

# Dawlish Community College

Elm Grove Road, Dawlish, Devon, EX7 0BY

**Inspection dates** 16–17 October 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Strong improvements in standards have been achieved by the vision, drive and resolve of the Principal and excellent leadership at all levels.
- Over the last four years the results for Year 11 students have improved significantly year on year, particularly in GCSE English and mathematics.
- Teaching is generally good and sometimes outstanding. Strengths include teachers' subject knowledge and the way that lessons develop students' understanding.
- Students are very positive about the college, attend regularly and say they feel very safe. Behaviour is good and students work together well.
- Students who are disabled or have special educational needs are supported well with individual attention. Parents greatly appreciate this support.
- There are very strong systems in place to check the college's work so that it improves. Students' progress is checked very regularly. Students who are not making the progress they should get help very quickly.
- Senior teachers observe lessons regularly to identify strengths and weaknesses. Training activities are well matched to teachers' needs.
- The range of subjects and courses is excellent. This has led to much improved examination results, attendance and behaviour.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not all teachers provide work that is suitable for every student's needs, particularly the most able, or give students opportunities to develop their understanding in practical activities.
- Marking is not used as well as it could be because students are not required to take as much notice of it as they should.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed the teaching in 34 lessons, of which five were joint observations with a member of the college’s leadership team.
- Meetings were held with three groups of students, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Governing Body and school staff, including the Principal, assistant principals, subject leaders and teachers. An inspector also heard some students read.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work, and looked at a number of documents, including data on students’ achievement, planning and monitoring documentation used by leaders to check on how well the college is doing, governors’ minutes, records of behaviour and attendance, documents relating to safeguarding and students’ books.
- Inspectors took account of eight responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection, and an additional 38 responses received during the inspection. Forty-one questionnaire responses from staff were considered.
- An inspector held telephone discussions with one parent and a representative of the local authority.

## Inspection team

Robert Pyner, Lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Fran Ashworth	Additional Inspector
Russell Bennett	Seconded Inspector
Marcia Headon	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Dawlish Community College is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The school serves the coastal town of Dawlish and the surrounding rural area, with around one third of the students travelling into college daily by bus.
- Most students are of White British heritage and almost all speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in care of the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or with a parent serving in the armed forces, is in line with the national average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is above that found nationally. The proportion of students supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average. Students' needs include specific and moderate learning and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.
- The college's recent GCSE results meet the government's floor standard, which sets the minimum levels expected for students' attainment and progress.
- The school has a specialism in technology which includes mathematics and science.
- The school is a member of a cooperative trust with two post-16 colleges, a local aviation company and the Diocese of Exeter.
- Adjacent to the college site there is a training centre, the Red Rocks Skills Centre, operated in partnership with the local authority youth service and a local further education college. A significant proportion of students use this facility.

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

- Improve the proportion of good and outstanding teaching by ensuring that all teachers:
  - make sure that work is suitable for every student's needs in lessons, particularly the most able
  - plan lessons which include practical activities in lessons so that students apply the skills they have learned
  - check that students read marking and act upon it.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Students do well at this college. This is because good, and improving, teaching is based on very thorough checking of students' progress. For example, the proportion of students achieving five or more A\* to C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics, improved by 16% between 2009 and 2011, completely closing the gap with the national figure. Results for this year show another double-digit increase.
- Examination results for other subjects vary from year to year, with consistent high performance from science and design and technology but more uneven results from, for example, drama and this year, geography and modern foreign languages. Senior leaders check the performance of each faculty. This ensures that subject leaders and teachers are held to account for results.
- Students generally know their targets for the subjects they take. The college has rigorous systems for checking on students' progress. This means that extra support is available when students are not making the progress that they should. This is the reason for the significant improvement in the progress that the students have made. However, some students, particularly the most able, could make even greater progress.
- Governors provide a pupil premium guarantee for appropriate students. Under the terms of the guarantee, eligible students get financial help with equipment, activities, trips and uniform, together with planned one-to-one support in English and mathematics and access to careers guidance and work-related courses. As a result of these measures, attendance is better and results have improved at the same rate for this group as for others. The standards reached by students known to be eligible for free school meals are the same as those reached by other students.
- The college operates an early examination entry scheme for food technology and mathematics. For food technology this enables students to work on an AS course in Year 11 and, in mathematics, the study of extension courses. Early entry in these subjects benefits students. Results for these subjects are strong and improving.
- Many students study work-related courses at the skills centre adjacent to the college site. These courses include hairdressing, catering and construction. This means that students can benefit from a mix of work-related and academic courses. As a result, there have been strong improvements in results for work-related and academic courses, and attendance has improved because courses such as health and beauty and construction are very popular. Students receive personalised teaching in English, mathematics and life skills at the centre and this contributes to rising results.

### The quality of teaching is good

- The teaching in most lessons is at least good. Some lessons are outstanding. Teachers' relationships with students are generally very good and students find their teachers supportive, approachable and helpful.
- Most teachers expect much from their students. However, in the small number of lessons where teaching is not good, teachers are not clear enough about what they expect from students and there are fewer specific tasks closely matched to students' needs. Sometimes teachers' questions are not geared closely to stretching the thinking of brighter students or do not encourage detailed answers.
- Teachers work hard to create a positive and purposeful atmosphere in classrooms where students feel safe to express their ideas. Disabled students or those with special educational needs make similar progress to all students, because they are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants. Sometimes, they are over reliant on this support as tasks are not appropriately matched to their abilities and they are not encouraged to be as independent as possible.

