

# 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>       | 379878            |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 7–8 December 2011 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Lee Northern 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> | 590                                       |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>               | The governing body                        |
| <b>Chair</b>                               | Malcolm Sterratt                          |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                         | Arnold Kuchartschuk                       |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b>  | 20 October 2010                           |
| <b>School address</b>                      | Kelbrook Road<br>Barnoldswick<br>BB18 5TB |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                    | 01282 812292                              |
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 25 lessons, each taught by a different member of staff. Of these, two were observed jointly with a member of staff from the school. A 'learning walk', consisting of short visits to a series of lessons, was conducted with a senior leader from the school. Inspectors also visited a large number of lessons during the second morning of the inspection to look at students' behaviour and attitudes to learning. Inspectors held meetings with groups of students, members of the governing body and school staff. They observed the school's work, scrutinised a range of documentation and examined evaluations undertaken by the school to ensure that it meets statutory requirements in relation to safeguarding. In addition, 92 questionnaires from parents and carers were scrutinised and inspectors also examined questionnaires returned by staff and those from a representative sample of students.

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

- Students' attainment and progress in mathematics.
- The effectiveness of provision in improving outcomes for boys.
- How effectively provision targets improvement in levels of literacy and its impact on raising boys' achievement, particularly in English.
- The extent to which leaders and managers at all levels, including governors, are effective in driving improvements, including to teaching and learning.
- The extent to which leaders and managers are demonstrating increased capacity to improve, underpinned by rigorous and robust self-evaluation.

## Information about the school

The school is a smaller-than-average school that has specialist status for technology. It serves the towns of Barnoldswick and Earby, along with several surrounding villages. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is in line with the national average. Virtually all the students are from White British backgrounds and the number of students who speak English as an additional language is low. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with the national average, although a smaller proportion than seen nationally has a statement of special educational needs.

At the previous inspection in October 2010 the school was issued with a notice to improve in relation to the effectiveness of senior leaders in accelerating the rate of improvement, attendance, improving the progress made by students in lessons and the way students are supported to lead healthy lifestyles.

**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?**

**3**

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

**3**

## Main findings

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement. Overall levels of attainment have risen since the time of the previous inspection. From their broadly average starting points on entry to the school, students make satisfactory progress and reach standards by the end of Key Stage 4 that are in line with those seen nationally. Improved systems to monitor and track students' progress are effective in identifying where students are underachieving and in targeting support for their progress in key subjects. Lines of accountability have been strengthened and clarified so that leaders and managers are now more frequently held to account for the progress made by individual students. This has resulted in a rising trend in the proportion of students achieving five or more good GCSE passes, including in English and mathematics, which is now close to the national average. Improvements in the overall quality of teaching and learning are ensuring that most students make better progress in lessons, particularly in English, science and history. Attainment in mathematics is lower than in English because provision is not consistently effective in more rapidly raising rates of progress.

However, within this picture of satisfactory achievement overall, there remains considerable variation across the curriculum and between different groups of students. Although boys' attainment is rising, it is lower than that of girls and this difference is closing too slowly. In addition, the proportion of the more-able students gaining the highest grades at GCSE is lower than would be indicated by the prior-attainment profile of year groups recently completing Year 11. This is because senior leaders have not balanced more effectively the focus on 'headline' measures of attainment with a sufficiently sharp focus on the performance of different groups of students within the school. In addition, not all teaching is effective in providing high levels of challenge for all groups of students, including the most able, or in targeting students' literacy skills more effectively. The quality of written feedback to students about how to improve their work varies greatly across the school. Targets are appropriately challenging and students know their target grades across all of their subject areas. However, boys' targets and the steps taken by the school to raise boys' expectations and aspirations, are not consistently effective in more rapidly closing the differences in their attainment. For example, lower expectations of boys' achievement are reflected in the extent to which boys predominate in lower-attaining sets across the school.

