



# Kirk Hallam Community Technology College

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 112947  
**LEA** DERBYSHIRE LEA  
**Inspection number** 279062  
**Inspection dates** 9 November 2005 to 10 November 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mr. David Martin LI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Godfrey Drive
<b>School category</b>	Community		DE7 4HH
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01159301522
<b>Number on roll</b>	1048	<b>Fax number</b>	01159445884
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs. Janet Mallett
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 December 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr. Peter Hamer

<b>Age group</b> 11 to 16	<b>Inspection dates</b> 9 November 2005 - 10 November 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 279062
------------------------------	--	------------------------------------

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Kirk Hallam Community Technology College is a popular and oversubscribed college situated in the Erewash area of Derbyshire close to Ilkeston. It serves a mixed catchment area drawn from both urban and rural communities. The academic ability of the student body on entry is broadly average. Almost all the students are from white British backgrounds. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of students who have learning difficulties or disabilities is also below average, but the proportion with statements of special need is in line with that of schools nationally. The college has been a specialist technology college since 1998 and has been identified as a 'developer of vocational education'. The college has 'leading edge' status and forges many external links and partnerships that enrich learning opportunities for students.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

The college is providing consistently good education across all the major aspects of its work and has many outstanding features. This closely matches the college's own evaluation of its performance. Differences in judgement between inspectors and the college are recorded in standards, which the college evaluates as outstanding rather than good. The school evaluates personal development as good while the inspection team judged this to be outstanding. The standards that students achieve overall are good. Students' progress is also good and in some cases outstanding at Key Stage 4. There is an excellent climate for learning and strong commitment to continuous improvement. Senior staff have high expectations. Teaching is predominantly good with many strengths. The tracking and monitoring of students' progress is very effective. Students' personal development is outstanding. They behave well at all times and enjoy attending and participating in college life. The curriculum is innovative and meets the needs of all groups and individuals, particularly at Key Stage 4. There is outstanding care and support for students, enabling them to achieve well. Senior leaders identify priorities for development in the college but do not always systematically monitor and evaluate how these developments improve performance. The college could gather and act upon the views of students, parents and stakeholders more consistently. Heads of department monitor and evaluate the performance of their subjects effectively and feel increasingly empowered to further develop teaching and learning. The college has improved significantly since its last inspection, especially in raising performance at GCSE. The college's development plan is strongly focused on raising standards and further increasing opportunities for students. There is very good capacity for further improvement, building on the excellent practice and expertise which already exists in the college. The college provides good value for money.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Further raise standards in Year 9 national tests in English and mathematics, particularly for higher attaining students.
- Adopt a more strategic approach to development planning, by identifying how initiatives are to be monitored and evaluated for their impact on school improvement.
- Systematically collect and act upon the views of students, parents and other stakeholders.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Students' achievement is good overall. Students enter the college in Year 7 with attainment which is broadly average. They make good progress and, by Year 11, their standards of attainment in national examinations are well above average overall. Students with learning difficulties make equally good progress and are enabled to achieve well. The college exceeded its targets in 2005, and its targets for students' attainment are well founded on a careful analysis of individual students' performance. The college evaluates achievement as outstanding. There is indeed outstanding

achievement at GCSE in some subjects, particularly those associated with the college's specialist technology status. Subjects where students gained a significant percentage of higher A\* and A passes include child development, design and technology, drama, French, geography, German, history, music, physical education, religious education, biology, and physics. Performance in English and mathematics at GCSE, although satisfactory, falls some way behind that of the stronger subjects. Vocational courses are effective in enabling students to develop well their particular strengths and aptitudes. In Years 10 and 11, the college's curriculum increasingly encourages higher achievement. Standards in the Year 9 national tests are above average overall. However, the progress students make between Years 7 and 9 is not yet as high as that between Years 7 and 11. Year 9 students attain higher standards in science than in English and mathematics. However, results for potentially higher attaining pupils in the Year 9 tests for English were below average during the past two years, and those for mathematics have dropped slightly. Nevertheless, the heads of department have analysed their department's performance very effectively, and are taking the necessary action.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Although the college judges this as good, inspectors found that students' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Students thoroughly enjoy attending the college and their achievements are valued and celebrated very well. The college is a very orderly community where students' attitudes and behaviour are excellent. They speak enthusiastically about the numerous and varied opportunities they have to develop important skills and experience which will assist them when they leave school. During lessons students are well motivated and interested, and they contribute well to discussions. Attendance is in line with the national average, although unauthorised absence is commendably low. The level of exclusions is low. Students develop a keen sense of responsibility within the college's supportive and inclusive environment where they feel safe. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. During assemblies and lessons such as personal and social education and humanities subjects, students reflect on a wide range of issues affecting their own lives and the lives of others. This has resulted in an impressive charitable response to world events such as the Tsunami appeal and the college has initiated the building and equipping of a new nursery in Sri Lanka. Students show a great deal of mutual care and support for each other through their role as mentors and buddies. They understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle, and they are adamant that bullying is not an issue because any incidents are dealt with promptly and effectively. Students have an increasingly strong voice through the college council and they are secure in their knowledge that their views are important in the college's development.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching is good overall, with many strengths. Faculty leaders have worked hard to encourage a reflective approach to teaching, which has resulted in many improvements to practice. This has been done through rigorous evaluation of teaching, often involving mutual review, and the provision of high quality training. The college's leadership of the region's partnership of schools and colleges has contributed significantly to this. Enthusiastic, well focused teaching, combined with pupils' highly positive attitudes and tangible enjoyment of learning underpins their good and often exceptional progress. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 in particular, appreciate the increased demands which their teachers make on them to take responsibility for their own learning. The characteristic strengths of teaching are: high expectations and excellent relationships, often aided by effective partnership with very able learning support assistants; and thorough, detailed planning, informed by teachers' good knowledge of the range of needs of all their students. This was exemplified in an outstanding information and communications technology (ICT) lesson seen during the inspection. Teaching engaged students' interest, excited them through the very effective use of a range of good quality technology and helped them to make exceptional progress towards completing a portfolio for their exams. Regular assessments, the marking of written work and thorough feedback are consistent across faculties, ensuring that students have a clear understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The college's curriculum is excellent, and is significantly enriched through its technology college status. This adds considerably to the breadth of students' learning experiences in Key Stage 3 and provides a wealth of optional courses for older students. It also benefits enormously from the extraordinary range of extra curricular activities offered to all its students, including many sporting activities, expressive and performing arts, modern foreign languages and model formula one racing car club. The majority of these involve the local and wider community to very good effect. The college provides a highly relevant curriculum that responds to local needs as well as the interests and aptitudes of students. Its breadth and distinctive character ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities, and have helped considerably to ensure the achievement of all groups of pupils. The college works very effectively with a wide range of external agencies to enhance its provision.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 1

