

Longbenton Community College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	108645
Local authority	North Tyneside
Inspection number	377794
Inspection dates	14–15 May 2012
Lead inspector	Alison Thomson

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
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	1,059
Of which number on roll in the sixth form	150
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tim Goodwin
Headteacher	Jim Cockburn
Date of previous school inspection	20 May 2009
School address	Hailsham Avenue Longbenton Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE12 8ER
Telephone number	0191 218 9500
Fax number	0191 270 6760
Email address	lcc@lblearning.com



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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 purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information 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'.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
www.ofsted.gov.uk



© Crown copyright 2012

Introduction

Inspection team

Alison Thomson
Alexandra Hook
Colin Scott
Nancy Walker
Barbara Waugh

Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector
Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspectors observed 33 teachers teaching 35 lessons, three of which were joint observations with members of the school's senior leadership team. Meetings were held with school leaders, governors and students. The inspectors observed the school's work, undertook analyses of the students' work and looked at a number of documents including those relating to safeguarding, child protection, development planning and the monitoring of the quality of teaching. The inspectors also analysed 156 parent and carer questionnaires, 151 pupil questionnaires and 93 questionnaires completed by the staff.

Information about the school

This school is a larger than average secondary school. A higher than average proportion of students is known to be eligible for free school meals. Most students are White British and speak English as their first language. The proportion of students who are disabled or have special educational needs is average, although the proportion of those who have a statement of special educational needs or who are supported at School Action Plus is higher than average. The school is a specialist college in technology. It also has a specialist unit for students who have autism. The school has many awards, including Healthy School status and Artsmark 2012 for the evaluation, celebration and development of quality arts education. The school meets the current government floor standard which sets the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

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	2
Achievement of pupils	2
Quality of teaching	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	2
Leadership and management	2

Key Findings

- Longbenton is a good school. It is held in high regard by parents and carers, students and staff alike. The school is not outstanding because school leaders have not brought about improvement as quickly as they might do, particularly in relation to achievement. The effectiveness of the sixth form is good.
- Students' achievement is good. They make good progress from average starting points in Year 7 and leave in Year 11 with attainment that is generally above national averages. Attainment in English is particularly high. Students who are disabled and those who have special educational needs also make good progress.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding. Teachers have excellent relationships with the students and engage them well in lessons. However, the outstanding quality of teaching is not widespread enough across the school. Occasionally, teaching is not adapted sufficiently well to challenge all students appropriately or to give clear enough guidance for students to be able to tell how well they are learning.
- Students are polite, confident and articulate. They behave well, have positive attitudes to their work and co-operate well with each other in lessons. They say that they feel very safe in school and that bullying of any kind is rare. Attendance has improved but is not yet above average. To date, the school has not been successful in persuading all parents and carers of the importance of regular attendance.
- Leadership and management are good and the school's promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Management of performance and leadership of teaching are helping to bring about improvement, although not as rapidly as might have been. Observations of teaching do not always have a close enough focus on students' learning. The curriculum is good, but the school has not always been proactive in ensuring that all courses are matched as well as they could be to the needs of all students.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve student achievement by:
 - sharing more effectively the outstanding practice in teaching that already exists in school so that all teachers increase their ability to promote better learning
 - ensuring that the work in all lessons is always adapted well to offer appropriate challenge to all students
 - involving students as much as possible in assessing how well they are learning through effective use of clear criteria for success.

- Strengthen the effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels to bring about improvements more quickly by:
 - focusing more clearly on the impact of teaching on learning when observing lessons
 - being proactive in ensuring that the curriculum always best matches the abilities and aptitudes of all students
 - persuading more parents and carers of the importance of regular attendance.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Students arrive with attainment that is broadly average. Progress is good overall and outstanding in English. At the end of Year 11, students' attainment is above average overall, especially so in English. All groups make good progress, including those who are disabled, those who have special educational needs and those who are known to be eligible for free school meals. Accurate data and results from early entry examinations confirm that the dip in attainment in mathematics and science at Key Stage 4 has been reversed. The performance of middle-attaining students has improved considerably. The school is meticulous in monitoring the progress of students. Timely interventions ensure that those who are underachieving catch up quickly. The better matching of courses to the aptitudes and interests of students together with successful examination preparation has impacted positively on student achievement. For example, Year 11 mathematics students were seen making good progress to improve on the C grade already secured. Year 9 French students made good progress when learning the names of parts of the body, eagerly checking their answers to a quiz; they relished the idea of competing against each other to see who had scored most.

Good literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills are evident in lessons as are students' good and sometimes excellent communication skills, such as those seen in many mature class discussions. Disabled students and those who have special educational needs do as well as their peers, because teachers generally make suitable adjustments to learning. Students often receive effective small-group and one-to-one support. This was seen to particularly good effect in the unit for students with autism where individual needs are known especially well by adults who are very skilful and sensitive in managing behaviour. Younger students in the unit made good progress in a lesson on diary work, where great attention was given to writing clearly in well-structured sentences. Students in the sixth form make good progress and achieve well compared to other students nationally, attaining above average results in many subjects. Previous relative

underachievement in Year 12 is being tackled well and students are rising to the challenges offered in lessons. For example, students in a Year 12 religious studies lesson were observed making outstanding progress as they confidently discussed and researched how to deliver opinions, not necessarily their own, such as humanistic beliefs and the Roman Catholic view on abortion. Parents and carers strongly agree that their children are making good progress

Quality of teaching

Teaching is mainly good but there is some that is outstanding. The good teaching takes account of students' prior attainment and supports their learning. Students appreciate the additional help some teachers provide outside lessons. Many teachers demonstrate strong subject knowledge and teach with passion, helping to enthuse and motivate students. This was seen in a Year 11 English lesson using AA Gill's 'Thoughts and Feelings about Pandas' to stimulate thinking about how writing presents thoughts and attitudes. Outstanding teaching with very clear success criteria enabled students to make outstanding progress and improvement in writing to achieve higher grades. This lesson promoted students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively, and especially their resilience. The students were also very sensitive when commenting upon the work of their peers. Expectations are often high and work is usually matched well to the needs and abilities of all students. However, this better practice of teaching is not shared widely enough. In lessons where teaching is less than good, learning is less secure, success criteria are not obvious and activities are poorly designed to meet the needs of all students, thereby limiting their achievement.

