



# Castle View School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 115335  
**LEA** ESSEX LEA  
**Inspection number** 279577  
**Inspection dates** 26 January 2006 to 27 January 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs. Sheila Nolan LI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Meppel Avenue
<b>School category</b>	Foundation		SS8 9RZ
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01268696811
<b>Number on roll</b>	893	<b>Fax number</b>	01268511585
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr.Terry Lovell
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 December 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr. Russell Sullivan

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 16	26 January 2006 - 27 January 2006	279577

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Castle View School is a specialist science college, which draws most of its pupils from the local community of Canvey Island. Almost all of the pupils in this average-sized school are of white British descent and very few have a home language other than English. The school is currently oversubscribed despite a falling school population across the Island. The number of pupils eligible for a free school meal is low. The proportion of pupils joining or leaving the school other than at standard times is similar overall to the national picture although, unusually, just over one fifth of the 2005 GCSE cohort entered the school after Year 7. Generally, pupils enter the school with attainment slightly below average, although the proportion identified as having learning difficulties or those with disabilities is lower than the national figure. The attainment profile of the present Year 7 is above average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 3**

Castle View, an improving school, provides a satisfactory quality of education. Senior leadership is effective and has established a clear direction for the school. Senior managers evaluate the school's performance realistically and take appropriate measures to promote improvement. Governors support and challenge well. The school is taking a number of robust measures to improve middle leadership which remains uneven. Value for money is satisfactory. From a just below average base, pupils achieve satisfactorily although standards in some subjects, particularly English, mathematics and science, are not as high as they could be by the end of Year 11. The school acknowledges that its specialist science status has not had sufficient impact on improving standards. In Years 7 to 9, all groups of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, make at least satisfactory progress. In contrast to previous years, the 2005 Year 11 group did not achieve well enough, despite sound teaching and the high priority given to the care and support of pupils. The school rightly recognises that the guidance pupils receive on improving their day-to-day work could be better. Parents support the school well. They recognise that positive attitudes and good behaviour are promoted. Only very few are concerned about the behaviour of a small number of pupils. The school has demonstrated good capacity to improve and has made steady progress since the last inspection.: attitudes, behaviour and attendance have improved; teaching has developed and is never less than satisfactory. The school has successfully gained science specialist status. Standards at Year 9 have risen to match the national average and the overall trend at Year 11 is rising. Progress in lessons is satisfactory. Other than the full implementation of a daily act of collective worship and improved outcomes in science, issues from the last inspection have been addressed.

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

- continue to implement measures to raise achievement across the school, particularly in English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 4
- improve the quality of classroom assessment so that pupils understand clearly how to better their work
- accelerate the impact of science specialist status on whole-school performance
- fully implement the daily act of collective worship.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Standards at both key stages have been rising since the last inspection. National test results at the end of Year 9 show an encouraging upward trend. In 2005, pupils achieved the school's best ever results reaching average standards in English, mathematics and science. All groups of pupils achieved well with the best progress in science as befits the school's specialist status. In 2005, however, results in examinations at the end of Year 11 declined with 34% of pupils gaining five or more A\* to C grades, well short of the school's target. Just under a quarter of pupils gained these higher grades in both English and mathematics. In contrast to the previous two groups, the pupils made

too little progress. Boys, in particular, and those pupils warranting support, achieved least well. Examination results in science were disappointingly low at Key Stage 4 and below the whole-school results. The school has clearly identified a number of contributory factors to the downturn in results: exceptional inward mobility; a legacy of challenging behaviour; the unexpected implications of introducing the new modular GCSE examinations and the unexpectedly low GNVQ results that are still subject to appeal. It recognises the need for a substantial improvement in the proportion of pupils gaining five or more higher GCSE grades, and has taken steps to remedy any underachievement in the current Year 11. Modular results, the progress seen in lessons, and the school's tracking system indicate that Year 11 is likely to meet the school's aspirational target of 54%.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Inspection evidence confirms the school's evaluation that pupils' personal development is good. They are proud of their school, consider it 'brilliant' and develop positive relationships with teachers and friends. Because they enjoy school, they attend regularly, and show interest in their work. Behaviour is generally good and any potential disruption is well managed. Pupils feel safe, use the school building sensibly at breaks, and report that there is little bullying. Where it occurs, 'it is soon sorted out'. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is also good, although the school recognises that more could be done to develop the pupils' understanding of the customs and cultures of others. Many pupils make a difference to the lives of others by their valuable contribution to the wider community through voluntary work and representing the school on local and national bodies. Their personal development is further enhanced by the opportunity to participate on the school council, and, for older pupils, to become prefects. A significant number take on further personal challenge and community service when completing their Trident Gold Award. There are many instances where highly committed peer mentors have helped to resolve difficulties for and between others. Pupils adopt healthy lifestyles through their participation in games and other physical activities, and by supporting in increasing numbers the school's greater emphasis on healthy eating. Through carefully organised careers education, work experience, enterprise days and good business links, they are well prepared for the world of work.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The school rightly judges that since the last inspection the quality of teaching and learning is more consistently sound across subjects. However, the school's monitoring of teaching provides a more generous distribution of good lessons than that found by inspectors. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. No lessons seen were unsatisfactory and just under half were good. In the best lessons, relationships are

