

Casterton Business & Enterprise College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120289
Local Authority	Rutland
Inspection number	358733
Inspection dates	17–18 November 2010
Reporting inspector	David Muir HMI

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

The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	947
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	220
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Malcolm Goddard
Headteacher	Victoria Crosher
Date of previous school inspection	16 January 2008
School address	Ryhall Road Stamford PE9 4AT
Telephone number	01780 762168
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Email address	info@cbec.rutland.sch.uk

Age group	11–19
Inspection dates	17–18 November 2010
Inspection number	358733

Registered Childcare provision	Casterton Childcare Centre
Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision	52
Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision	Not previously inspected

Age group	11–19
Inspection dates	17–18 November 2010
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 30 lessons and part lessons taught by 30 different teachers, and held meetings with a group of governors, staff and two groups of students. Telephone conversations were held with a range of stakeholders, including a parent, a representative from the local authority and the School Improvement Partner. Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a range of documents, including the school improvement plan and various other action plans, the school's data and its analysis, and the school's self-evaluation form. They analysed 156 inspection questionnaires returned by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- How well-established is the new sixth form department, and what impact is it having on students' outcomes?
- To what extent have the curriculum developments at all key stages improved students' academic and personal outcomes?
- How is target setting and assessment information used to inform teaching and learning and measure achievement?
- How effective are the middle leaders in driving improvement?
- Are the school's procedures for monitoring and evaluating performance robust and effective?
- What impact has the college's specialism had on its work and students' outcomes?

Information about the school

Casterton Business and Enterprise College serves east Rutland and Stamford. The school's sixth form provision was established in September 2010 and is situated in Oakham, the county town, 10 miles from the main school. The majority of learners in Key Stages 3 and 4 come from the neighbouring county, Lincolnshire. The students are predominately of White British heritage and the proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below the national average. The proportion with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs is slightly above average. The number of students who are known to be eligible for free school meals is significantly below the national average.

The college runs full day care Early Years Foundation Stage provision, for children aged 0 to 5 years, on site. The college gained its specialist status in 2005 and has achieved a number of awards for its work, including National Healthy School Status, International Schools Award, The NACE Gifted and Talented Challenge Award, Artsmark and Sportsmark.

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: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

This is an outstanding school which places the needs of the students at the centre of its work. Students make good progress from their below average starting points and leave with average attainment. Several aspects of students' personal development are outstanding. For example, attendance is particularly high compared with national averages. Students' adoption of healthy lifestyles is excellent due to the level of participation in physical activities and sports and their healthy diet choices, among other factors. Personal development outcomes are supported by outstanding care, guidance and support, especially that provided by student services and 'truancy call', which has been the driving force behind the increased attendance in recent years. Arrangements to support transition into and out of the school are also significant strengths. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding due to the strong links with a wide range of cultures, which the school plans well for.

Leaders and managers set high expectations and lead by example. Consequently, all staff work hard to improve their own practice and contribute towards the school's continual improvement. This was exemplified by the work of the leadership team last year during the setting up of the new sixth form provision. Members took on extra responsibilities, but school improvement continued nevertheless. These professional qualities are also reflected in the highly effective work of middle leaders who take on whole-school responsibilities while ensuring that students' performance in their subject areas continues to improve. The accuracy of the view that leaders have of the work of the school, and the significant improvements in areas such as the curriculum and academic outcomes, demonstrate that the school has outstanding capacity to make further sustained improvements.

The quality of teaching is good, and some is outstanding. This, alongside the outstanding curriculum, supports students' good progress. The leadership and management of teaching and learning are outstanding. Rigorous monitoring has clearly and accurately identified strengths and weaknesses in teaching. For example, there are inconsistencies in some aspects such as planning for students' different needs and the provision of written feedback to students on how they can improve their work. These are currently being robustly addressed by appropriate action.

Several aspects of leadership and management, including arrangements to safeguard students and to promote community cohesion, are outstanding. The school has developed extremely strong relationships with local businesses, schools and colleges to support improved well-being and learning for all students. The sixth form provision has got off to a good start, however, it is too new for its overall effectiveness or students' outcomes to be judged by the inspection. Nevertheless, leadership and management of the sixth form are good and effective plans are in place to improve the provision, for example by developing

