

Bottisham Village College

Inspection report

Unique reference number	136677
Local authority	N/A
Inspection number	397849
Inspection dates	14–15 June 2012
Lead inspector	Raymond Lau

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Non-Maintained
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1039
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Philip Hodgson
Headteacher	Kate Evans (Principal)
Date of previous school inspection	26 September 2007
School address	Lode Road Bottisham Cambridge CB25 9DL
Telephone number	01223 811250
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Email address	enquiries@bottishamvc.org

Age group	11–16
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Introduction

Inspection team

Raymond Lau Additional Inspector

Elaine Long Additional Inspector

Michael Stanton Additional Inspector

Elizabeth Dickson Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. The inspection team sampled 40 lessons, observing 39 teachers. Seven lessons were observed jointly with members of the college leadership team. Meetings were held with groups of staff, students and members of the governing body. Inspectors took account of the responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. They observed the college's work, scrutinised documentation including improvement plans, records and analyses of students' behaviour, the tracking of students' achievement and examples of students' work. They looked at the college's attendance figures and monitoring information. They also analysed questionnaire responses from staff, students and 132 parents and carers.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized secondary college. Almost all students are from a White British background. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is low. The proportion of students supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average. Students travel from a large geographical area to the college.

The college converted to academy status in April 2011. It specialises in humanities and applied learning. It meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress. The college has suffered significant staffing turbulence for two years in English and mathematics, which has now been resolved. The college holds the International Schools Award and has Healthy Schools status.

The college is part of the Bottisham Education Partnership and a locality team is based on site working with a range of local organisations in supporting the college's work. At the time of inspection, public examinations were being held and, therefore, no Year 11 lessons were observed.

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	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- This is an outstanding college, where a very strong ethos of community, high quality learning and aspirational academic achievement exists throughout. One student commented: 'Bottisham is inspirational. The college helps individuals to shape well, giving us the confidence, determination and skills to succeed.'
- Achievement is outstanding. Attainment is well above average in English and mathematics. Boys and girls make outstanding progress reaching well above average attainment across a wide range of subjects. Attainment in a very small number of subjects remains average.
- Teaching is outstanding. Teachers utilise their expert knowledge of their specialisms, and assessment of their students' prior attainment in planning activities to meet the needs of all learners exceptionally well. Skilful use of questioning enables students to think and respond, thus securing a level of understanding which contributes to their outstanding progress. Oral feedback given to students is excellent and there is some exemplary marking. Occasionally, the quality of day-to-day marking in books does not sufficiently aid students' progress.
- Students' behaviour and attitudes to learning are impressive as they are polite and courteous towards each other and staff. Students are very well motivated and demonstrate a passion for learning. They work together harmoniously in lessons, freely supporting each other to learn even more. They have an excellent understanding of safety. The student leadership within the college is very strong. Students' attendance is above average.
- The Principal and Deputy Principal, together with the college leadership team, provide outstanding leadership. The personalised tracking system, known as 'The Register', has accelerated student's progress and contributed to outstanding achievement. The leadership of teaching and management of performance are outstanding. The curriculum matches students' learning needs

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exceptionally well and is highly effective in promoting their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- By September 2014, strengthen outstanding achievement by:
 - ensuring attainment is consistently well above average across all subjects
 - ensuring the day-to-day marking of students' work is detailed so that it accelerates students' progress.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Students enter the college with attainment that is typically in line with the national average. Through good and frequently outstanding teaching, students' progress is rapid and sustained. By the time they leave the college, attainment is well above average. In Years 7 to 9, students demonstrate very positive attitudes to learning as they grow in their knowledge, confidence and skills, including in working together. In a Year 9 English lesson, students eloquently responded to the task of creating a film review. Through discussion, problem solving and working together, they showed a high level of skill and made exceptional progress as they evaluated the system of age classification. In a Year 9 music lesson, students demonstrated excellent concentration and teamwork skills in rehearsing separately a popular theme tune as there were several parts, and different instruments. When uniting the parts together, they accomplished a first rate initial performance.