Leaders and managers at all levels are generating a greater urgency and impetus for improvement. However, the energies of senior leaders are not consistently effective in more rapidly driving improvement across the school. For example, priorities identified in strategic planning, including in relation to boys' achievement, the attainment of the more-able students and improvements in levels of literacy, are not translated effectively into improvement planning at an operational level. As a result departmental improvement planning does not identify clearly subject specific actions that will be taken to improve outcomes for different groups of students, including those to address students' levels of literacy. However, support to develop the skills of middle leaders in driving improvements has been effective in building capacity for further improvement. There is a regular programme of quality assurance which is ensuring that the work of staff at all levels is monitored more effectively and robustly. As a result the quality of provision is improving. Areas of underperformance and weaknesses in the strategy of 'early-entry' to GCSE examinations, particularly in mathematics, have been addressed. However, the proportion of teaching that is good or better is not rising more rapidly because monitoring activities do not place sufficient emphasis on students' learning and progress in lessons and over time. In addition, leaders and managers have not dealt swiftly and decisively enough to reduce the impact of staff absence on students' learning and progress. This has been a significant factor in reducing the wider impact of the specialism of technology.

Self-evaluation is broadly accurate and the school has identified those aspects of its work in need of further improvement. As a result leaders and managers are demonstrating a satisfactory capacity to improve further. This can be seen in the impact of actions taken to address the issues identified at the time of the previous inspection and in the continued upward trend in overall levels of attainment.

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Raise achievement, particularly for boys and for the more-able students, by:
  - placing a greater emphasis on improving levels of literacy across all aspects of the school's work
  - raising attainment in mathematics
  - ensuring teaching is consistently effective in meeting the needs of all groups of students in the class
  - ensuring targets are used more effectively to raise expectations and aspirations, and close more rapidly the differences in attainment between boys and girls
  - improving the quality and consistency of written feedback to students to help them to improve their work
  - reducing the impact of staff absence on students' learning and progress.

- Improve the effectiveness of senior and middle leadership to be at least good by:
  - monitoring more closely the impact of the school’s work in relation to the performance of different groups of students
  - ensuring that the evaluation of the impact of teaching and learning places a greater emphasis on students’ progress and attainment in lessons and over time, including the performance of different groups of students
  - ensuring that improvement planning identifies more sharply subject-specific actions that will be taken to raise the achievement of different groups and that these are linked closely to improvements in outcomes for students.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

|   |
|---|
| 3 |
|---|

Students make satisfactory progress in lessons and where teaching is good, progress is often better, such as in English and in history. Achievement overall is satisfactory and the progress made by students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is in line with that of their peers. It is better where they receive individual support in small group settings than it is in mainstream lessons, where not all teaching is sufficiently well adapted to meet their needs. In most lessons, students show good attitudes to learning and are keen to do well. They enjoy lessons where a variety of learning activities are used and where they have opportunities to work in pairs or in small groups. However, some teaching lacks challenge and does not capture students’ interest and engagement well. These factors contribute to the slower progress of particular groups of students, most notably the progress made by boys and by more-able students. Students say that there are too many lessons in which the class is taught by someone other than their regular teacher. As a result of these weaknesses, learning in a few lessons is sometimes disturbed by the restless or inattentive behaviour of a small minority of students.

Students generally show maturity and responsibility when moving around the school site and they understand well the importance of safe practices in workshops, in laboratories and when using modern technologies. Nevertheless, some younger students expressed their concerns in relation to occasional boisterous behaviour in narrow corridors at lesson changeover and at social times. Inspectors’ observations confirmed that levels of supervision are not sufficient to reinforce higher expectations of behaviour, or to deter more effectively those few students who choose to smoke on the school site. Nevertheless, the school has worked hard to promote effectively the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. As a result, many more students now access the enrichment activities on offer at lunchtimes and after school, particularly boys. Students say they value the choice available through the school canteen and many more students are choosing to eat healthily at break and lunchtimes. The actions taken by the school to improve attendance and reduce persistent absence have been concerted and effective. As a result, levels of attendance are now above average and are improving. Almost all students move on to further education, employment or training when they leave school. However, because of weaknesses in the development of boys’ literacy skills and students’ lower attainment in mathematics, the development of students’ skills for their future economic well-being is only satisfactory.