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the curriculum to better meet the needs of the students by the introduction of more vocational courses. The childcare provision is outstanding in all aspects of its work.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the overall quality of teaching so that more lessons in the school are good or better by:
 - ensuring that all lessons have tasks and activities matched to the learning needs of all students
 - providing consistent written feedback to all students to ensure that they know how to improve their work in all subjects.
- Improve the sixth form provision by:
 - developing the curriculum to include a wider range of subjects
 - monitoring the progress of all students to ensure that the curriculum is meeting their needs.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Students enter the school at the start of Year 7 with attainment that is below national averages, and with literacy levels which are particularly low. However, students make good progress and when they reach the end of Key Stage 4 have at least average levels of attainment. The school monitors progress carefully to check for any underachievement, and works hard to close any gaps so that all groups, including boys, girls and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. Good progress is supported by good learning in lessons. In the best lessons, tasks are adapted well to ensure that all students are able to make good progress in relation to the targets that are set for them. Students enjoy coming to school and this is exemplified by the high rate of attendance across the school. Behaviour is good and records on exclusions and other events show that it is improving. However students are sometimes too passive in class. Students' work in and contribution to the local community is outstanding, for example through links with local businesses and schools, work on refurbishing a local theatre and environmental projects.

The school runs a range of activities which support students' development of outstanding workplace skills. These include well thought-out work experience opportunities in local businesses, participation in the 'Young Chamber' to promote awareness of government and visits from local and national business people to raise students' aspirations in this area. The school works hard and successfully to provide opportunities for students to meet people from other cultures and backgrounds. These include a partnership with a school in a nearby city and visits to several different countries, with other links being developed. These have helped to develop a strong cultural awareness among students. Students' personal and social development is significantly enhanced by the numerous leadership opportunities open to them throughout their school life. The students' contribution to charity work is exemplary.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Teaching seen during the inspection was generally good, although some outstanding and some satisfactory teaching was also seen. In the best teaching, staff have high expectations of all students and planning provides for a range of activities which are linked to different styles of teaching and learning. Effective lessons proceed at a brisk pace, with sufficient opportunities given for students to work individually, in small groups or as a whole class. Support by teaching assistants is well tailored to allow students to work independently wherever possible. In less effective lessons, students are sometimes too passive because of too much teacher talk and a slow pace. Feedback is generally good and supports the systems to set targets and monitor progress for individual students. However, written feedback is inconsistent and does not always follow the school's policy.

The highly personalised curriculum provides an outstanding array of opportunities and courses for students in Key Stages 3 and 4. Excellence is particularly evident the use of the SEAL (Social and emotional aspects of learning) curriculum and the introduction of vertical and academic tutoring used alongside the school's twin initiatives of NILE (numeracy, information and communication technology, literacy, and enterprise) and STAR (success through alternative routes) in Key Stage 3. These allow students to receive targeted intervention to support their development in the NILE and STAR areas of learning. Although there are four pathways at Key Stage 4, they are sufficiently flexible to allow personalisation for students by mixing courses from different pathways or changing

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pathways if necessary. Progression routes out of school are very clear. There is a huge variety of extra-curricular activities on offer, such as drama, art, music and the innovative 'Study Extra' homework club. Over 80% of students are involved in at least one activity per week.

The school's exceptional range of partnerships and the skills of staff provide outstanding care, guidance and support. Excellent induction allows students to settle quickly into the school in Year 7, and transition into Key Stage 4 is skilfully managed with good careers advice provided in partnership with the Connexions service. This continues when students reach the end of this key stage with very effective advice given about future options. Outstanding collaboration between the school and a range of external agencies such as the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service, the Targeting Adolescent Mental Health in Schools organisation and social services allow the care and educational needs of all learners to be exceptionally well met. The school's 'student services' supports families who find themselves in vulnerable circumstances extremely well.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The outstanding leadership team, supported by a very effective tier of middle managers has developed a clear vision and climate for success. This common sense of purpose has been a key element in the school's overall improvement since the previous inspection. Leaders work hard to raise students' aspirations and life chances. The action plans that are in place, and the procedures for identifying areas for development, show that leaders have an accurate view of how to continue to improve. The school places equality at the centre of its work. This is demonstrated by the way the gap between the progress of girls and boys has been reduced and by the equal progress of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities to their peers. The governing body provides good support and constructive challenge for many areas of the school's work, but members are not all fully aware of the improvements required or how this might be achieved.

Views of parents and carers are actively sought and acted upon. However, several parents and carers of students in the new sixth form commented through the questionnaire that communication with the school's leadership has been difficult since September. The leadership team are looking at ways to remedy this and to engage all parents and carers. The school's work on promoting community cohesion is outstanding and the action plan shows the school's in-depth knowledge of its context, how its work fits in to the community which it serves, and how to promote it further at a national and international level. The school is very much seen as a hub of the local community. For example, it

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provides a location for adult education classes and a children's centre. The school's safeguarding procedures and policies are outstanding. All adults working with children are appropriately recruited and vetted and exceptional support for pupils and their families is provided by the school's 'Wraparound Team'. The college specialism directly contributes to improvements in students' outcomes and the curriculum. For example, it has been used to introduce more vocational courses and to engage students at risk of disaffection by raising their aspirations.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make outstanding progress in this stage. They enter with skills that are below expectations and leave to move into Reception classes with skills that are above expectations for their age in all areas of learning. Children are becoming increasingly independent in their learning and have exceptional skills in information and communication technology. The progress that they make is due to the outstanding quality of provision. The use of the outdoor area is exemplary and supports learning extremely well. It is used to develop learning through play and by building on children's own experiences. This strongly promotes their outstanding acquisition of skills in a range of areas, including communication, problem solving, reasoning and number, and physical development.

