

Glossopdale Community College

Talbot Road, Glossop, Derbyshire SK13 7DR

Inspection dates

1–2 March 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Require improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Outcomes require improvement. Pupils enter the college with broadly average standards but by the time they get to the end of Year 11 do not make enough progress to achieve standards that are average or better.
- The gap between disadvantaged pupils and others nationally is not closing quickly enough. The most-able pupils are not making sufficient progress in a range of subjects. Pupils are not confident in applying what they learn to new situations.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement. In too many lessons, expectations of how much pupils can achieve are not high enough to secure good progress.
- Pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare require improvement. A significant minority of pupils do not have good attitudes to learning. As a result, they do not make the most of the opportunities provided. Low-level disruption is hampering the progress of pupils. The attendance of some groups of pupils is low.
- Leadership and management require improvement. Some leaders and managers are not using the assessment information they have about pupils effectively to identify how best to help them to improve.
- Governors too readily accept the information provided to them by the college. Consequently, they do not challenge leaders to secure fast enough improvement in a number of key areas.

The school has the following strengths

- The sixth form is good. The relatively new leader provides a strong and effective focus on improving the quality of teaching. Progress in academic courses is improving to match the good progress seen in vocational courses. More learners are remaining on their courses and attendance has improved; a high proportion of learners secure places at university.
- There is some strong teaching at the college. Some of the strategies used to improve teaching have proved to be effective and leaders' capacity to improve teaching further is secure.
- Improvements to aspects of teaching, pupils' outcomes and the sixth form since the last inspection demonstrate the capacity of leaders and managers to further improve the college.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes overall, particularly for the disadvantaged and the most-able pupils by ensuring teachers:
 - have high expectations of how much pupils can achieve in lessons
 - use the assessment information they have to identify and support those who are underachieving
 - plan resources and activities to help pupils develop their confidence in applying their learning to unfamiliar situations and make connections with learning in other subjects
 - share the good practice that exists in the college more widely.
- Improve attendance, particularly the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs or disability, by:
 - analysing more effectively the impact of actions taken to improve attendance so the strategies which work best can be extended and those that are less effective can be modified.
- Improve the effectiveness of leaderships and management by ensuring:
 - initiatives to improve pupils' learning are rigorously evaluated to help identify how well they have worked and what else needs to be done to raise achievement
 - governors are more stringent in scrutinising the performance information they receive from leaders and managers.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management **requires improvement**

- Not all leaders and managers analyse the information they hold about outcomes for pupils rigorously enough to bring about the improvements necessary. This is particularly true for attendance information and the progress of pupils who have special educational needs or disability.
- Self-evaluation is sometimes too generous as it does not give enough weight to the college's remaining weaknesses. This results in an unbalanced evaluation which means that leaders, managers and governors have an over-generous view of the college's performance.
- Leaders and managers accurately predicted many of last year's results in public examinations. Predictions for this year continue to show a mixed picture.
- The college sets targets that are appropriately challenging and aspirational for many pupils but not always for those who join with lower starting points. Aspirations for what these pupils can achieve are too low. Expectations for how much Year 7 pupils should achieve by the end of the year are too low.
- Leaders log clearly where they are spending the pupil premium funding. There have been some improvements in outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. However, as the college does not routinely compare their progress with the progress of other pupils nationally, leaders' expectations are not high enough. The actions taken in the current academic year have brought about improvement but progress in mathematics for disadvantaged pupils remains slow and well below the progress made by other pupils nationally.
- The college's arrangements for monitoring and improving the quality of teaching have had some impact. There has been a focus on improving the feedback given by teachers and the responses made by pupils. Pupils' books show this strategy is being adopted across most areas of the college. Leaders and managers provide opportunities for well-focused professional development. The college identifies individuals who might benefit from support plans. Targets for teachers relate to overall progress in classes but this does not always result in underachieving groups, such as the disadvantaged, making better progress. Leaders and managers have an accurate view of the quality of teaching; the areas for development identified in the college's review of teaching are similar to those identified by inspectors.
- The college curriculum meets the learning needs of pupils through a wide range of courses. In Year 7, the college has put in place a competency-based curriculum that uses history, geography and religious education as a base to develop pupils' learning skills. The curriculum is adapted from year to year in response to analysis of its impact on outcomes for pupils. Leaders correctly identified the lower than average outcomes for separate sciences last year as a consequence of the larger groups allowed to access the courses. The college has now limited access to these separate sciences to higher-ability pupils. Current tracking information suggests outcomes are likely to be better in the separate sciences this year.
- Compulsory religious education helps ensure pupils' understanding of fundamental British values. Pupils have opportunities to debate and listen to each other's views and they learn to respect difference. Extra-curricular activities are wide ranging and staff take steps to ensure that disadvantaged pupils are able to participate. These activities contribute positively to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Alternative provision organised by the college is meeting the needs of a number of pupils who might not otherwise complete their studies or are at risk of permanent exclusion. College staff monitor arrangements for these pupils appropriately.
- Impartial and effective careers advice for older pupils is in place and results in high proportions of pupils going on to further education, employment or training. Year 9 pupils said the advice they received did not link the key stage 4 options to options in key stage 5 and careers beyond that. Strategic planning for the future of the college is strong. For example, governors and the principal have secured funding for a new building on one site to replace the three currently in place.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors have a good range of skills and the knowledge required to take the college forward. They undertake training to ensure they are up to date with changes in national policy, for example with regard to changes in how pupils' performance will be measured this year.
 - The governors and senior leaders ensure poor performance is not rewarded and that there are clear links between teachers' performance and pay.
 - Nevertheless, governors have accepted some information provided to them by leaders in the college

