



# Thornton Cleveleys Millfield Science and Performing Arts College

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 119714  
**LEA** Lancashire  
**Inspection number** 280642  
**Inspection dates** 7 June 2006 to 8 June 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Patrick Geraghty HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive	<b>School address</b>	Belvedere Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Thornton-Cleveleys
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16		Lancashire FY5 5DG
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01253 865929
<b>Number on roll</b>	820	<b>Fax number</b>	01253 857586
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Dr H Pindred
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 November 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Alan Harvey

<b>Age group</b> 11 to 16	<b>Inspection dates</b> 7 June 2006 - 8 June 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 280642
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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

The school has a fully comprehensive intake although the majority of pupils are at average or just below average ability on entry. At the time of the inspection there were 60 pupils on the SEN register. The vast majority of pupils are from a White British background. Some of the areas which the school serves have high indices of social and economic deprivation. The school has a pupil mobility level nearly three times the national average. In September 2005 the school became a Science and Performing Arts College.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to: achievement and standards of pupils; leadership and management.

Standards have not improved sufficiently since the last inspection. They are significantly below the national average and are unsatisfactory as pupils are capable of achieving considerably more than they do. However, the school has a relatively new senior management team who have accurately identified many of the school's weaknesses and implemented appropriate strategies to address them. These changes are impacting on standards, particularly in progress observed in Years 7 and 8, and in a more appropriate curriculum in Year 10. Much remains to be achieved.

Nevertheless, teaching is currently satisfactory. At the request of the school, local authority (LA) advisers have helped the school improve teaching and learning. Systems for the sharing of good practice, target setting and monitoring of performance have been developed but are neither consistently applied across the school nor fully embedded. Emphasis on the development of information and communication technologies is beginning to have a positive impact on learning.

The care and guidance of pupils are satisfactory. The school is a well-ordered community where behaviour is satisfactory. Pupils feel safe and happy at school and are developing good practice in healthy living, an awareness of personal development issues and their responsibilities to the school, their fellows and the larger community. Pupils appreciate the range of extra-curricular activities, particularly in sports.

The school has started to change its curriculum so that it will best serve the needs and aptitudes of its pupils through a greater emphasis on vocational courses. The school has used its specialist college status effectively. All this is benefiting pupils' understanding and involvement within the community.

While inspectors judge that effectiveness overall is unsatisfactory there is evidence that the school has the capacity to improve.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Improve achievement and standards so that pupils make appropriate progress.
- Improve consistency in implementing and following school policies.
- Implement fully the plans to improve the curriculum, so that it provides relevant and enjoyable opportunities to all pupils.
- Improve further how management sets and monitors challenging targets and implements effectively the school's improvement plan.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 4

Achievement and standards are unsatisfactory. Pupils are capable of much more. The 2005 test results showed that the rate of progress between Years 7 to 9 was significantly below average, and there was significant underachievement in English and mathematics. Progress in science was satisfactory and boys did particularly well. Progress at the end of Year 9 was poor overall when compared with pupils who have similar backgrounds and with similar prior attainment. There is evidence, however, that initiatives to address underachievement are having an impact. Tracking of pupils' progress and tests in Year 7 and 8 indicate some improvement and inspectors observed good standards of work in English, history, music, and science.

Progress from Year 9 to 11 was unsatisfactory. Pupils achieved significantly below the national averages of five A\* to C GCSE results although the percentage achieving five or more A\* to G grades was in line with the national average. Girls do better than boys at five A\* to C grades at GCSE. Conversion rates from Level 5 at the end of Year 9 to A\* to C in GCSE were inadequate in the core subjects and too few boys left with a GCSE pass. Pupils with learning difficulties are given appropriate support but progress is inconsistent. Girls below Level 4 make better progress than boys below Level 4 between Key Stages 2 to 4. Standards and achievement in literacy and numeracy are still too low and require further improvement.

Grade: 4

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 3

The personal development and well-being of pupils are satisfactory.

Inspectors judge that pupils learn and behave satisfactorily in lessons and around school, and enjoy school activities, although a minority of parents and pupils voice concerns about pockets of unacceptable behaviour. Good provision is available for disaffected and vulnerable groups of pupils. Attendance is tracked effectively through daily checks and unauthorised absence has been reduced. Attendance levels show improvement although this remains below the national average and is well below average in Year 11. Some pupils are late for lessons.

In religious education and geography, pupils discuss the impact of the environment and the experiences of other cultures. Assembly and tutorial themes, that include the exploration of relationships and consideration of the nature of responsibility, support the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils satisfactorily. Pupils are encouraged to develop healthy lifestyles and are aware of the social and moral issues associated with alcohol and drugs misuse. Charity work encourages pupils' understanding of the needs of the wider community. Pupils have good opportunities to voice their opinions on the school council; on the whole, they enjoy school and feel secure and safe. Year 10 and 11 pupils take responsibility in supporting younger pupils

to reduce any incidents of bullying. Work related activities are being adequately developed to plan for the pupils' economic welfare and future employment.

Grade 3

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are just satisfactory overall. New strategies and development activities working with LA advisors have established an improved environment for teaching and learning. Targeted training and increased sharing of good practice is bringing about improvements in teaching and achievement; however, there are inconsistencies in the application of the school's teaching and learning policy.

