

Whitcliffe Mount Specialist Business and Enterprise College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107780
Local Authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	356241
Inspection dates	5–6 May 2011
Reporting inspector	Michael Maddison HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1197
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	48
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Cllr Kath Pinnock
Headteacher	Mr John McGee
Date of previous school inspection	21 January 2008
School address	Turnsteads Avenue Cleckheaton West Yorkshire BD19 3AQ
Telephone number	01274 335182
Fax number	01274 335187
Email address	head@whitcliffemount.co.uk

Age group	11–18
Inspection dates	5–6 May 2011
Inspection number	356241

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 36 lessons and 37 teachers. Meetings were held with groups of students, senior staff, middle leaders, classroom teachers, the Chair of the Governing Body, the School Improvement Partner and a senior officer from the local authority. Inspectors observed the college's work, and looked at policies, data analyses, including the college's self-evaluation, students' books and 348 questionnaires completed by parents and carers. They also looked at questionnaires completed by students and staff.

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

- The achievement of all students, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Whether the quality of teaching is good enough, the use of assessment information effective enough and the curriculum appropriate enough to raise achievement and promote high outcomes for all students.
- The effectiveness of strategies to improve behaviour and attendance.
- The effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels in monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision and driving forward strategies to raise attainment and achievement throughout the college.

Information about the school

Whitcliffe Mount Specialist Business and Enterprise College is a larger-than-average secondary college. Most students are of White British heritage and the proportion from minority ethnic backgrounds or who speak English as an additional language is below average. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is average. Whereas the proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average, the proportion of students with a statement of special educational needs is average. The college has had specialist status in business and enterprise since 2004. The college is subject to reorganisation. At the end of this term the sixth form will close. With the recent closure of one of the partner middle schools, the college currently caters for a small number of students in Years 7 and 8. At the end of the academic year 2011/12 the other partner middle schools will close and Whitcliffe Mount will become an 11 to 16 school.

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

Whitcliffe Mount Specialist Business and Enterprise College is a good and improving college. Pastoral care is a strength and the college provides students with a safe and caring environment which promotes their personal development well. Behaviour is good and students have positive attitudes to their learning. Attainment is rising, as is attendance. As a result, the college is living up to its motto of 'Achieve, Enjoy, and Celebrate'. Parents and carers are overwhelmingly supportive of the college and particularly appreciate the high-quality care and guidance which are provided for their children.

Achievement is good and since the last inspection results in national examinations at the end of Key Stage 4 have shown that standards of attainment have risen. Although results in 2009 were somewhat disappointing, in 2010 the college made considerable improvements and gained its best ever results. For example, the proportion of students achieving five subjects at grades A* to C increased from 58% in 2009 to 79% in 2010, and the proportion achieving five subjects at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, rose in the same two years from 37% to 53%. The college has worked hard to improve results and has put in place a series of measures which are successfully improving attainment. Systems for monitoring progress and attainment are robust and current analyses of students' academic performance show that results at GCSE are likely to improve again this coming summer.

Attainment and achievement are improving because teaching is getting better. In the best lessons observed, students made good or outstanding progress because expectations were high, learning was challenging and work matched the needs of all students. However, such good practice is not universal. In the lessons where least progress was made, teaching failed to engage students sufficiently. This was because the level of challenge was too low and did not meet the needs of all students. Furthermore, in these least successful lessons, there were not enough opportunities for students to work independently and reflect upon their learning. Although the college has highly effective systems for tracking and evaluating students' academic performance, teachers are not using this data consistently to plan lessons and to design activities which are closely aligned to students' individual needs and academic targets. The quality of marking and written feedback is also variable.

Leadership and management are good. Senior leaders undertake their roles effectively. They have a focused agenda and, with the governing body, are giving clear strategic direction on the college's key priorities. Leaders at all levels are being increasingly challenged and held to account. However, the effectiveness of middle leaders is variable. As a result, planning, monitoring and evaluation by all leaders are not sharp enough to maintain the pace of improvement. Nevertheless, accurate self-evaluation, clear

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

improvement plans, effective measures to raise attainment, the improvements in behaviour and attendance, the robust systems for tracking students' academic performance, and the good learning observed by inspectors in classroom indicate that the college has good capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate students' achievement in all subjects by:
 - ensuring that there is greater expectation and challenge in all lessons to meet the needs of all learners
 - ensuring all students are provided with sufficient opportunities in lessons to reflect upon their learning and become independent learners
 - using assessment information more precisely to plan learning activities that are more closely aligned to students' individual needs and academic targets
 - improving the consistency and quality of marking to that of the very best in the college so that all students have a clear view of how they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Sharpen planning, monitoring and evaluation by leaders and managers at all levels to increase the pace of improvement through:
 - fully developing strategies to share and embed the good practice in leadership which exists in the college
 - ensuring that all actions and strategies are evaluated more comprehensively in terms of their impact on improving outcomes for all students.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Attainment on entry is broadly average. Students make good progress in their learning. In the best lessons they respond enthusiastically because they are motivated and the activities provided offer challenge and interest for every student, regardless of ability. However, a small number of lessons lack challenge or are dominated by mundane tasks. In these lessons, students become passive and their progress is no better than satisfactory. Some underachieve, though the college has made some progress in narrowing the achievement gap between girls and boys. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities make the same progress as their peers.

Students say they feel very safe at all times, that there is little bullying and any that occurs is effectively and quickly dealt with. Students appreciate the opportunities to be involved in sport but, along with their parents and carers, they rightly recognise that, although the college encourages them to lead a healthy lifestyle, it could do much more. Students make a good contribution to the college and the wider community and are being well prepared for their future life beyond the classroom. The college's specialism is having a greater impact upon enhancing students' wider curriculum experiences than previously with a range of enterprise activities now delivered through subject areas.