too readily. This has lessened their effectiveness in holding college leaders to account.

- Governors monitor how the pupil premium funding is spent but are not robust enough in evaluating its impact, as they do not consider all the performance information available.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. A newly appointed designated safeguarding leader has reviewed the out-of-date child protection policy and produced an updated draft which reflects changes to statutory requirements. The college has ensured staff and governors have been trained in safeguarding issues of recent national concern, including through training to protect pupils from extremism and radicalisation. Pupils who spoke with inspectors said they feel safe and that they know how to avoid risks, for example by not revealing personal information when using social networking sites.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is too variable and some teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can learn. This explains why the outcomes for pupils require improvement.
- Not all teachers' expectations with regard to pupils' behaviour and work rate are high enough. Even though some challenging tasks and activities are planned, teachers do not always structure the lessons well enough to enable pupils to gain the skills and confidence to attempt them. As a result, pupils do not make good progress.
- Teachers' questioning in some lessons is limited to those who volunteer to answer them. This leads to teachers not identifying the pupils whose understanding is limited or incorrect. On these occasions, learning is less effective.
- Teachers are driving the development of literacy well across the curriculum. They take time to ensure pupils understand technical language in lessons. Teachers correct pupils' spelling mistakes and errors in punctuation and grammar routinely through their marking.
- Teachers' collaboration on projects which link science, technology, engineering and mathematics are promoting the use of mathematics learning across the curriculum. This provides an opportunity for pupils to apply their knowledge to unfamiliar situations. However, the opportunity to do so across a wider range of subjects is not provided.
- A college-wide initiative to strengthen marking and feedback is developing well. Most pupils receive regular feedback on their work from teachers, in line with the policy, and, through the 'rewind' time in lessons, are asked to respond to this. This is helping to further improve the progress of most pupils. However, not all marking follows the school policy.
- Where progress is good or better, teachers build on good relationships to establish habits that support learning. Pupils engage enthusiastically in the activities organised for them. They are encouraged to ask questions, explore their understanding and make connections with other learning. Teachers do this by giving pupils the chance to think about challenging questions with their peers before arriving at an answer. Mistakes made are unpicked to make sure pupils have not misunderstood the work.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Where teachers' expectations are not high enough, pupils' work rates drop. Even when teachers provide challenging work, some pupils choose to settle for the easier work if given the choice. This leads to intermittent focus on their learning and poorer progress. Pupils' attitudes to learning are better when they are encouraged and challenged effectively by their teachers. They work well with their peers and help each other.
- The pride pupils take in their work is variable. Many pupils take care to ensure their work is well ordered and neat, though others do not. In a few cases, books include a mixture of graffiti, poor presentation and lack of care and incomplete work.
- When given the opportunity to work in groups, many pupils do so constructively.
- Pupils say attitudes to learning are better in the top sets and less so in middle and lower sets. While inspectors saw evidence of this, they also observed some poor behaviour in the top sets.

