

Taunton Deane Partnership College

Northfields, Bishops Hull, Taunton, TA1 5DR

Inspection dates 11–12 March 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The new leadership team has successfully merged three pupil referral units into the Taunton Deane Partnership College during the past year. They have built on previous good performance and improved outcomes for students.
- The new governing body has improved due to effective training which enables them to hold leaders to account for the college's outcomes.
- Governors ensure that those students who are eligible for additional funding benefit fully from it, so that they make the same good progress as their classmates.
- Students make good progress in English and mathematics. They make excellent progress in art and design.
- The vast majority of students leave the college at the end of Year 11 with some accreditation. The most-able students acquire some GCSEs at A*-G. Students all go on to other specialist placements or to sixth form colleges.
- Good-quality topics and subjects, tailored to match the different needs of students, meet their needs and abilities well. This ensures that most students make good progress.
- Students' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is the result of effective provision. This is based on strong community links, good relationships with local schools, and effective support and therapies to meet individual needs.
- Students' personal skills improve at the college. They benefit from opportunities to increase their confidence and self-esteem through good-quality therapies, visits, residential trips and work experience.
- These activities enable students to be well prepared for their futures in modern Britain.
- The vast majority of students behave well. Students are safe and secure.
- Teaching across the college is good. Lessons are regularly tailored to meet individual abilities.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- At times, students do not make the progress expected of them because tasks are too easy and they are not challenged by the work set.
- The progress of some students in Key Stage 3 is limited by the poor behaviour of a few.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited all three sites and observed students' learning in eight lessons, some jointly with the senior leaders. The inspector also listened to some students reading during their lessons.
- The inspector spoke to several different students about their work and about their school.
- The inspector held meetings with the headteacher, other senior and middle leaders based at all three sites, the Chair of the Governing Body, the access liaison officer and the educational psychologist. Phone conversations were held with a representative from the local authority, the new assessment leader, and the access and admissions manager.
- The inspector observed the work of the school and looked at a range of documents. These included the school's own information about students' progress, planning and monitoring documents, safeguarding information and students' work.
- The inspector took account of the school's own parent questionnaires because there were too few responses to the Ofsted online survey, Parent View. The inspector also considered 54 responses to the staff inspection questionnaire.

Inspection team

Denise Morris, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This Pupil Referral Unit was established a year ago by amalgamating three units into one college. It is based on four different sites. The Holway Centre caters for administration and support services, the other three each cater for different groups of students.
- The Deane Discovery Centre caters for younger students across Key Stages 2 and 3, and includes the Otterhead Forest School for students at the school and from other schools.
- The Taunton Centre caters for students in Key Stage 4.
- The Northfields Education Centre caters for students at all key stages. It incorporates a Key Stage 4 centre as well as the Hospital Education Unit at Musgrove Park Hospital. It also incorporates a 'Virtual Classroom' for students who are not able to attend the college in person due to their medical or personal needs.
- About a quarter of students are supported by a statement of special educational needs for their learning difficulties and a few have a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder.
- Almost all students are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium is above average. This is additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after.
- The school provides outreach support to primary and secondary schools in the Taunton area.
- The nearby Somerset College provides off-site training in vocational education for students in Years 10 and 11 for one day each week.
- The acting headteacher was appointed in January 2015.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that students make even better progress in English and mathematics by:
 - making sure that planned tasks are more challenging in order to match students' abilities better and enable them to complete as much as possible in their lessons
 - improving the behaviour of a few students in Key Stage 3 so that they can all concentrate on their learning.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- Effective leadership by the new headteacher has ensured that good outcomes have been maintained. Despite the challenges of incorporating the different Centres together, leaders have successfully created environments where teaching, behaviour, social and emotional development of students is at least good across the whole college.
- Staff are overwhelmingly supportive of the leadership and are really pleased to be working at the College. Leaders have an accurate view of each college site because of regular monitoring visits and effective relationships with students and staff. Students are pleased to be at the college. Almost all attend regularly and work hard when they arrive. They value the high-quality support that they receive. As a result, their behaviour and their learning are improving.
- Middle leaders are effective in their roles and help to manage each site, promoting the learning and behaviour of students. The literacy and numeracy leaders have worked successfully to incorporate their subjects across the curriculum on all sites. This ensures that students make good progress in these areas.
- Leaders provide good-quality training for all staff, managing staff performance well. Targets set for teachers are linked to students' progress. Increases in salary are linked to whether teachers fully meet these targets.
- There is a broad range of subjects for students on each site. Students are very enthusiastic about the provision for art, in which they achieve extremely well. Some outstanding art work was evident on display at the Taunton Centre, illustrating why students achieve outstandingly well in this subject. All students benefit from at least good-quality provision on each site so that they improve their skills. As a result, they achieve well.
- The college's successful strategies for managing students' behaviour almost always lead to calm lessons in which students work well.
- Some students told the inspector that they had been on a recent residential trip to Skern Lodge Activity Centre, which they really enjoyed. Others value the regular swimming and trips into the community. These activities support students' progress, their physical skills and personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, well.
- The college provides many activities to promote students' understanding of life in modern Britain. For example, during the inspection, students talked about how they were planning to celebrate 'Red Nose Day' to raise money for charity.
- British values are fostered through personal development such as independent travel, through learning about right and wrong, and through celebrations, visits and local links. These opportunities help to improve students' attitudes and awareness of safety.
- Leaders on all sites check students' achievements regularly to ensure that they achieve their targets. Any student falling behind is provided with extra support. This ensures that they can catch up and make at least the progress expected of them.
- Leaders regularly check the achievement, behaviour and attendance of students during off-site activities, college provision and work experience. They are currently working with other similar establishments around the country to develop an innovative approach to assessment.
- Work experience for students in Years 10 and 11 is available in local businesses such as shops and horticulture. Careers guidance is provided for older students, who say they benefit from it.
- College data show that the majority of students across each site make good progress in English and mathematics during their time there, achieving well. This is due to high levels of support. Leaders are aware that there is more to do to ensure that each and every student is fully challenged by the work set so that they all achieve equally well.
- Staff use technology to support students' learning very effectively. For example, the Virtual Classroom engages those students who cannot get to college regularly. This helps them to receive tuition and keep up with their work.
- Disadvantaged students and those with additional special educational needs receive good-quality additional support from teaching assistants. As a result, they ensure that they achieve at least as well as other students in English and mathematics.
- Leaders ensure that all students have equal opportunities. These are provided by the effective curriculum which helps students to learn about different cultures and faiths. This makes sure that there is no discrimination of any kind at the college and that relationships are positive.
- Well-received outreach work to mainstream schools is provided by the experienced outreach team. This

