



Welland Park Community College

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120246
LEA Leicestershire
Inspection number 280778
Inspection dates 24 May 2006 to 25 May 2006
Reporting inspector David Anstead HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Welland Park Road
School category	Community		Market Harborough
Age range of pupils	11 to 14		Leicestershire LE16 9DR
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01858 464795
Number on roll	713	Fax number	01858 433702
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	
Date of previous inspection	28 February 2000	Headteacher	Ms Pascale Powell

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 14	24 May 2006 - 25 May 2006	280778

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: 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

Welland Park Community College is an 11 – 14 school. Although it is smaller than the average secondary school, the college is relatively large compared to middle schools nationally. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals and the proportion with learning difficulties and disabilities are both well below average. Students from minority ethnic backgrounds represent a much lower proportion than the national average. The school will become a specialist technology college from September 2006. An extensive child care, youth, community and adult education programme operates on the college site.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Students enjoy coming to Welland Park Community College. The college is a happy and friendly community where students are helped to develop their confidence and where relationships are good. Students praise the way the college cares for them and ensures they are safe. They are appreciative of the good range of lunchtime and after-school clubs and of the good facilities available to them through the other services operating on the school site.

Partnerships with community groups broaden the opportunities open to students and enhance the support they receive. This aspect of the college's work is outstanding. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with good teaching seen in most subject areas except mathematics. In some lessons pace and challenge are pitched too low. In many lessons students are given the same work regardless of their different starting points. Opportunities for students to work independently are not sufficient in some subjects.

The principal has made ensuring the college is attractive and well maintained a priority. Her calm and assured leadership is having a good impact on raising standards. The school evaluates its own effectiveness as good. This is more generous than the judgement of satisfactory reached by inspectors. The school underestimated the significance of only satisfactory progress in mathematics. However, the school has a clear common purpose and understands well what it needs to do to improve. The school provides satisfactory value for money. Good progress has been made on issues from the last inspection. The school has a good capacity to continue to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure all lessons are varied and interesting to students, are set at a good pace and provide the right level of challenge.
- Ensure all work prepared for students is matched to their starting points.
- Provide more opportunities for students to learn independently.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. The attainment of students joining the college varies between above average and broadly average. Progress overall through Key Stage 3 is satisfactory. After a dip in performance two years ago, progress is now good in English, science and most of the foundation subjects. Progress in mathematics is now satisfactory. Boys and girls make similar progress. There is no underachievement amongst any particular groups of students. The standards reached by students in national tests at the end of Year 9 are above average overall. Standards in science are outstanding. Improving standards in information and communication technology (ICT) was a key issue at the last inspection. Provision for ICT has been greatly improved and standards are now good.

The college follows national guidance in setting performance targets derived from prior attainment. The target for last year was met in English and science but not in mathematics. The college is predicting that a more challenging target for this year will be achieved and that progress will have improved.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

This is a friendly school where students are treated with respect. As a result, their personal development and well-being are good. The respect is mutual and feeds into the good relationships evident throughout the college. It means that students are mostly willing to work hard and to behave well. This manifests itself in lessons where even those students who find learning difficult often show surprising confidence for example, by speaking newly learnt phrases in front of the class in a French lesson. The respect between teachers and students was demonstrated recently when teachers were updating their skills in information technology. Some teachers were assigned students to help them. Teachers say the arrangement worked well.

Students are happy in college and feel safe. This is reflected in their attendance, which is good. Students are progressing well in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They are supported in this by the good range of extra-curricular activities which includes residential visits and trips abroad. There are opportunities in lessons to look at other cultures and to explore their own. Their personal development is best illustrated by the opportunities that they have been encouraged to develop themselves, such as the activities connected to their commitment to fair trade produce, which tie in well with what is happening in the locality. Students get on well with each other. They have confidence in the college's approach to bullying and know that if they have a problem it will be dealt with. They understand the demands of a healthy lifestyle and what they need to eat to be healthy. They are greatly encouraged in this, although in practice they do not always choose the healthiest foods available. There are effective systems for gathering students' views, most notably through the form, year and college council. A strength of the college is that students feel that they are listened to. Students talk enthusiastically about their community work with young children and also that with adults with learning difficulties. They show concern and a sense of responsibility for the needs of others through their charity appeals. This sense of community is well developed, as are the personal qualities that pupils will need for the world of work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall and good in some subjects, such as science. The college gives a high priority to improving teaching and learning and has brought about marked improvements in the teaching of some subjects like English.

