

Wellfield Business & Enterprise College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	119723
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	395582
Inspection dates	13–14 June 2012
Lead inspector	Sally Kenyon HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	461
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Bill Evans
Headteacher	Piers Tolson
Date of previous school inspection	9 October 2008
School address	Yewlands Drive Leyland PR25 2TP
Telephone number	01772 421303
Fax number	01772 454767
Email address	head@wellfieldbec.lancs.sch.uk



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Introduction

Inspection team

Sally Kenyon	Her Majesty's Inspector
Bernard Robinson	Additional Inspector
Denah Jones	Additional Inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 29 teachers, in 29 lessons. They also made a number of short visits to lessons to review English and mathematics, the quality of marking and assessment, tutor time and how well the college promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Meetings were held with groups of students, members of the governing body, staff and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors observed the college's work and looked at the college's self-evaluation and planning documents, external evaluations of the college's work and policy documents. They scrutinised students' work and analysed 165 inspection questionnaires returned by parents and carers, questionnaires completed by a sample of students from each year group and 31 completed by staff. Year 11 students were not attending at the time of the inspection, except for examinations, so learning was not observed for this group.

Information about the school

Wellfield Business and Enterprise College is much smaller than the average sized secondary school. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average. The proportion of students supported at School Action Plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average. The college meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

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	4
Achievement of pupils	4
Quality of teaching	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils	4
Leadership and management	4

Key Findings

- In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its students an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.
- This school is not satisfactory because since the previous inspection, leaders and managers have not been effective in securing the necessary improvement to teaching, resulting in persistently low attainment and inadequate achievement overall. Teaching has not been strong enough over time to improve attainment and quickly close the gaps between the college's performance and that found nationally.
- Achievement is inadequate and leaders and managers do not have an accurate picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the college. The curriculum does not meet students' needs effectively and this means that too few students make the progress of which they are capable. The number of students leaving school with five or more GCSE passes at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, remains significantly below the national average.
- The quality of teaching seen ranged from outstanding to inadequate. However, too often, teaching does not take account of students' prior attainment and progress is slowed because learning is not precisely matched to the needs of all students. Last year approximately half of the Year 11 students did not make the progress that is expected nationally in English and mathematics. Science was identified as a cause for concern during the previous inspection and significant underachievement remains.
- Behaviour over time is inadequate. While some students are polite, courteous and have a good attitude to learning, inspectors also saw examples of satisfactory and inadequate behaviour. The college's behaviour policy does not give staff adequate strategies to manage classroom behaviour consistently and effectively. Incidents of poor behaviour and bullying are not uncommon and minor accidents occur more

frequently than usual during break and lunchtimes. This situation is not helped by a limited number of supervisory staff on duty at these times.

- Leadership and management are inadequate. The college does not have a convincing improvement plan and performance management has not been effective in driving up achievement. Members of the governing body have some understanding of what the college needs to improve but have not challenged leaders rigorously enough to bring about the changes required.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that the proportion of students leaving with five or more GCSE passes at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics at least meets or exceeds the national average by:
 - creating a rigorous and robust monitoring system which raises teachers' expectations of all students' capabilities and ensures that targets provide sufficient levels of challenge regardless of students' abilities, backgrounds or starting points
 - enabling all staff to use assessment information precisely to match work to meet individual students' needs
 - increasing opportunities for well-planned, independent learning in lessons and devising clear assessment procedures so that accurate and more frequent assessment is used to accelerate students' progress
 - ensuring that the curriculum meets students' needs more effectively and supports them to make the progress of which they are capable.
- Improve behaviour and prevent bullying by:
 - creating a clear and effective set of procedures for managing behaviour and ensuring that they are understood by all staff and students
 - consistently and fairly applying the college's procedures for managing behaviour and preventing bullying
 - encouraging all students to develop a positive approach to the learning opportunities that teachers provide
 - increasing supervision around the college site at break and lunchtimes.
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels by:
 - strengthening the accountability of middle leaders for securing good or better teaching in their areas, ensuring that there are rigorous procedures to monitor, evaluate and review the quality of provision and its impact on progress
 - creating robust processes for self-evaluation involving a range of stakeholders
 - developing a succinct college development plan with specific, measurable and time-bound targets to help drive improvement quickly and securely
 - using performance management effectively to support improvements in teaching and learning in order to raise achievement.

Main Report

Achievement of pupils

Achievement is inadequate for all groups of students, including those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, disabled students and those with special educational needs.

