each other and raise money for charities, but we think you could contribute more to the work being done to improve the school by sharing your ideas with the school's leaders. In order to ensure that the school continues with its efforts to improve we have issued it with a 'notice to improve' certain aspects of its work.

We have asked the school to take the following steps:

- make sure more of you attend regularly, pupils also have a role in this
- encourage more of you to stay in school at lunchtime and make healthier food choices
- provide activities in lessons that are more closely matched to your individual needs so that you make better progress
- improve the urgency with which leaders plan for and make improvements so that West Craven is better than satisfactory when next inspected
- take more account of your views and those of your parents and carers and the staff when considering what needs to be done next.

On behalf of myself and the other inspectors, I wish you all the best for your success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Elaine Taylor

Her Majesty's Inspector

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