

Impington Village College

Inspection report

Unique reference number	137826
Local authority	Cambridgeshire
Inspection number	393748
Inspection dates	30–31 May 2012
Lead inspector	David Jones HMI

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Non-maintained
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	1370
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	227
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Rigby
Headteacher	Robert Campbell (Principal)
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
School address	New Road Impington Cambridge CB24 9LX
Telephone number	01223 200400
Fax number	01223 200419
Email address	office@impington.cambs.sch.uk

Age group	11–18
Inspection date(s)	30–31 May 2012
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Introduction

Inspection team

David Jones	Her Majesty's Inspector
Christine Mayle	Additional Inspector
Joan McPhail	Additional Inspector
David Webster	Additional Inspector
Lynn Cox	Additional Inspector
Del Planter	Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days notice. Inspectors conducted 58 lesson observations, including joint observations with members of the senior management team. Inspectors were able to see the teaching of 57 of the 90 teachers on the staff; a total of 28 hours was spent directly observing teaching. All staff were offered professional feedback. Meetings were held with groups of students, governors, and nominated staff. Informal discussions with students took place throughout the inspection. The inspection team took account of the responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection and observed the college's work. Inspectors looked at a range of documents provided by senior managers, the principal's reports to the governing body, the minutes of meetings of the governing body, and the college's most recent self-evaluation. Inspectors scrutinised 226 parental questionnaires, a proportionately lower than average return, and evaluated the much larger response collated from the parents' evenings at the college in March 2012. Inspectors also evaluated questionnaires returned by pupils and staff. The lead inspector spoke to a small number of parents and carers on the telephone.

Information about the college

Impington Village College became an academy on the 1 February 2012 and is part of the Impington Academy Trust which includes Impington Sports Centre Ltd. The academy is larger than the average secondary school. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is lower than the national average. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is just above the national figure and so is the proportion who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is just above average. Academic outcomes have been significantly above the government's minimum floor standards for secondary schools since the last inspection. The college operates an international sixth form that draws post 16 students from around the world.

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	1
Leadership and management	2

Key findings

- This is a good college. It has many significant strengths but is not yet outstanding because variations in the students' rates of progress remain where teaching is less than effective. Although the curriculum is good, progression and continuity of experience into the International Baccalaureate based sixth form are not strong enough.
- Achievement is good with groups of students, including disabled students and those with special educational needs, making better progress than similar groups of students nationally. Standards at age 16 are significantly above average and the proportion of students securing five higher grade GCSE passes, including English and mathematics, was significantly above average in 2009-2011. In 2011, 35% of students gained five or more A* or A grades; a notable achievement.
- Sixth form provision is outstanding. Standards in the International Baccalaureate are above the national and international averages and students make outstanding progress given their starting points.
- Teaching is good; seven out of every ten lessons were good or better, a figure that matches the principal's most recent analysis of the quality of teaching. However, inspectors judged just over a quarter of teaching to be satisfactory and observed two lessons when the teaching was inadequate.
- The students' behaviour and safety is outstanding. The college provides a calm and friendly environment and the students demonstrate their maturity on a consistent basis. Attendance is above average and the students' attitudes to learning are very positive. The integration of students with a range of complex physical and learning difficulties in all year groups is exemplary.
- Leadership and management are good. The improvements secured in behaviour and safety, standards and achievement, and in International Baccalaureate

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outcomes in recent years, have been a significant achievement. The college's capacity to improve is good.

What does the college need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all teaching is at least good or better by:
 - utilising the examples of outstanding teaching evident in all subject areas to facilitate high level independent learning and debate.
- Improve the curriculum progression from Key Stage 3 to the sixth form by:
 - providing a blend of courses that link to the challenge and opportunity provided by the successful International Baccalaureate provision.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

The proportion of students securing five higher-grade GCSE passes, including English and mathematics, has been above average since the last inspection. In 2011, the proportion of students securing a higher level pass in the English Baccalaureate subjects (English, mathematics, science, history or geography, and a modern foreign language) was nearly three times the national average. There were some variations in the progress made by middle ability students and those eligible for free school meals. However, there is robust evidence that effective action has been taken to address these matters and the outcomes in 2012 are likely to be more positive. Students' literacy skills are well above the average and are a feature of their positive contributions to lessons. The achievements of those students with physical disabilities and a variety of special educational needs, are significantly above average as a result of the quality of care, provision and exemplary inclusion they receive on a daily basis. The students' current good or better learning and performance in the classroom mirrors the quality of teaching seen on this inspection and noted by the principal in his robust evaluation of provision.

Attainment on entry to the sixth form is broadly average because the mix of students' abilities post 16 is different to the profile of the main school intake. However, the majority of post 16 students make outstanding progress. AS and A level results are above the national average. The majority of students take the International Baccalaureate and make outstanding progress, securing results well above the national and international averages. During this inspection, students made outstanding progress in half of the sixth form lessons observed and good progress on all other occasions.

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Quality of teaching

Teaching is good overall, with the teaching in nearly one in three lessons judged to be outstanding. Where teaching was most effective, tasks were well planned, questioning was skilful, and teachers nurtured high level discussion that facilitated independent learning. The use of assessment and the good quality of marking evident in the students' books are notable features of these strong lessons. In an International Baccalaureate literature lesson the outstanding quality of the planning, task selection and resources provided an excellent basis for articulate discussion of a text translated from the original Arabic. The students' insightful responses were enhanced by very good use of video and the task was skilfully linked to homework that required students to respond to the author directly via the internet.