Staff skilfully encourage children to initiate their own learning activities by allowing them to follow their own interests. An example of this, seen during the inspection, was when a child placed a chair in the middle of the room and sat on it making train sounds. Other children soon joined in and staff quickly took the opportunity to develop their language skills by questioning children about their experiences of train journeys. The children's imagination was fired as they collected objects to serve as steering wheels and brakes.

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This resulted in outstanding language and creative development and contributed significantly to the children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Assessment is immediate and observations are noted and used speedily to plan the next stage of children's learning. Partnership with parents and carers is very strong and staff use their conversations with parents and carers to plan activities that relate to children's interests at home.

Outstanding management systems and procedures ensure that children are well safeguarded and looked after. Leadership and management are outstanding. Staff are reflective practitioners, evaluating their performance and using the information to devise effective action plans to improve the provision. An example of this is the recent change to the parents' notice board, where information is now written in more parent-friendly language.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

Sixth form

The sixth form has been a part of Casterton Business and Enterprise College for less than three months so it is not possible to judge students' outcomes or overall effectiveness at this time. However, students made good progress in the majority of lessons seen during the inspection. Senior leaders have a clear vision for the sixth form based on an analysis of local need. Early evidence suggests that the provision is already leading to students' improved outcomes.

The senior leaders have evaluated the quality of the sixth form curriculum and are already implementing changes. Currently, it is predominantly based on A-levels and does not cater for the full range of students' abilities, although some BTEC courses have now been introduced with more planned. Students feel that they have been provided with good guidance in helping them to make choices for their futures, both coming into the sixth form, and when getting ready to plan for their adult lives. The tutorial programme is becoming increasingly rigorous in monitoring students' progress and providing them with flexible support.

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These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	1
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	1
The quality of provision in the sixth form	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

Approximately one-sixth of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. There was a clear difference between the response by parents and carers of students in Key Stages 3 and 4 and of those in the sixth form. The more negative responses in the sixth form questionnaires related to a perceived breakdown in communication with the school. The inspection found that plans are being developed to review this area to develop lines of communication with parents and carers. Some general concerns were raised about students' behaviour. However, conversations with students, and inspectors' first hand evidence did not support these concerns.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Casterton Business & Enterprise College to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 156 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 947 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	51	33	97	62	8	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	51	33	103	66	2	1	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	49	31	98	63	6	4	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	52	33	89	57	10	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	38	24	103	66	5	3	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	19	105	67	12	8	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	35	22	101	65	18	12	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	43	28	91	58	8	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	35	22	106	68	6	4	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	52	33	79	51	15	10	5	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	15	104	67	9	6	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	48	31	100	64	3	2	3	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	52	33	96	62	3	2	2	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the 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:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.

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.



19 November 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Casterton Business & Enterprise College, Stamford, PE9 4AT

I am writing to you on behalf of all of the inspectors who visited your school recently. Thank you very much for making our visit very interesting and enjoyable.

We found that your school is outstanding. The headteacher and staff all work very hard to make your time in school very happy and successful. Your personal development is a strength of the school, in particular the work that you do within the local community and on adopting healthy lifestyles. We judged that you make good progress during your time in the school and those of you who need extra help also make good progress due to the support you receive from the school. Overall, the care, guidance and support which you receive are outstanding and you receive excellent advice about your future options. Your behaviour is good and you have good attitudes to learning, however, some of you need to be more active in your learning to make it more effective. At present, it was not possible to make an overall judgement for the sixth form as it has only been part of the school for a very short time. However, the childcare provision that is managed by the school is outstanding.

I have asked the school to improve some things to make the school even better than it is now.

Improve the overall quality of teaching so that more lessons in the school are good or better by:

- ensuring that all lessons have tasks and activities matched to the learning needs of all students
- providing consistent written feedback to all students to ensure that they know how to improve their work in all subjects.

Improve the sixth form provision by:

- developing the curriculum to include a wider range of subjects
- monitoring the progress of all students to ensure that the curriculum is meeting their needs.

Once again, thank you very much for the time you spent with us during the visit and we would like to wish you well for the future.

David Muir

Her Majesty's Inspector

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