



Farringdon Community Sports College

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 108858
LEA Sunderland
Inspection number 278062
Inspection dates 2 February 2006 to 3 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Judith Straw

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Allendale Road
School category	Community		Sunderland
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		Tyne and Wear, SR3 3EL
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0191 5536013
Number on roll	1131	Fax number	0191 5536017
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Councillor Peter Gibson
Date of previous inspection	1 February 2000	Headteacher	Mr David Thornton

Age group 11 to 16	Inspection dates 2 February 2006 - 3 February 2006	Inspection number 278062
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Farringdon Community Sports College is a larger than average school for boys and girls aged 11-16 years. The percentage of students entitled to free school meals is broadly average, as is the number of students identified as having specific learning difficulties/disabilities. A substantial number of students come from areas of high social deprivation. The great majority of students come from white British backgrounds.

The college has had specialist sports status since 2002 and has been a Full Service Extended School since November 2003. The college operates a joint sixth form with four other local schools.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

The college provides satisfactory education overall, a judgement which matches its own self evaluation. Staff and students are justly proud of their well-established specialist sports college status and their role in the federation of three sports colleges in Sunderland. The college has benefited in numerous ways from enhanced provision and shares its expertise and enthusiasm with other local schools. Full extended school service provision, gained in 2003, has also widened the opportunities available to students. The wider community sees the Jubilee centre, a joint resource managed by the school and the local community, as a model of good practice. Academic standards and achievement have been below average in recent years but improved considerably in 2005 and are now satisfactory, although improvement is needed in English and mathematics. Students' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Behaviour is satisfactory but attendance is unsatisfactory and has been so for several years, despite the wide range of strategies put in place by the college to improve it. Teaching is satisfactory overall with some excellent practice which has not been spread widely enough across the college. The use of learning targets is inconsistent. The increasingly broad curriculum assists in helping to raise standards as more students are placed on courses which match their levels of ability. The college cares well for vulnerable students and those with learning difficulties and disabilities but has not previously identified the progress of every individual so that underachievement can be tackled early and effectively. Excellent links with other schools and agencies help to support and guide students. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The new headteacher has good vision for the future which he shares with the senior management team. Together, they are determined to raise standards further. The capacity to improve is good. The college has made satisfactory progress on the issues raised at the last inspection and provides satisfactory value for money.

not applicable

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the use of learning targets to accelerate the present rate of improvement in English and mathematics.
- Monitor teaching and learning to raise all teachers' expectations and to spread more widely the good practice currently in school.
- Actively target the minority of parents who are failing to send their children to school regularly.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory overall. The attainment of the annual intake of students to Year 7 is broadly average. Inspectors agree that a barrier to progress throughout the college is the substantial number of students joining Year 7 with below average

reading ages. Nevertheless, the students make satisfactory progress and reach average overall standards in Year 9.

Results in tests at 14 have been static for some years, but recently improved. Results in English at the end of Year 9 increased to being significantly above average in the summer of 2005. GCSE results in Year 11 in 2005 were the best in the school's history. The percentage of students who achieved five or more passes at grades A*-C was above the national average. The performance of the current Year 11 shows that they are within reach of the challenging targets set by the college and should continue the upward trend in results. Girls achieve better than boys overall; both make satisfactory progress, as do the students with specific learning difficulties/disabilities. Results are well below the national average in the pass rates of mathematics and English at GCSE.

The percentage of students gaining 5 or more grades at A*-G is in line with the national average. The achievement of students following an alternative curriculum based on vocational courses is satisfactory.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

The personal development and well-being of students is satisfactory. Despite the wide range of strategies and targets developed by the college to improve attendance, it remains unsatisfactory. The extent of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. They collaborate well in lessons for personal, social and health education, are keen to contribute to whole class discussion and demonstrate good levels of social responsibility. Most students enjoy being at college, feel safe from being bullied and are confident that they would receive adult support if necessary. Attitudes to learning and behaviour are at their most positive when students are interested and engaged in their lessons. Students' behaviour overall is satisfactory. Students receive three hours of physical education weekly and many participate in the various activities at lunch times and after school, so they are gaining a good understanding of the importance of leading a healthy lifestyle. Students make stable and positive relationships and many contribute to the local community through fund raising activities for example. There are many opportunities for them to take responsibility through the Junior Sports Leadership scheme. They demonstrate self confidence in role play situations and make steady progress in their literacy, numeracy and ICT. The many vocational options and opportunities for work experience help to prepare students for the future.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Students learn best when they are actively involved in their work and have difficult tasks to do. They respond well to the challenge of thinking for themselves or of working with other students to discuss and understand

complex issues. The best teaching gets students involved in this way. Lower attaining Year 10 students were able to evaluate the visual impact of designs and to analyse how viewers might react to such media images. They relished the demanding nature of this work and made very good progress. The teacher had high expectations, the work was adapted to stretch every student in the class and the pace of learning was rapid. Such good practice is not uniform and sometimes the teaching is either pedestrian or poor. Students become bored, are easily distracted and behaviour deteriorates. The challenge facing the college is to raise the quality of all teaching by spreading the excellent practice widely. The way in which teachers assess students' work is inconsistent and the quality of advice given on how to improve varies. The college has recently devised a good procedure for monitoring and analysing students' progress over time