Where teaching was good, the lessons were also well planned. However, they were not outstanding because although they produced some high level student responses, not enough time was given to nurturing the academic debate that was possible. Similarly, in some lessons, opportunities were missed for insightful questioning that could have nurtured significant achievement. Disabled students and those with special educational needs are always effectively supported and challenged by teaching assistants and the class teacher. The support provided by their peers was often outstanding.

Nearly a quarter of all teaching remains satisfactory. In those lessons where students make only satisfactory progress, tasks are not always linked sufficiently well to prior learning; marking is inconsistent in its guidance and impact; and completed work is too variable in its quality and presentation. In the very small number of lessons where teaching was found to be inadequate, learning activities were not sufficiently challenging with the result that students made inadequate progress.

The quality of teaching in the sixth form is outstanding. As a result, students are highly motivated and thoroughly enjoy their learning.

Parents and carers and students from all year groups who responded to the questionnaire or spoke to inspectors were very positive about the quality of teaching.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Students make an exceptional contribution to the safe, positive learning environment. They show very high levels of engagement, courtesy, collaboration, and cooperation, in and out of lessons. Behaviour was outstanding in 50% of all lessons and good in over 90%. The students have excellent attitudes to learning; they are highly adept at managing their own behaviour in the classroom and in social situations and appreciate the college's consistently applied approaches to behaviour management.

A small number of parents and carers expressed concern regarding behaviour. The

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students questioned during meetings and in a range of informal settings were far more positive. For example, at the end of the lunch period, students make their way to registration without any adult intervention and they are prompt to lessons. The students' behaviour in class was consistently a very positive feature of the lessons observed and their positive attitudes to learning often sustained the least effective lessons. Instances of bullying are rare and students note the college is highly effective when identifying and tackling bullying of any sort, including cyber-bullying, about which they are knowledgeable and positive.

Sixth form students make a very positive contribution to the life of the college and in the locality. They participate in or lead an extensive range of activities and events, principally through the IB Creative Action Service. This ranges from work in local primaries to that in schools in the Congo, Ethiopia and an orphanage in India.

All groups of students, and their parents and carers, noted that they feel safe at college and clearly understand what constitutes unsafe situations. Students were asked about the college's behaviour management systems; many felt the introduction of internal exclusion had been a positive feature and most felt they were treated like adults. An electrical malfunction resulted in a fire alarm on the first day of the inspection; students' mature behaviour exhibited was particularly impressive.

Attendance has risen steadily for the last three years and is well-above average. Effective monitoring of attendance and rapid follow-up procedures have made a difference. Punctuality to college is good and students move around the extensive site between lessons without hesitation and in good humour, showing consistent consideration for others. The simple courtesies and respect shown to disabled students by their peers was very impressive. The consistently mature manner in which students worked in pairs and small groups organised by the teacher were a strength noted by the inspection team.

Leadership and management

The senior leadership team's pursuit of excellence has been underpinned by a particularly accurate evaluation of the college's effectiveness as judged against the current inspection criteria. This uncompromising analysis and diagnosis has helped to raise standards and achievement over the last three years, introduced the effective use of assessment, reduced exclusion and improved attendance. The improvements secured in teaching and learning have been at the core of the college's progress in recent years, although teaching is not, as yet, consistently good or better. Senior staff joined inspectors in the observation of teaching and the views they expressed accurately matched the judgements given by the inspection team.

All leaders and managers, including the governing body, are highly ambitious for the college and lead by example. The governing body secured the conversion to academy status and, with the enthusiastic support of the senior staff, intends to expand the range of provision related to the International Baccalaureate. Although the current curriculum provision is good, senior staff have a clear understanding that

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continuity of experience 14-19 could be stronger.

The strength of middle leaders is evident in many departments, but not all. It is particularly strong in the performing arts. Leadership and management have developed a very strong sixth form ethos with international dimensions where every student feels they are an individual who receives time, care and personalised attention.

Teaching and provision are highly inclusive allowing the vulnerable to flourish and providing excellent support for disabled students and those with special educational needs. This provision contributes well to the students' outstanding spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. Students move to help their peers, disabled or otherwise, without request. They often apply a strong cultural insight to their work and spontaneously celebrate their peers' achievements. Equality of opportunity is excellent; vulnerable students noted that discrimination did not exist. The college's arrangements for safeguarding students meet statutory requirements and staff recruitment procedures are exemplary.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding college provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a college. A college that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory college is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate college 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 colleges

Type of college	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 college 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 college 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 colleges.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add 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 college and in lessons, taking into account the college'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 college.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the college to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the college 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 principal, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the college.
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 college's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the college.
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 college, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the college promotes safety, for example e-learning.

This letter is provided for the college, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their college.



1 June 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Impington Village College, Cambridge, CB24 9LX

It was a pleasure to visit the college. The inspection team was impressed by the consistently mature manner in which you worked and cooperated in lessons. Similarly, the manner in which you supported and respected disabled students was a credit to you all.

The inspection team view is that the college is good. We found some aspects to be outstanding and your contribution to this is noted in the outstanding judgement given on behaviour and to the sixth form. Well done!

I have asked the principal to ensure that all teaching is effective by utilising the manner in which the best teaching supports independent learning. I have also asked him to review the curriculum so that there is greater continuity of challenge and experience between the main school and the sixth form.

I look forward to hearing of your future success.

Yours sincerely

David Jones
Her Majesty's Inspector

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