ensures that the college shares its expertise and is helping to maintain students in their own schools.

- The local authority provides good support to leaders, regularly checking on students' progress. It has full confidence in leadership.
- Parents who responded to the college's own questionnaire commented on how pleased they are with the improvements in the behaviour and achievements of their children.
- Leaders use the additional sports funding well to support sports trips and fund places at the forest school. These enable students to build their own confidence in outdoor activities.
- The leadership uses pupil premium funding well for the benefit of eligible students. It provides extra support and resources, including technology. As a result, these students make at least similar progress to their classmates in English and mathematics.
- Safeguarding procedures at the college meet current requirements and are effective. All staff receive regular training in identifying students at risk of harm. Procedures to ensure students' safety are fully in place. Risk assessments are always available for trips and visits.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors have the level of skills required to support the college and hold it to account. They visit the different centres regularly and there are 'link governors' attached to each site. For example, they check data and assessments thoroughly. Governors know where achievement and behaviour are good and have a thorough knowledge of the quality of teaching on each site. They make sure that the performance of staff is regularly checked and monitored. Members are aware of the college's performance data and check it with other similar establishments. Financial management is good. Governors make the best use of additional funding to support those students who are eligible to receive it. This funding is used well to enable these students to achieve as well as their classmates in English and mathematics. Governors know about procedures for setting targets for teachers and they use these to reward the best teachers.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good. College records indicate that behaviour incidents and short-term exclusions have decreased recently. This is due to improved monitoring and support for all students.
- Good behaviour is a key feature of most lessons. Leaders make sure that any behavioural incidents are regularly recorded and checked. Just occasionally, behaviour dips, which is why behaviour is not outstanding. This was mainly evident in the Key Stage 3 classes where students found it difficult to concentrate and insisted on eating sweets instead of working.
- Most students have positive attitudes to their classwork and to adults. Relationships within the different sites are almost always positive. Students enjoy the positive support which helps them succeed.
- Students told the inspector that they understand the different forms of bullying. They said that there was some bullying at the college but that it was usually dealt with quickly by staff. Girls and boys say that staff help them.
- In their questionnaires, staff at the school said that behaviour was almost always good. Students agree. Staff at each site are very supportive of their students and help them to do their best.
- Students' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are promoted well by the well-planned activities at each site. Staff provide good support and guidance to students when necessary. As a result, they learn about right and wrong. The college has a Christian ethos which also recognises the contribution made by other faiths.
- The attendance of most students improves once they start at the college. Most of those who are able to attend college do so on a regular basis.
- The college helps to prepare students well for their futures through their improved achievements and behaviour, their good qualifications and the improvements in their personal development.
- Students in Years 10 and 11 attend and behave well in lessons and on their college courses.
- The behaviour and attendance of students on their alternative provision, including work experience, is good.

Safety

- The college's work to keep students safe and secure is good.
- Policies and procedures to ensure the safety and welfare of students are effective. This ensures that

students feel safe on all sites.