Most teachers use the school's marking policy consistently and students told the inspectors they found the use of 'what worked well' and 'even better if' helped them to improve their work. This, along with an increasingly personalised curriculum, contributes to the good achievement of students who are well-motivated in lessons and almost all progress on to further education, employment or training at the end of Key Stages 4 and 5. Students who are disabled and those who have special educational needs receive good support enabling them to achieve well, in line with their peers. The parent and carer questionnaire responses agree that teaching is good, as do the students who say that teaching is good and that the school helps them to achieve as well as they can. Inspection evidence confirms this.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Students are polite, welcoming and friendly. Movement around the school is orderly and safe. The vast majority of students say they feel very safe in school and have a good understanding of all types of bullying, including cyber-bullying and any that is prejudice-based. They speak of students being 'friendly' and that bullying of any kind is rare but that when any does occur it is dealt with very well. Year 11 students described how much the Sixth-Form Surfers were appreciated as people whom they could approach and with whom they could discuss any problems. Students and staff consider behaviour to be good, both in school and in lessons, and consider it has been so for some time. The vast majority of parents and carers believe behaviour to be good also and that their children are safe, although a few perceive lessons to be disrupted by poor behaviour. Inspectors observed good behaviour overall in lessons and around the school. Students' very positive attitudes to learning allow most of them to secure good achievement. Where behaviour is less good, it is in a very small number of lessons where work is not sufficiently well-matched to the needs of all students and their attention wanes.

Robust systems are in place for dealing with unacceptable behaviour and are generally applied consistently across subject areas. Most students are punctual to school and to lessons. Attendance has improved, including the persistent absence of a few students, and is just in line with that found nationally. The school recognises that more needs to be done to promote better than average attendance.

Leadership and management

Senior leaders are successful in addressing underachievement and securing improvement across the school, for example, improving behaviour so that students make a positive contribution to their learning, arresting the drop in attainment in mathematics and science and continuing to improve the quality of teaching. As a result, there is good capacity to improve. Self-evaluation is largely accurate and involves curriculum leaders fully. Students' progress is monitored thoroughly and any gaps in the performance of different groups are closing, helping to ensure equality of opportunity. Discrimination of any type is not tolerated. Professional development and performance management procedures are good and have been used effectively to tackle underperformance, for example in the quality of teaching. Leaders observe lessons regularly and usually give appropriate areas for development to ensure improvement. However, there is not always enough focus on how well students are learning when judging the quality of teaching. This means that improvements are not occurring as quickly as they might do.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision is outstanding. The school provides a wealth of high-quality cultural experiences, much of which is woven seamlessly into the good curriculum; a curriculum which is now largely matched well to the needs and aspirations of the students. There are many popular extra-curricular events, including the school's drama and musical productions or creative enterprise, such as The Use of ICT and Art in Industry. One student told inspectors how much confidence students had gained by participating in this event and producing an award-winning logo, currently used by a local bakery. This is evidence of the positive impact of the school's specialism on students' development. The sixth-form curriculum is particularly appropriate and the school works well in partnership with two other schools to deliver a wide range of subjects. Responses to the staff questionnaire show that all staff are very positive about all aspects of the school. Every response confirmed that members of staff are proud to belong to the school and that they know what the school is trying to achieve. Governance is good. The governing body is very involved with the school and challenge it well. Governors are increasingly monitoring not only the work of the school, but also their own performance. Safeguarding meets current statutory requirements.

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	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data 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.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

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

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



16 May 2012

Dear Students

**Inspection of Longbenton Community College, Newcastle-upon-Tyne,
NE12 8ER**

Thank you for making the inspection team most welcome when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed our time with you and are very grateful to those of you who spoke with us in meetings and in lessons. We judge your school to be good. There is much to praise, such as the school's outstanding provision for your spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. We feel sure that you will continue to work with your teachers to make Longbenton even better than it is now.

Your academic achievement is good and you attain standards in most of your subjects that are above those found nationally. Your behavior and safety are good, as is the quality of teaching you receive and the school's leadership and management. We are leaving the school with two key areas to improve; one is to raise further your academic achievement and the other is to strengthen leadership and management so that improvements occur more quickly. We have asked that achievement be raised further by sharing more effectively the best practice in teaching, by always matching well activities in lessons to the needs of all of you and by giving you clear ways of being able to tell if you are learning well. We have asked leaders to bring about improvement more quickly by focusing more closely on your learning when observing your lessons, by making sure that you all embark on the examination courses that are most appropriate for you and by further raising attendance through convincing all your parents and carers of the importance of regular attendance.

You can help by always ensuring that you have clear criteria for success in lessons to enable you to know if you are learning well. Some of you can help by attending school more regularly than you do at present. We would like to wish you all the best for the future and to continue to enjoy your education.

Yours sincerely,

Alison Thomson
Lead 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.