*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:  | 3        |
| 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                      |          |
| <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>3</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>3</b> |
| Taking into account:  | 2        |
| Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>   |          |
| <b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>  | <b>3</b> |

**How effective is the provision?**

Teaching is satisfactory overall and improving. Although occasional examples of outstanding teaching were seen, the proportion of teaching that is good or better is not high enough to more rapidly accelerate rates of progress. The school has introduced a number of initiatives to improve teaching since the time of the previous inspection and these have been effective in securing greater consistency in the quality of lesson planning. In the best lessons, students engage enthusiastically with tasks that are well matched to their abilities and interests and they are actively involved in assessing their own learning and that of other students. For example, in a highly effective history lesson for Year 9 students, characterised by good relationships and high expectations, students made good progress because the teacher had a clear focus on developing the literacy skills of all students. An emphasis on improving students' speaking and listening skills encouraged them to make links to other aspects of their learning and promoted well the achievement of higher-attaining students. In less effective teaching, students spend too long securing lower-level skills in unimaginative ways. As a result the pace of learning slows and the more-able students make slower progress because all students move at the same pace through the same work. The quality of written feedback to students varies greatly. The best examples provide valuable guidance to students on how they can improve their work, to which they are expected to respond; in other examples, books are infrequently marked or the comments provided do not help students to improve.

The curriculum makes a satisfactory contribution to improving outcomes. This is seen, for example, in students' high levels of attainment in science and in the satisfactory balance of vocational and academic courses for most groups of students. A consequence of maintaining curriculum breadth in partnership with other providers is that, for some students, their lessons in English or in single science subjects are clustered together over only one or two days. The impact of work to improve cross-curricular support for literacy is uneven and the development of numeracy across the curriculum is in its infancy. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall.

<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

Effective systems are in place to intervene in support of the academic and pastoral needs of students and the impact of this work can be seen most clearly in the improvements to overall levels of attendance. Transition arrangements into Year 7 are good and the guidance for students in making choices in Year 9 and Year 11 are effective. However, levels of exclusion are higher than normally seen in schools of a similar size and those involving students whose circumstances might make them vulnerable are disproportionately high.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The quality of teaching</b>   | <b>3</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>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>3</b> |

## How effective are leadership and management?

Leaders and managers have succeeded in establishing a drive for improvement. The use of assessment information is a significant factor in recent improvements. Lines of accountability have been clarified and strengthened and leaders at all levels are now held more routinely and rigorously to account for students' progress. However, senior managers have not moved decisively enough to mitigate the impact of staff absence on students' learning and this is a significant factor, for example, in reducing the wider impact of the specialism of technology. Teachers have welcomed the support provided to develop approaches to teaching and learning, including through the use of coaching and other professional development opportunities. However, the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning is not rigorous enough to more rapidly reduce variations within and between subject areas.

The effectiveness of the governing body is satisfactory; it knows well the school's strengths and weaknesses although its understanding of performance in relation to national benchmarks is less secure. Safeguarding arrangements – including through partnerships with external agencies - are satisfactory and in line with current requirements. While the school works hard to ensure all students can achieve well, the promotion of equal opportunities is only satisfactory because the differences in attainment between boys and girls are only slowly being reduced. The school is a cohesive community where students get on well with one another and with adults. However, the school recognises that more needs to be done to provide students with a greater understanding of religious, ethnic and cultural diversity. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

*These are the grades for the leadership and management*

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>  | <b>3</b> |
| Taking into account:<br>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> |



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|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <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>3</b> |

## **Views of parents and carers**

The proportion of questionnaire responses received from parents and carers was in line with that normally seen for secondary schools. The large majority of parents and carers who returned the questionnaire were pleased with their child's experience at the school, and feel the school promotes safety and enjoyment well. A few parents and carers expressed concerns about the number of lessons taught by temporary staff and with the impact of the behaviour of a few students on learning. Inspectors found that more could be done by leaders and managers at the school to reduce the impact of disruptions to teaching and learning caused by staff absence. In addition, a small minority of parents indicated that they would like further support and guidance in how to help their child with school work.