very positive and classroom management skilful. Because of well chosen, stimulating activities, pupils join in purposefully and enjoy learning. They are confident to ask questions and communicate their understanding to the class. Such good teaching is rooted in teachers' clear explanations and competent use of computers and interactive white boards. Support is well targeted for those with learning difficulties and disabilities. Across otherwise satisfactory lessons, however, there are some common characteristics. Planning is conscientious but teaching is not always well enough structured to ensure that all staff know clearly how much each pupil understands. Some lessons develop too slowly because of little variety in the pupils' tasks. As a result, pupils are not always challenged well enough and adopt a co-operative but leisurely approach to learning. The quality of marking is too variable and does not regularly provide good enough guidance to pupils on how to improve their work. The school already recognises that improving the quality of day-to-day assessment to accelerate progress is a priority.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The good quality curriculum has greater flexibility than at the last inspection. A broader range of vocational courses is now included at Key Stage 4. Pupils can choose from vocational/applied courses in information and communication technology (ICT), business, law, science, art and leisure and tourism. Despite the school's currently modest progress as a specialist science college, the improved resources have enabled the school to provide a wide range of additional options and out-of hours learning. Pupils enjoy geology, archaeology and classical civilisation as well as many sports, music and drama activities. Younger pupils have generous opportunities to work with and learn about ICT. Homework clubs and other subject- support sessions round off each school day. Holiday courses are well attended by many groups, including gifted and talented pupils. The school provides well for the small number of pupils who are better served by work-related programmes. All legal requirements for citizenship and personal and social education are met.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. Child protection, health and safety, and risk assessment procedures are clear. Pupils talk positively of the help they get from their tutors and value the support of other key staff. They say they can talk freely about problems to adults and feel respected and valued. There are good arrangements for tracking and supporting vulnerable pupils. Personal and academic monitoring is increasingly well managed. Pupils have a developing understanding of their personal targets. Those in danger of under-achieving are better identified than at the time of the last inspection and are given a range of support to improve their progress. Good academic guidance in Years 9 and 11 enables pupils to choose appropriate options and study routes. Regular formal and informal opportunities are available for parents and pupils to review progress.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

While the impact on pupils' achievement at Key Stage 4 has yet to be fully seen, the quality of leadership and management is satisfactory overall. Some aspects, however, are good such as the leadership of the headteacher who provides very clear direction for the school. He is supported effectively by the senior team. The school's self-evaluation is an honest and mainly accurate analysis of strengths and weaknesses and is well integrated into the annual review cycle with carefully planned remedial actions. A sensitive balance of challenge and support for staff enables them to pull together well to achieve improved outcomes for pupils, successfully to date at Key Stage 3. Equality of opportunity for all pupils is actively promoted and systems to support pupils' personal development are strong. The management of subjects and departments has strengthened since the last inspection. However, the school has rightly decided that middle leadership, at present satisfactory, requires further development. The school knows that its effectiveness as a science college needs rapid improvement and is addressing departmental issues urgently. Systems to monitor and improve performance, currently satisfactory, are becoming more robust. The weekly monitoring of lessons, the competent reviews of departmental performance, and the clear liaison between senior and middle management all contribute to increased rigour. Despite these improving whole-school systems, there are still weaknesses in some departmental assessment practices. Governors give good leadership. They are well led and are closely involved in monitoring and challenging the school's work. They have not, however, ensured that a daily act of collective worship always takes place. The school is well staffed. Teachers appreciate the school's positive professional atmosphere. Accommodation is good and the site is well cared-for with attractive displays in many areas. Money and other resources are managed well.





## 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>
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### 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>	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	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>	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	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	2	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	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**

After our visit to inspect your school we would like to tell you of our findings. We would also like to thank you for your friendly welcome and for sharing your work and opinions with us. We were pleased to hear that you are proud of your school and enjoy the many opportunities it provides. As a result, you attend regularly, behave well and work hard. We agree with you that Castle View is providing you with a sound education and that your school keeps on improving. There are many things that are good about your school. You have a very committed headteacher, governors and staff who want you to do well. They know that some of you could do better, particularly in GCSE examinations. Teachers and other staff are providing you with a wide range of support and experiences outside of lessons to encourage you to achieve your best. You are well looked after. Many of you follow this example and try to make a difference to others in both school and community service. The school buildings are clean with attractive displays and you treat them with respect. Catering staff provide interesting and nourishing menus which you appreciate. It was good to see that the healthy food queue was much longer than that for fast food. Your school is developing as a specialist science college and you benefit from strong links with other schools and businesses. The young scientist of the year award is very worthwhile striving for. We have suggested to the headteacher and governors that your school can become even better by: - teachers monitoring your progress and your books even more carefully so that standards in examinations at Year 11 rise further. They are still not high enough in GCSE English, mathematics and science - speeding up the development of the science college - giving you opportunities each day for collective worship. We wish you and your school very well for the future.