In Years 10 and 11, progress is promoted very well by highly effective teaching and students' personalised choice from a curriculum that provides an excellent range of options. Students exhibit high levels of engagement and motivation, and readily collaborate. In a Year 10 physical education lesson, students enthusiastically extended their knowledge of the hurdling technique. Through excellent focus, determination, outstanding coaching and feedback from their peers and the teacher, students reflected on their practice and made exceptional progress.

In 2011, the proportion of students gaining five of more A* to C grades including English and mathematics was well above the national average. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Both boys' and girls' attainment is well above the national average. Attainment in English has been consistently well above the national average. While attainment in mathematics over time is usually well above average, it was broadly average in 2011 though the proportion of students gaining A* and A grades in mathematics was well above average. Attainment in the humanities and vocational specialist areas is high. In 2011, attainment was broadly average in a few subjects, such as design and technology and drama. Current indications from observations, sampling of students' work and tracking of data show attainment is well above average this year, particularly in English and mathematics.

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The college's focus on literacy and numeracy is very well developed across the curriculum. Students' attainment in reading is accelerated through very well-targeted intervention work. Disabled students and those with special education needs make exceptional progress. A sample of students interviewed stated that support staff expertly assist in their learning. For a very small number of students known to be eligible for free school meals, attainment is broadly average. The college is carefully targeting and tracking these students and the gaps are closing.

Lessons observed during the inspection indicated that students make at least good and, in many cases, outstanding progress. This view is supported by the students, parents and carers.

Quality of teaching

Students' progress over time indicates that teaching is outstanding and during the inspection, over half the teaching observed was outstanding and it was consistently at least good. Almost all students, parents and carers agree. Teaching is exceptionally strong in English, science, French, music and physical education. Outstanding teaching is characterised by excellent relationships between the students and the teacher, and sequenced activities that are planned extremely well and personalised to learners' individual needs. Such teaching captures interest and stimulates students' knowledge, skills and understanding. In an outstanding music lesson in Year 10, students were actively rehearsing different performances and were highly engaged and worked independently. Two groups respectively performed the 'Rocky' and 'Armageddon' film theme tunes with creativity and flair which demonstrated exceptional progress. In a very few lessons, teachers' explanations are unnecessarily long which limits students' progress.

A strong and consistent emphasis on the development of literacy is evident across the curriculum. Teachers provide numerous opportunities for students to develop their social and moral skills. An outstanding Year 8 history lesson captured these elements. Students explored, 'What persuaded the British to quit India in 1947'. Through discussion, reflection, and written tasks, they were able to critically examine the reasons behind the decisions. A range of targeted activities subsequently led to accelerated progress for all students. Disabled students and those with special educational needs achieve exceptionally well because of skilled questioning and activities that precisely match their needs and interests. The teaching of reading is highly effective, especially for those students who need extra help.

Assessment is detailed and provides students with clear information on how to improve their learning. In an outstanding lesson in information and communication technology in Year 10, the exemplary feedback provided by the teacher enabled students to understand what they had to do in order to achieve a higher grade. High quality feedback is consistent across the college as is an effective dialogue between the teacher and the student. Exemplary practice is consistently evident in the humanities, although there are slight inconsistencies in the day-to-day marking of

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students' work across the college.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

The college is highly committed to developing the ideal 'Bottisham student'. Students are proud ambassadors of the college and demonstrate exemplary behaviour and attitudes to learning. In the majority of lessons, very high levels of mutual respect are evident and students collaborate exceptionally well. Their concentration is excellent and when required, they are skilful in supporting each other to achieve further. For example, in a Year 10 English lesson, students' mature discussion and highly collaborative working supported their learning when using a variety of techniques and methods. There are highly effective rewards and clear behaviour management systems in place. The college's extensive strategies for ensuring students come to school regularly lead to above average attendance.