When teaching is good, lessons have a fast pace and pupils are challenged to achieve well. Targets are set and monitored and there are high expectations of pupils' work and involvement in learning. Most lessons seen were well resourced but tasks are sometimes prolonged or the material lacks variety. In the weaker lessons, questioning is not extensive enough to extend the more able pupils and teaching does not focus adequately on the different rates of learning of various groups of pupils. Since the last inspection, the school has made good efforts to ensure that the provision for teaching and learning using ICT has improved through the development of resources and training.

Pupils are aware of the targets set for them in some subjects and teachers are beginning to track these for improvement against previous work. Not all marking is thorough and teachers do not always offer comment on what pupils need to do next to improve.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory and effectively meets statutory requirements for all groups of pupils. The school provides a balanced curriculum and is placing an appropriate emphasis on science and performing arts in the light of its recently acquired specialist college status.

The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 has improved and is focusing more on individual needs and interests; it offers a range of vocational courses. Timetabled day visits by Year 10 pupils to the local further education college are particularly valued and have had an impact on behaviour and achievement. However, the school acknowledges the need to extend vocational and pathways provision even more, particularly for those pupils who are less motivated by more traditional courses. Good collaboration with colleges and local businesses has helped to enable the extension to the curriculum from September 2006. A good range of extra-curricular activities contributes to pupils' enjoyment and to their personal development. Pupils talked positively about the opportunities in sport and in the variety of team games available.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 3

The school provides good care and support for most pupils. Guidance is satisfactory overall. Until recently the school did not have an adequate system to set individual targets and monitor pupils' progress. Measures to monitor their current effectiveness are now in use but yet to be fully embedded. Pupils speak highly of the arrangements which help them settle when they transfer from primary school and the guidance they receive about careers or continuing their education after leaving school. There are good opportunities for more able pupils to aim higher, for example through challenges in mathematics and initiative building on residential courses. Good support is given to those pupils with learning difficulties. Pupils say they feel safe and have trusting relationships with adults. Child protection requirements and procedures are clear and understood by all staff. Links with outside agencies ensure that pupils at risk receive special support. Pupils feel that their views are listened to and respected, and that they can discuss concerns with staff. The health and safety procedures are properly underpinned by risk assessments, enabling pupils to undertake activities safely both on and off the school premises.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 4

Leadership and management are unsatisfactory because standards have declined steadily over recent years and pupils have made too little progress during their time in school. The headteacher has recently strengthened leadership and management to form an effective team who are vigorously supporting improvement. The school's annual improvement plan focuses on

raising achievement and is starting to have a small but important impact. The school has also started getting departments to evaluate all aspects of their work and act upon any weaknesses revealed. Senior managers have a good appreciation of the school's weaknesses although they were overgenerous in their grading of achievement and standards and leadership and management in the self-evaluation.

Management of all subject areas is not yet adequate. There is regular monitoring of teachers' classroom work, which is leading to the implementation of measures that are slowly improving learning. Departmental self-review and links with senior managers are becoming helpful in bringing about improvement. However, more intervention is needed to raise all teaching to good standards; in particular, in matching a range of challenges in the work set to pupils in mixed ability groups. Agreed policies and intervention strategies for improving achievement are not yet being implemented fully.

The governors have a good knowledge of how things stand with all aspects of the school's work and give sensible advice and good support to senior staff. The school is beginning to take advantage of innovations offered by its specialist school status and this has helped to raise the school's standing in the community. Financial

management is effective. Recent signs of improvement in the school's performance demonstrate a satisfactory capacity to 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>	<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>	4	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	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	No	NA

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	4	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	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>	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	3	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	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>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	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>	4	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	4	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	4	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

<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

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June 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you for welcoming the inspection team into your school recently. Many of you gave up your time to talk with us about your work, life in the school and all the activities you do. We enjoyed talking with you and appreciated your time and comments.

These are the main finding from the inspection.

You enjoy many of your lessons, particularly when you know that you are improving and learning. However, too many of you are not reaching the standards that you are capable of. You can play an important part in this by working with your teachers and helping them to improve your work.

There is some good teaching in the school and in these lessons you respond well to the teachers' high expectations and you make good progress. However, this is not the case across all of the school. In too many lessons you are not being given work which really stretches you or encourages you to enjoy learning, achieve well and progress.

Some of you are aware of your targets in subjects and know what you have to do to improve. However, this is not always the case. Teachers need to set you realistic targets and keep track of how well you are doing.

The teachers and support staff care for you and give you satisfactory guidance. Generally your behaviour is good and you agree that the school is a safe and enjoyable place to be. The school is beginning to have good links with the community, including local colleges and businesses which help your learning opportunities and future career choices. You enjoy a wide range of extra activities including sports.

The main points which the staff and governors need to improve are:

ensure that your examination results improve and that you make the progress that you are capable of

ensure that more teaching is good and that you are set challenging targets to improve performance

how your progress is monitored and assessed so that teachers and other staff can best support you

continue to improve your curriculum so that it best serves your abilities and offers you an appropriate range of opportunities for the future

regularly review all aspects of the school's work to ensure that it is as good as it should be.

On behalf of the inspection team I wish you well for your future education.

Yours sincerely

Patrick Geraghty

Her Majesty's Inspector for Schools