- Pupils are polite and courteous towards visitors. The head boy and head girl are a credit in the way they represent the college.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Some pupils take pride in their appearance but standards of uniform are variable, with significant numbers of pupils wearing trainers and other incorrect uniform. The majority of pupils are confident and self-assured around the corridors and during break and lunchtimes.
- Attendance is close to the national average overall, but lower in years 9, 10 and 11 than in other years. For specific groups, such as disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs or disability, levels of attendance are low. The number of pupils who are persistently absent from school remains high compared to the national average for 2015.
- The college is typically orderly. However, the college's records show that low-level disruption sometimes hampers learning. There was a high level of withdrawals from classrooms over a six-week period at the beginning of the spring term. Inspectors observed some of the low-level disruption in lessons that pupils mentioned in conversations with them.
- The attendance and behaviour of pupils who receive some of their education elsewhere are good for most that attend but remain variable for a small number of pupils. A nominated contact person in the college ensures that these pupils are safe and have appropriate access to careers guidance and support for their personal development.
- Few parents raise concerns about behaviour in the college. Discussions with pupils and returns of staff questionnaires do not reflect this confidence.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Too many pupils across a range of subjects are not making the enough progress from their various starting points. The quality of work in pupils' books and the progress they make over time is too variable.
- At the end of the last academic year pupils in Year 11 reached standards in English and mathematics that were close to the national average. The proportion of pupils securing five or more passes at GCSE A* to C grades, including English and mathematics, was just below the national average. This group of pupils entered the college in Year 7 with average standards in English and mathematics. Levels of progress last year were below the national average for English and mathematics. Currently these are improving securely for English in Year 11 but less so for mathematics in Year 11.
- The college's assessment information indicates that pupils supported through the pupil premium are making better progress in English this year compared to last year. However, their progress in mathematics remains broadly the same as last year, when it was much lower than that of others nationally. Last year the gap between pupil premium pupils and other pupils nationally was large, with pupils one and a half grades behind in English and two grades behind in mathematics. The college's current assessments suggest that these gaps are likely to reduce slightly by the end of the year. Nevertheless, these gaps are not closing rapidly enough.
- The college's strategies for encouraging pupils to read widely and often in Year 7 and for some in Year 8 are well structured. Older pupils say they are given opportunities to read, but not many read for pleasure in their own time.
- Leaders are focused on raising the achievement of the most-able pupils. However, while the percentages of those securing A* and A grades are improving in some subjects, they are declining in others, according to the college's own assessment information. There is evidence that teachers are challenging pupils more effectively but too few pupils are taking up the additional challenges provided.
- The college is now supporting pupils with special education needs or disability to make better progress. Tracking information indicates that pupils are making progress that will be closer to the progress made by other pupils nationally.
- Pupils attending alternative provision are making adequate progress. This provision helps ensure that pupils who attend secure places in further education, employment or training.

16 to 19 study programmes

are good

- Leadership and management in the sixth form are now good. Clear tracking of performance and checking of learners' progress is ensuring additional support is provided to support learners who need more help. This is having a clear impact in raising achievement and accelerating learners' progress. Attendance has also been a focus for improvement and, as a result, has risen by 10 percentage points this year.
- Information, advice and guidance provided by the college have improved and have resulted in improved retention on courses from one year to the next. Improvements to the quality assurance of teaching are leading to better experiences for learners in classrooms. A number of previously underperforming subjects are now improving.
- In the lessons observed by inspectors, teachers' love for their subject and good knowledge was seen to secure effective engagement from learners. In the sixth form, teachers make good use of examination criteria to help learners improve their work. For example, in a Year 13 biology lesson the teacher drew on learners' previous knowledge and applied it to working through past examination papers to help learners secure full marks.
- Learners' personal development, well-being and behaviour are good. Learners speak positively about wanting to achieve well in lessons. Those who inspectors spoke with said they are happy at the college and were positive about the support they receive from college staff. They also said they receive good careers advice and guidance on applications for university. Over 85% of learners went on to university last year. Many secured their first choice.
- Outcomes for vocational courses last year were good and are improving further this year. Academic course outcomes were less strong last year but learners are making increasingly good progress due to the improved leadership of the sixth form and the improved guidance offered to ensure they choose courses matched to their ability and interests.

School details

Unique reference number	112957
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10001855

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	980
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	170
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julie Soboljew
Principal	Stephen Playford
Telephone number	01457 862 336
Website	www.glossopdale.derbyshire.sch.uk
Email address	info@glossopdale.derbyshire.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26–27 November 2013

Information about this school

- This is a larger than average sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported through the pupil premium is close to the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is similar to the national average.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and the vast majority speak English as their first language. A very small number of pupils are from other minority ethnic backgrounds.
- The college uses the following institutions to provide alternative opportunities for pupils learning: Buxton and Leek College, Mat Asdan and Toolbox.
- The college is situated on three sites, two next to each other with the other two miles away.
- In 2015, the college met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in lessons across a wide range of subjects and year groups between years 7 and 13. Some observations were undertaken jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors also visited a number of registration sessions and an assembly.
- Inspectors looked at the college's self-evaluation of its own performance, development plans and records on checks of the quality of teaching and information on pupils' progress, attendance and behaviour. Inspectors scrutinised pupils' work in books. Safeguarding documents and the college's arrangements to keep pupils safe were also reviewed.
- Inspectors held meeting with pupils and subject leaders responsible for different aspects of the college's work. Meetings were held with three governors and a representative from the local authority. A telephone conversation was held with an adviser who is working with the college who is commissioned by the local authority.
- Inspectors considered the views of 42 parents who responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, two phone calls made directly to the Ofsted office and 278 parental responses to the college's own questionnaire. The views of 41 staff and three students who returned a similar questionnaire were also considered.

Inspection team

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