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

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	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

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?

The college is rightly proud of the quality of the pastoral care it provides for its students. Good arrangements are in place to ease the transition between one phase of education and the next. The good curriculum has been carefully adjusted to meet the needs of students. The provision is enhanced through local partnership arrangements and through a wide variety of extra-curricular activities and enrichment opportunities. However, cross-curricular provision for literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology is not well developed.

While the quality of teaching is good overall, inspectors observed teaching which was satisfactory and some which was outstanding. Good or better teaching is characterised by well-planned lessons which include a range of sequential activities which match students' needs. Teachers help students to make good progress by having high expectations, ensuring that all students are appropriately challenged, using assessment information to plan appropriate learning activities and giving students sufficient opportunities to work independently. However, such good practice is not yet embedded across the college. Students generally enjoy their lessons but, because work is not always appropriately matched to their abilities, the progress they make over time is not being maximised.

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

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The college benefits from the highly effective leadership of the headteacher and his well-focused senior team. Senior leaders are ambitious, there is an awareness of where intervention is needed, effective strategies to support students in their learning are being implemented, and there is an understanding of what needs to be done to take the college forward as it enters the period of transition from a 13 to 18 to an 11 to 16 school. In these ways the leadership team has shown that it has the capacity to embed ambition and drive forward improvement. However, at present leadership and management at all levels are not sharp enough to increase the pace of improvement. For example, not all actions and strategies are being comprehensively evaluated in terms of their impact on improving outcomes for all students. Furthermore, the good practice in leadership which exists in the college is not being shared to the benefit of leaders and managers at all levels.

Governance is good; the governing body takes an active role in the life of the college and uses its wealth of knowledge and experience to support and question college leaders at all levels. Safeguarding arrangements are rigorous and leaders and managers ensure that staff are well informed about child protection policies and procedures. Equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all students are included in the life of the college. The college knows its own and the local community well and this makes a strong contribution to community cohesion. However, students are given insufficient opportunities to engage with those from different ethnic, religious and socio-economic backgrounds within the United Kingdom.

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

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	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
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	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Sixth form

The sixth form provides a satisfactory quality of education. Teachers have good subject knowledge and the sixth-form teaching observed was at least good. Overall, students make satisfactory progress in their learning and achieve broadly average results in examinations. Academic outcomes have improved but attainment in some subjects is below the national average and in others the progress made by students is below expectations. Students enjoy their time in the sixth form. They speak positively about the learning ethos and regard the good relationships with staff and sense of community as key strengths. Although the impending closure of the sixth form has affected recruitment and retention, the college has maintained a curriculum which has provided appropriate courses for students. Sixth-form leaders can be proud of the high-quality care and guidance they provide for students throughout their time in the sixth form; students greatly value the advice and support they are given.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	3
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	3

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

Views of parents and carers

A higher-than-average percentage of parents and carers responded to the Ofsted questionnaire and most responded positively to most statements. A very small minority of parents and carers felt that the college was not doing enough to help their children have a healthy lifestyle. A small number of parents and carers added written comments. Some were negative but there were few common themes. Most parents and carers report the college keeps their children safe and greatly appreciate the level of support which is provided. However, a very small number raised concerns about inconsistent teaching. The inspection team investigated these concerns carefully and its judgements about the quality of teaching are reflected elsewhere in this report. In relation to students adopting a healthy lifestyle, inspectors consider that the college's actions to persuade students to do this are only partially successful.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Whitcliffe Mount Specialist 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 348 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1197 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	56	16	250	72	37	11	5	1
The school keeps my child safe	60	17	278	80	9	3	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	98	28	222	64	27	8	1	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	64	18	246	71	28	8	5	1
The teaching is good at this school	46	13	272	78	21	6	2	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	51	15	244	70	41	12	5	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	39	11	241	69	55	16	4	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)	57	16	252	72	19	5	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	48	14	267	77	22	6	3	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	57	16	239	69	38	11	7	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	9	251	72	36	10	9	3
The school is led and managed effectively	41	12	278	80	12	3	4	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	69	20	250	72	18	5	5	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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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.



9 May 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Whitcliffe Mount Specialist Business and Enterprise College, Cleckheaton, BD19 3AQ

On behalf of the inspection team, I would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome. We greatly appreciated the time you spent talking to us and we found your comments very helpful. As well as coming into lessons and looking at your work, we read the questionnaires completed by you and your parents and carers. We came to your college to find out what was going well and what could be improved. We found that:

- you attend a good college
- you enjoy coming to college, where you feel very safe
- you receive good care, guidance and support
- you receive good teaching in lessons
- you make good progress in your lessons, though some of you could make better progress and gain better results
- your college is well led by the headteacher and by all those who make decisions.

Although your college is providing you with a good education, we know it can do even better. As a result, we have asked the headteacher, the governing body and your teachers to focus on a number of priorities, which include making sure that:

- you are given work which is challenging and which is matched to your needs
- your teachers use the assessment information they have about each of you to guide them more closely in planning lessons
- you are given more opportunities in lessons to work independently
- your work is closely checked and marking clearly details the steps you need to take to improve.

We have also asked the college to increase the pace of improvement by ensuring that all leaders benefit from the good practice in leadership which exists in the college and by checking that everything that goes on in college supports as fully as possible improvements in your education.

The headteacher and senior leaders are determined to continue to improve your college and the teachers are working hard on your behalf. However, you have your part to play and you can certainly help your teachers with some of these things by coming to college regularly and working to the best of your ability.

We very much enjoyed visiting your college and I would like to thank you once again for being so friendly and polite.

I wish you all every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Michael Maddison

Her Majesty's Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.