## 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 92 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 590 pupils registered at the school.

| Statements  | Strongly agree |    | Agree |    | Disagree |    | Strongly disagree |   |
|---|----------------|----|-------|----|----------|----|-------------------|---|
|   | Total          | %  | Total | %  | Total    | %  | Total             | % |
| My child enjoys school  | 23             | 25 | 60    | 65 | 8        | 9  | 0                 | 0 |
| The school keeps my child safe  | 22             | 24 | 59    | 64 | 8        | 9  | 2                 | 2 |
| The school informs me about my child's progress   | 17             | 18 | 57    | 62 | 13       | 14 | 3                 | 3 |
| My child is making enough progress at this school   | 24             | 26 | 54    | 59 | 11       | 12 | 2                 | 2 |
| The teaching is good at this school   | 10             | 11 | 66    | 72 | 11       | 12 | 2                 | 2 |
| The school helps me to support my child's learning  | 11             | 12 | 56    | 61 | 18       | 20 | 4                 | 4 |
| The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle   | 9              | 10 | 65    | 71 | 11       | 12 | 2                 | 2 |
| 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) | 17             | 18 | 60    | 65 | 7        | 8  | 1                 | 1 |
| The school meets my child's particular needs  | 11             | 12 | 66    | 72 | 9        | 10 | 3                 | 3 |
| The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour  | 15             | 16 | 54    | 59 | 12       | 13 | 6                 | 7 |
| The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns   | 12             | 13 | 54    | 59 | 10       | 11 | 6                 | 7 |
| The school is led and managed effectively   | 17             | 18 | 53    | 58 | 9        | 10 | 8                 | 9 |
| Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school   | 22             | 24 | 53    | 58 | 10       | 11 | 3                 | 3 |

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      | 43  | 47   | 10           | 0          |
| Primary schools      | 6   | 46   | 42           | 6          |
| Secondary schools    | 14  | 36   | 41           | 9          |
| Sixth forms          | 15  | 42   | 41           | 3          |
| Special schools      | 30  | 48   | 19           | 3          |
| Pupil referral units | 14  | 50   | 31           | 5          |
| All schools          | 10  | 44   | 39           | 6          |

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 is for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://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"><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.**



9 December 2011

Dear Students

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

You will remember that a team of inspectors and I inspected your school recently. We took careful note of the views that you expressed in our meetings with you and in the questionnaires that you completed for us. We found that you have responded well to the school's efforts to encourage better attendance and that you value the extended choice available in the school canteen and in lunchtime and after-school activities.

We judged that your school is providing you with a satisfactory standard of education, although there are differences in the progress made by different groups of students across the school. For example, we found that boys do not achieve as well as girls. We also found that more of you should be achieving grades A and A\* by the end of Year 11 and that you could attain more highly in mathematics.

We have therefore asked school leaders and managers, and the governing body, to ensure that achievement continue to rise and that the performance of boys and of higher-attaining students improves further. We have also asked leaders and managers to ensure that they look more closely at the performance of different groups of students when they are evaluating how well the school does its job and when planning their actions to improve the school. To improve the quality of teaching you receive, we have asked the school to ensure that all teaching regularly meets the needs of all students, for example, by providing you with opportunities to move on to more challenging work in lessons where this is appropriate. We have also asked that school leaders reduce the impact of staff absence on your learning.

You can play your part in improving West Craven High Technology College by continuing to attend regularly, behaving well and working hard. I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Lee Northern  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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