Attainment on entry to the college fluctuates between below average and broadly in line with that found nationally. However, regardless of students' starting points their attainment by the time they leave Year 11 remains too low. Since the previous inspection there has been a marginal improvement in the proportion of students leaving with five or more GCSE passes at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics. Despite this improvement students' attainment remains significantly below the national average. This is because there is endemic underachievement across a range of subjects, most notably in English, mathematics and science. Science was identified as an area for improvement at the previous inspection in 2008. However, analysis of performance data shows that despite over half the cohort being entered for core science each year, the large majority of students fail to achieve a good GCSE pass at grade A* to C.

Students made good and better progress in just over half of the lessons observed by inspectors. However, progress is inconsistent across and within departments and the progress for some groups of students is severely impeded by the curriculum pathways that they are guided onto. For example, last year, approximately one-third of the students in Year 11 took at least one and sometimes two level 1 vocational courses, when they clearly had the potential to achieve much more. This significantly restricts their options for further study or employment, especially when placed alongside the continued underperformance of students across the curriculum including in English, mathematics and science. The promotion of literacy in other subjects is also variable. Although inspectors observed the effective use of keywords and marking in some lessons, the college does not have an effective plan for the development of whole school literacy and the quality of some additional literacy provision was inadequate.

The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire feel that their child makes good progress at the college. A wide range of inspection evidence does not support this view. Procedures for target setting are variable. Targets for some students present insufficient challenge and as a result these students are not required to make the rates of progress expected of students nationally. Consequently, the proportion of students making expected rates of progress in English and mathematics is in decline. Analysis of the college's most recent assessment information, undertaken at the end of April 2012, shows that just 26% of students are on track to achieve five or more GCSE passes at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics. This would represent a significant decline in results compared to the previous year and as a result, the college employed a wealth of individual curriculum interventions and study support in the six weeks before Year 11 left to begin their study leave. However, it is too soon to judge the extent to which these very recent initiatives have had a measurable or proven impact on students' achievement.

Quality of teaching

Teaching is inadequate because its quality is too variable both across and within departments. During the inspection, just under half of the teaching observed was satisfactory with a very small amount judged to be inadequate. Overall, the quality of teaching and its impact on students' learning over time are not strong enough and too many students do not make the progress of which they are capable. Less effective teaching is characterised by inappropriately planned learning which does not meet the needs and abilities of students. This is compounded by a lack of pace and opportunity for independent learning. Assessment is disjointed and a recently introduced whole college marking policy is yet to have an impact. Differences in practice between departments result in an incoherent approach to measuring the progress of different groups of students. A few parents and carers commented on the lack of support for disabled students and those who have special educational needs. The college does not track and analyse the academic progress of this group of students closely enough. Consequently, college leaders are unable to intervene effectively to ensure that these students achieve as well as they can. Where non-specialist teachers are deployed to teach core subjects their impact on students' progress is variable.

Nevertheless, pockets of good and outstanding practice were observed by inspectors. This stronger teaching results in high levels of engagement because detailed planning ensures that all students are well-supported and challenged. The most effective learning was observed where teachers made deft use of clear success criteria coupled with regular and accurate assessment throughout the lesson. This was very evident in a Year 10 English lesson where students practised speaking and listening skills by learning to infer. In groups they studied a 'dead body', actually a dummy covered by a sheet, and a set of clues including a playing card, a rose and a letter. Stimulating discussions ensued while students developed their hypotheses of what had caused the 'death' to occur. The teacher and learning support assistant circulated around the room and used clear success criteria to assess the quality of each student's contribution to the group task. All students, including disabled students and those who have special educational needs, made rapid progress.

Some good examples of social, moral, spiritual and cultural development were seen, such as a Year 9 class working in groups to investigate deforestation in Borneo and a history class enjoying a 'Dragon's Den' style activity about rationing. However, opportunities are missed for students to participate more regularly in well-planned, engaging group work.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Behaviour is inadequate. While the very large majority of parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire feel that behaviour is good at the college, some raise well-founded concerns about standards of behaviour and the way the college deals with bullying. One parent commented: 'lessons are often being stopped and interrupted by children messing about.' Another complained: 'my child has been bullied from day 1 and it still hasn't been sorted.' Other parents and carers raised concerns that poor behaviour in certain year groups and classes, particularly the lower sets, was not being dealt with effectively. The college's bullying log shows that such incidents are not uncommon. Only a small minority of students who responded to the questionnaire say they are always happy to come to school and a few students say that they do not feel safe.