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory with some significant strengths. It is particularly successful in promoting the achievement of students with more complex learning difficulties and disabilities. The system introduced in Year 10 and 11 guides students towards courses and qualifications that are increasingly well matched to their aspirations and capabilities. The college promotes the value of practical skills relevant to the needs of the local area well; this is evident in the wide range of vocational subjects on offer in Years 10 and 11. The college has good but as yet unrealised plans to develop more flexible and individualised learning plans in Years 7, 8 and 9 in order to build more successfully on all students' earlier learning. Learning support teams are effectively deployed in subject areas as well as alongside specialist provision, such as the groups that offer extra support to more vulnerable students. The curriculum promotes students' personal development well. Students benefit from the college's specialist status in numerous ways, for example when coaching or organising sporting events within partner primary schools. An excellent range of out-of-school activities caters well for the interests and aptitudes of the large numbers of students who take part.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall but with several strengths.

The arrangements for child protection are securely in place. Care for vulnerable students is very supportive, effectively monitored, and helps successfully to support students with poor attendance, and those at risk of being excluded. Such students are identified early and good arrangements support them. Systems for monitoring students are not yet sufficiently thorough so that the individual student's progress is effectively tracked. Arrangements for the safeguarding of students are good. Students say that bullying is dealt with effectively. In practical lessons students are taught how to handle equipment safely although there are aspects of the physical environment in DT which need attention. Students are well informed about future options. Links with other agencies concerned in promoting the welfare of students are excellent. The school

effectively promotes the health and well-being of its students by emphasising healthy eating and fitness.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The newly appointed headteacher has a clear vision for improvement which is shared by senior managers and is firmly focused on improving standards for all students. The college development plan establishes an uncompromising agenda for this improvement and staff are responding well to increasing levels of accountability. The college knows its strengths and weaknesses well as a result of more rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning. It recognises that there is still much work to do to raise standards, especially in the core subjects of English and mathematics, and has begun to make plans to improve standards. Senior managers are now making better use of technology to put systems in place which track students' progress more consistently and effectively so that they meet challenging targets. The college seeks the views of both parents and students and increasingly acts upon them.

Financial management is secure, resources and accommodation are adequate and the college provides satisfactory value for money. Specialist sports college status, good links with the community and with outside agencies (particularly through the excellent Jubilee Centre) all continue to have a positive impact on the opportunities the college offers to enhance students' learning. Governors are experienced and very supportive of the college. Satisfactory progress has been made in dealing with issues from the last inspection and under its new leadership the college has the capacity to embrace change and improve further.

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Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	3	NA
The attendance of learners	4	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

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Mr David Thornton

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SR3 3EL

6 February 2006

Dear Students

As you know your college was recently inspected and this letter is to tell you about the results of the inspection.

First, I would like to thank you, on behalf of all the inspection team, for your co-operation during our visit. We were interested to see you at work and to hear your comments about the college. Most of you seem to be proud of your college, especially the specialist sports' status which you enjoy, and the wide range of sporting activities on offer. Many of your parents say the college is doing a good job, but some of them are worried about bullying.

Most of the college's work is satisfactory. The performance of students in Year 9 tests and examinations in Year 11 improved last year, although results in English and mathematics need to be better. Your behaviour is satisfactory and when you are enjoying interesting and challenging lessons your behaviour is good.

Most of the teaching you receive is satisfactory; some of it is excellent, but some needs to be improved. The facilities and resources provided, especially for sport, are improving and the new buildings are splendid. You have a good range of courses for GCSE and other qualifications in Years 10 and 11 but the college knows it needs to develop the courses you do in Years 7 to 9. You obviously appreciate and enjoy the many extra-curricular opportunities offered to you. The school staff work hard to care for you and to help you work in a safe and healthy environment.

We have asked the college to work on two areas in particular to help it improve and you have a part to play here. The first is to improve results in English and mathematics and to make sure all the teaching is as good as the best. The second is to look at ways of ensuring you attend school regularly.

We think the new headteacher has made a very good start and that he and the senior teachers know how to help you to achieve even more. We have every confidence the college will continue to improve. We wish you success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Judith Straw

Lead inspector