Inspectors agree with the college's self-evaluation that it provides outstanding guidance and support for its students. Students are exceptionally well cared for by a committed staff and this makes a strong contribution to their achievements and personal development. Students have access to very good quality information and advice and they speak highly of the help they receive. A strong feature is the very regular progress checks in Key Stage 4, when projected grades are shared with students and parents. Highly effective and consistent systems are followed to monitor and regularly review students' progress and there are excellent procedures to identify and support students who are underachieving. The arrangements for safeguarding students' welfare are very well established and excellent procedures are followed for their protection and health and safety. Excellent working relationships are built within tutor and year groups and this ensures that academic and personal support is readily available to students. The college, with the support of 'Connexions', makes excellent provision to assist students with their career ambitions. Support for students with special educational needs is very good and is very effective in helping them to reach their full potential.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 2

Leadership and management of the college are good. The principal and senior staff maintain an excellent ethos and climate for learning. This is partly built upon the college's specialist status and pursuit of continuous improvement to extend opportunities for students, and partly through excellent care, guidance and support. The process of review and planning for development is detailed, inclusive and strongly focused on raising standards, but could be more precise in terms of how actions are monitored and evaluated. The college is enterprising in seeking opportunities to work in partnership and collaboration with others, always with the benefits for students in mind. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning are well established amongst senior staff and middle managers, who increasingly feel empowered to contribute to college improvement and the development of teaching and learning. The college's self-evaluation is broadly accurate other than in the areas identified in this report. The views of students, parents, governors and staff are heard in formal and informal ways, although the approach to collecting and acting upon stakeholder views is not embedded and systematic. The college effectively matches learning to students' needs and abilities. Teachers and other staff are well qualified and suitably deployed. Resources are managed well and value for money is good. Governance of the college is good. There is a clear focus on the main priorities of learning and standards and governors provide challenge to encourage further improvement. Senior staff roles are clearly defined and well matched to their expertise. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the curriculum provided and standards achieved by students at Key Stage 4. There is very good capacity for further improvement. The leadership of the college is very well regarded by parents.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## Inspection judgements

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

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	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

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	NA

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	NA
The behaviour of learners	1	NA
The attendance of learners	1	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	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	1	NA

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1	NA

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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**

As you know, your college was recently inspected and this letter is to tell you about the results of the inspection. Firstly, however, I would like to thank you all, on behalf of the inspection team, for your cooperation and help during our visit. We greatly appreciated your forthright comments and opinions and were very impressed with your enthusiasm and positive attitude to college life. The inspection found that your college was consistently good with many outstanding features. You are encouraged to learn and aim for high targets. Results of tests in Year 9 are almost always above the national average and GCSE results are often extremely good. You make very good progress from when you join the college. You behave well in lessons and around college and support and help each other. There is mutual respect and consideration between you and your teachers. Teachers review your progress regularly and give you support to improve when necessary. The college provides an outstanding range of courses which give you choices to suit your interests, particularly in later years. The advice you get on making choices and on careers is also good. There is an impressive range of activities for you to be involved in and a great number of you enjoy these. You have good opportunities to find out about the world of work. Your teachers take a great deal of trouble to find additional opportunities and funding to improve the college, as seen in the excellent provision for information and communication technology (ICT) and the specialist technology college status. They are constantly seeking to improve further the teaching and learning in the classroom. There are some aspects of the college's work that could be further improved. If results in Year 9 tests in English and mathematics were even better, this might improve these subjects at GCSE to the standard of the very best subjects. You will understand how success in these core subjects is vital to your future lives in education and beyond. The college council is starting to have a real say in how the college works. You should all feel confident to express your views on how the college should develop in the future. The principal, the governors, teachers and associate staff are keen to hear from you and your parents as to how the college might improve. The managers also need to check which of the many exciting initiatives that the school is involved in makes the most difference to your future success. We are confident that your college can continue to thrive as a centre of excellence in education. We wish you well in the future.