- Lessons are usually well planned with interesting activities to engage students of differing abilities. Sometimes, there are not enough opportunities for students to work on practical activities in order to reinforce their skills and understanding. In these lessons, learning can be slower and the teacher can spend too much time talking to the students.
- Marking is usually helpful in identifying areas in which students could improve. Some teachers do not use it consistently. Where areas of improvement are not identified clearly, students struggle to improve their work. Additionally, sometimes students do not read and act upon the marking. The presentation of work in some students' books could be better.
- The best lessons have carefully-planned and structured activities which engage students' interest and require students to take a leading role in their learning through finding out things for themselves. Students are required to work together and to ask questions about their work. Questioning and tasks are challenging, taking into account the full range of students' abilities. Teachers expect all students to join in and students know that it is 'OK' to make a mistake, as this is part of the learning process. This was seen in a science lesson where outstanding teaching enabled students to develop their mathematical skills very rapidly using measuring systems. The focused teaching, clear questioning and 'quiz trade' activity, where students challenged each other's knowledge, enabled rapid progress to be made.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- Students behave well around the college site, which is an orderly and pleasant environment. This is because all students understand the expectations for respect and courtesy for all as part of a community. The Principal and staff walk around the site regularly and know the students very well. Students say they know that every adult at the college wants to help them achieve their best. As one boy said, 'My teachers help me with my work when I am stuck. I am not afraid to ask for help.'
- Students say that they feel very safe and secure in school and parents responding to the on-line questionnaire, Parent View, agree. Students are cared for very well and those at risk of not doing very well, for whatever reason, get the support and guidance they need to thrive.
- The college is rightly proud of its considerable track record of success in its individual support for students with special needs of varying kinds. As a result, there have been no permanent exclusions for four years and fixed-term exclusions are reducing.
- In lessons, behaviour is typically good and sometimes outstanding, although some students do not participate in lessons fully. Students say that there can be some misbehaviour in a few lessons when work is dull.
- Students know what constitutes bullying and the different kinds that may occur, such as homophobic and cyber bullying. Students are clear that the school deals effectively with any bullying incidents.
- There are strong systems for ensuring students' good attendance. The college works well with parents and carers to make sure students' attendance is high.

### **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- Since the last inspection the Principal has driven improvement by his determination and passionate belief that only the best is good enough for the young people attending the college. He has been highly successful in developing a senior leadership team, faculty and subject leaders who share this passion for improvement. The excellent quality of the leadership and management of the college is recognised and appreciated by parents. The track record of success and high quality of the plans for development indicate strongly that the college will continue to improve.
- The secret of the college's success is a relentless focus on improving standards, teaching and

the subjects and courses available to students. Any sign of weaker teaching is met with a personalised package of support and training for individual members of staff. This, in turn, leads to more frequent observations until teaching is judged to be good or better. If improvement is not swift enough more formal procedures are used. Responses to the staff questionnaire show that teachers appreciate the support they have received to improve their teaching.

- One of the most impressive aspects of the college's improvement over the last few years has been the development of an excellent range of subjects and work-related courses that meet the abilities of all students. The highly effective partnerships developed through the cooperative trust and the links with an aviation company and local post-16 colleges have led to a range of learning pathways which are very effective in meeting students' ambitions.
- The siting of the Red Rock Skills Centre on the edge of the school site means that students can benefit from work-related and academic subjects. Students are very enthusiastic about the work-related courses on offer and particularly enjoy the opportunities to gain qualifications in hairdressing, catering and construction and well as work towards their GCSEs. As a result, standards, attendance and behaviour have all improved. Parents note strongly that their children are happy at college. The work of the college has spread into the wider community with, for example, the Step Up programme for Year 6 pupils at local primary schools who are at risk of not doing as well as they could.
- The college has excellent arrangements for managing the performance of teachers with a very clear link to salary progression and expectations for teachers at different levels of experience and responsibility. There is evidence of salary progression being withheld where analysis has found that the standards or progress achieved by a teacher's classes were not high enough. This represents good value for money.
- The pupil premium guarantee developed by the college is very effectively administered, and its impact in terms of standards achieved regularly measured. As a result the college has a very clear idea of what initiatives have been most effective. For example, one initiative, the accelerated reading scheme, has improved reading and spelling ages for students in Years 7 and 8. Information about the guarantee, and its impact, is shared with parents through the college website.
- The local authority has provided satisfactory support for the college. The school improvement partner provides clear reports following each visit which enable senior staff and governors to review developments in the college.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body has an excellent focus on improvement. There is a well-established Monitoring and Intervention Group (MIG) which meets monthly to review the performance of subjects, based on results. This group decides independently from staff which presentations from senior leaders and subject leaders they will review. The outcomes of the MIG group are shared with the full governing body. Through this process the governing body asks challenging questions of the Principal, senior teachers and subject leaders and knows the strengths and weaknesses of subject departments, and of teaching across the college. Through its general cycle of review the governing body is kept very well informed about the impact of performance management, salary progression and pupil premium funding. Through this process members of the governing body are able to ask perceptive questions about how well students who are supported by pupil premium funding are making progress in their work and meeting the targets set for them. The leadership of the governing body has excellent aspirations for further improvement in standards and opportunities for students.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	113518
<b>Local authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	401376

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	775
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Kath Whaling
<b>Principal</b>	Andrew Davis
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16–17 June 2010
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