Almost all students feel very safe in the college. They demonstrate an excellent understanding of keeping themselves and others from unsafe situations. Students' awareness of the different types of bullying is excellent and they are able to articulate their clear awareness regarding cyber-based and homophobic bullying. Few students, parents and carers expressed any concern regarding bullying. College records show a low incidence of this. Students interviewed stated that bullying is rare and is tackled effectively by the school, including by some students acting as mediators. Furthermore, they revealed an excellent understanding of different forms of discrimination, including that based on racial and sexual orientation, preparing them very well for living in a diverse modern culture.

Leadership and management

The college's leadership is outstanding because of the inspirational work of the Principal. She has successfully created a strong ethos of trust and respect in a supportive way that permeates the college. Staff share her vision and are highly committed to the college's work. The management of teaching is outstanding. At the last inspection, the college was asked to increase the proportion of outstanding teaching, and it has been very effective in doing so. Senior leaders have successfully managed temporary staffing difficulties, particularly in English and mathematics. 'The Register' developed by the college to monitor and track students' achievement, attendance and behaviour is used exceptionally well by staff and can be accessed instantly by students, parents and carers. The performance management system is outstanding and underpins the professional development of staff. Furthermore, the college leads a middle leadership programme for surrounding schools, to great effect. The governing body brings huge expertise and its members are fully involved in challenging and supporting all aspects of the college's work. They ensure that arrangements for safeguarding meet all statutory requirements.

The curriculum meets students' needs exceptionally well. It is personalised through a wide range of both academic and vocational courses. It promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well. Students' cultural

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understanding is increasingly enhanced by the extra-curricular provision in music. The strong sporting provision makes an extremely good contribution to developing students' social skills. There is a diverse and large range of leadership opportunities in which students get involved. For example, 300 students are actively involved with the college's sports leadership programme. Students are proactive in raising money for local and national charities. The school has an excellent range of international links that strengthens students' awareness and appreciation of the global work. For example, a longstanding relationship between a school in the Netherlands resulted in the 'Dutch exchange' visit to the school. The college also maintains a link with a school in Sri Lanka which enriches students' awareness of contrasting ways of life.

The college's 'specialist' status has accelerated achievement in the specialist subject areas, and enhanced provision in information and communication technology. Partnerships with local businesses and other schools are excellent.

The excellent use of data and target setting has enabled the college to target individuals and has led to outstanding achievement for all groups of learners. There are excellent partnerships with the local community in promoting students' well-being and achievement. The college's promotion of equality of opportunity is outstanding. It works rigorously to prevent any discrimination, outstanding achievement has been sustained, the proportion of outstanding teaching has increased and students' attendance is now above average. The college has an outstanding capacity to maintain quality and improve further.

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 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.



18 June 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Bottisham Village College, Cambridge, CB25 9DL

Thank you for making us feel so welcome to your college. We enjoyed meeting you and many thanks to those of you who spoke to us and completed questionnaires. These are our findings about your college.

- You go to an outstanding college. Your achievement, by the time you leave the college is outstanding. This is because you make excellent progress so that attainment is well above the national average.
- Teaching is outstanding. You are highly involved in your learning, and take part in a wide range of activities that hold your interest. Highly skilled teaching, probing questioning, the brisk pace and opportunities to work collaboratively all help you to learn as quickly as possible.
- You are proud ambassadors of the college and this is demonstrated by your outstanding behaviour and awareness of safety. You articulate clearly about the extensive range of leadership opportunities, including acting as mentors and leaders.
- Almost all of you feel very safe in and around the college. Few of you, in the questionnaire, expressed any concerns regarding bullying, and when interviewed, in formal and informal settings, you told us that bullying is rare and that the college tackles this very well.
- We have judged the college's leadership team to be outstanding. Collectively, leaders and managers are helping you to achieve the best you can. The 'register' certainly is unique and tells you instantly how well you are doing.

We have asked your headteacher and teachers to make improvements to your college by ensuring you reach well above average levels consistently in all subjects and by ensuring all marking makes clear how you could improve your work.

You can help by continuing to work hard, and by acting upon the feedback that is given to you on your written work. I wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Raymond Lau
Lead inspector

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