- Students have a good understanding of risks and soon learn how to deal with them. For example, students are learning to be independent travellers whenever possible.
- Students told the inspector that they know how to stay safe on the internet and are aware of the risks. They said that they have lessons about keeping safe and understand how to keep themselves safe and secure.
- College staff ensure that students have a very clear awareness of risk and know how to deal with it. Risk assessments are fully in place for any activity that needs it, at the college, on visits and during their vocational opportunities.
- The behaviour and safety of students attending alternative provision or on work experience or trips is good.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Students' achievement in literacy, reading and mathematics is good because the impact of teaching during the time students attend the college is effective. This is due to the good training that staff receive and the regular monitoring of lessons by senior leaders.
- In the vast majority of lessons, expectations are high and students are expected to complete the work set. This ensures that most students make at least good progress in literacy and numeracy.
- Reading, writing and mathematics are almost always taught well. Students benefit from effective support, with many students having individually planned and taught lessons. Just occasionally, tasks set are too easy for some students and do not fully meet their needs or challenge them. At these times, students' learning and progress dips.
- The amount of challenge provided for students across the school is inconsistent. As a result, not all students complete enough work in lessons to make the best possible progress. Consequently, progress is good rather than outstanding.
- The teaching of reading is improving since the introduction of phonics (the sounds that letters make) for younger students. This was evident in Year 6 where a student worked industriously with the teacher to use phonic sounds to read unknown words successfully.
- Leaders check students' work regularly. They assess how well each student achieves and provide good guidance on how they could do better. Feedback is often verbal, but students are left with a clear view of how to improve. This is almost always true in literacy and numeracy.
- Those with additional needs are well supported by teachers or teaching assistants. Speech therapy from the therapy team helps those who require it to benefit. Different approaches for each student are used to ensure that any provision meets their needs well and helps them to improve. As a result, these students make similarly strong progress to their classmates.
- Behaviour in lessons is almost always managed well. Teachers check behaviour, ensuring that students stay on task and that lessons are not disrupted. Just occasionally, particularly in Key Stage 3, students' behaviour limits the amount and quality of work completed, and also the work of others.
- The most-able students achieve well and make good progress in lessons as well as on their accredited courses.

The achievement of pupils

is good

- On entry to the college, students' attainment is usually very low because of their challenging behaviour or medical needs. Most come to the college from mainstream primary or secondary schools and many have been out of school for some time.
- Students settle quickly. One student who had only been at the college for a day or two said he was happy to be there and wanted to do well.
- Most students settle down and start to learn so that they make good progress. However, the proportion who return to mainstream schools is very small. Most go on to specialist provision or to a sixth form college.
- All students, including those who receive additional funding and those with additional special educational needs, such as autism spectrum disorders, achieve equally well. Students make at least the progress expected of them and many make better than expected progress from their starting points. This is because of the additional support and expertise provided for them.

- The progress of disadvantaged students is at least similar to that of other students in the school and often better than that.
- Progress in reading is improving because of the phonics approach for younger students. Students read regularly and enjoy their books.
- Students achieve well in reading, writing and mathematics because of the individual or small-group teaching provided by the college. The number of students in each year group is small, but evidence from school data and from students' literacy and numeracy books shows that the vast majority make good progress from their starting points.
- In Year 11, for example, a student was using art to improve his vocabulary in an English lesson. The student was asked to describe his art work. He responded confidently to the teachers' questions because he was interested in the task. As a result, his vocabulary and use of language improved.
- The most-able students make some very good progress in mathematics and gain good qualifications in the subject. They make similarly strong progress in art. Examples of students' art work were evident on all sites. At the Taunton Centre, there was clear evidence of outstanding achievements in the subject. Several students attain GCSEs in art and design.
- Students in Years 10 and 11 attend off-site provision at Somerset College to undertake vocational courses. Monitoring shows that they achieve and behave well on these courses.
- The vast majority of students who left Year 11 last year have found alternative placements or college courses.
- In the most recent examinations in 2014, students in Year 11 attained GCSEs at A* to G in core science, mathematics, English and in art and design. Achievement is not as good as that of students nationally.
- Students at the college acquire many other forms of accreditation, including Entry Levels and Functional Skills qualifications that will support them in their futures.
- Early entry for GCSE in core science is available and was taken by two students in Year 10 last year.
- Students' sports skills are improving because of increased resources and opportunities provided through additional sports funding.

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

Unique reference number	134699
Local authority	Somerset
Inspection number	449448

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

Type of school	Pupil referral Unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	8–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	50
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Andrew Hinchcliffe
Headteacher	Sarah Briton
Date of previous school inspection	22–23 February 2012
Telephone number	01823 349338
Fax number	N/A
Email address	sbriton@somerset.gov.sch.uk

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