Fixed-term exclusions are well above the national average overall and high for boys, those who are known to be eligible for free school meals, disabled students and those who have special educational needs. Although the college's own data show that fixed-term exclusions have fallen by approximately half this academic year, the number of referrals to the college's inclusion centre has increased significantly. College leaders do not have an effective system to analyse the type and frequency of behaviour incidents, exclusions and referrals to the inclusion centre. Consequently, the impact of the college's action to try to reduce the effect on behaviour and its promotion of equality of opportunity is diminished. For example, many students have repeated referrals to the inclusion centre and records of sanctions over time show a lack of parity when the length of referral is measured against the seriousness of the misdemeanour. While the behaviour policy has some guidelines surrounding sanctions it is unclear when a fixed-term exclusion rather than referral to the inclusion centre should be used. Attendance has improved since the previous inspection and is now average overall.

Leadership and management

Leadership and management are inadequate. Leaders and managers have not demonstrated the capacity to secure essential improvements since the previous inspection. The leadership and management of teaching and learning have not been effective in securing better teaching over time and the college's judgements about the quality of teaching are too generous. Processes for self-evaluation are ineffective in securing an accurate picture of the college's strengths and weaknesses. Improvement planning is rudimentary and does not allow senior leaders or members of the governing body to hold staff to account. Performance management is ineffective as it does not direct staff at any level to focus upon the core issues for improvement, thus, they cannot be held to account for their part in students' underachievement. The role of middle leaders remains extremely limited. They do not currently line manage their own staff, although there are plans to pass this responsibility on from senior leaders next term. Some self-evaluation and improvement planning occurs at this level, although it is not rigorous or accurate enough to have a positive impact upon achievement. While some monitoring in the form of 'book looks', learning walks and lesson observations takes place, judgements made from these do not take enough consideration of validated outcomes for students to establish why achievement is so weak over time.

The curriculum does not effectively meet the needs of all learners. In addition, the curriculum provides very limited opportunities for social, moral, spiritual and cultural education, although in the stronger lessons, inspectors observed some good examples of students working well in teams.

The promotion of equal opportunities and prevention of discrimination are ineffective because leaders and managers do not strategically analyse any variance between the outcomes for different groups, therefore, inequalities persist. The local authority has worked very closely with the college this year and rightly flagged students' achievement as a serious concern. It has offered support to leadership at all levels and assisted in key departments where underachievement is most marked. Despite this support, a range of inspection evidence, including the college's own forecasts, indicate that achievement is unlikely to improve at a fast enough rate to reduce the gap between the college's performance and that found nationally.

Arrangements for safeguarding meet 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 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.



15 June 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Wellfield Business and Enterprise College, Leyland, PR25 2TP

Please accept my sincere thanks for the warm welcome you gave the inspection team when we visited your school recently. We listened carefully to what you said and your comments really helped us to reach judgements. Thank you also for the time you spent completing questionnaires and for talking to inspectors in meetings and around the college.

The inspection team have identified a number of areas of your school's work which require swift and significant improvement. It is, therefore, necessary to place the school in 'special measures'; this will involve people from outside the school supporting its work and monitoring its progress very closely in the future. Inspectors found that:

- your achievement is not currently high enough and attainment persistently remains below the national average at the end of year 11
- leaders and managers have not secured essential improvements to achievement and the quality of teaching since the college was last inspected
- teaching is too variable and while inspectors observed some strong teaching, there is too much satisfactory and inadequate teaching over time
- poor behaviour and bullying occur more than occasionally and further prevent you from making the progress you should
- the curriculum does not meet your needs effectively and too many of you are making less progress than you are capable of in English, mathematics and science.

To help your school improve rapidly we have asked leaders and managers to:

- raise achievement in English and mathematics and across the curriculum and make sure more of you get better GCSE grades
- ensure that there is a consistent approach to managing any poor behaviour or bullying that occurs
- make sure that more lessons are good or better and that teachers tailor activities in lessons so that they better meet your individual needs
- put a clear plan for improvement in place so all staff know what their role is in helping you achieve your best and checking regularly to make sure that you are challenged to achieve, regardless of your ability, background or starting point

- accurately check that you are on track to make good progress and intervening quickly if you are not.

You can help the school to improve by showing respect for each other and ensuring that you tell adults if you feel unhappy or unsafe.

Yours sincerely

Sally Kenyon
Her Majesty's Inspector

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