The best lessons encompass a variety of activities to engage students' interest and capitalise on their good attitudes to learning. In these lessons, teachers are good at using national criteria to set clear objectives and checking learning against them as the lesson develops. Good lessons are planned well and there is a demanding pace, with lots of opportunities for lively questioning to draw out understanding. For example, in a Year 7 science lesson on foetal development, resources, illustrations and comparisons were skilfully brought together to make technical information easy to remember. Where learning is not as good, particularly in mathematics and some humanities lessons, pace and challenge are pitched too low. In such lessons, students begin to fidget and chat because they are not engaged by the tasks. Students appreciate opportunities to work independently but these are not provided in all subjects.

Students with learning difficulties benefit from additional staff in the classroom who assist them with prompts, clarification and reminders to keep them on task. However, in many lessons students are given the same work regardless of their different starting points.

Teachers are good at checking what students know and can do in lessons and are now using an improved system to track and monitor their progress. This underpins improved methods of giving specific advice on how to improve as well as helping parents to understand progress. However, these new approaches to assessing and advising students are inconsistently used across subjects.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced and meets the needs of all students. A well-planned range of courses enables all students to make at least satisfactory progress. Some aspects of the curriculum are innovative, such as the teaching of thinking skills through a range of subjects. Students are well prepared for adult life through citizenship lessons. The partnership with Connexions provides students with a good understanding of the career paths open to them. Students are prepared well for their future working lives.

A well-equipped library enables students to develop their understanding of possible career destinations. The curriculum is extremely well enhanced by links with local organisations, including employers and community groups. The 'researcher in residence' scheme has enabled more-able students to work on a joint electronics project with a local university.

There is a good range of lunchtime and after-college activities. Participation in these is high, particularly in musical and sporting events, and they make a significant contribution to students' enjoyment of college. There is a good range of extra provision for students with learning difficulties and disabilities. These include booster classes for those identified as falling behind, and also anger management classes. Good use of time is made for Year 9 after their national tests. Activities jointly planned with a local upper school enable them to make an early start on the Key Stage 4 curriculum.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support are good. Parents appreciate the college's very supportive ethos. The college has a strong commitment to promoting students' health which is recognised through the award of a nationally accredited quality mark. Good use is made of health professionals and there is a good range of extra-curricular activities providing ample opportunities for students to develop physical fitness. Special events are used to reinforce the health messages. The college carefully monitors students' and parents' perceptions and uses this information to shape its programmes, for example, the re-launch of the anti-bullying policy.

The arrangements for child protection are good, and robust procedures are in place for health and safety. Vulnerable students are carefully monitored, and the school works closely with outside agencies to ensure that they have good support. Most students are confident about transferring to the upper school because they have been well prepared, with good information about options and programmes, and careers advice.

Students are well supported in their learning. Learning targets are shared with parents and there is good information provided through curriculum booklets. This means parents can support their child's learning. A mentoring scheme is well established and involves the local business community, governors and parents. In subjects there is sometimes good guidance for students on how to improve but this is not always the case. Very good relationships mean that students are comfortable in asking teachers for help. Good personal support is available through the peer support programme (L2U) and the school nurse.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. Self-evaluation is thorough and takes into account the views of parents, students and community groups. Lessons are monitored by senior staff and subject leaders. Inspectors mostly agree with the college's evaluation of itself, although there is a tendency for it to be slightly too generous in its evaluations of teaching and learning.

Partnerships with other schools and community groups are outstanding. Links with primary schools integrate students well on joining the college. An effective partnership with the local upper school prepares students well for the next stage in their education. Other partnerships broaden the opportunities open to students and enhance the support they receive. An enthusiastic governing body supports the college adequately. However, governors lack the knowledge and expertise to challenge the college to improve more rapidly.

Good leadership and management derive from the principal's leadership qualities. Her calmness, insight and relentless determination drive improvement forward. She is ably supported by an effective team of senior managers. Together they are having a good

impact on improving learning and maintaining good behaviour and relationships. Past underachievement in English has been tackled resolutely through an analysis of weaknesses and effective action to improve teaching. The college is aware further improvements in teaching still need to be brought about. There is very effective planning. The college is very well organised and runs smoothly on day-to-day basis. Financial decisions and priorities are established well, with robust systems to monitor expenditure. Progress on tackling issues from the last inspection has been good. The college has a good capacity to continue to improve.

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.

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
--	-----------------------	--------------

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	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

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	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?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	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	2	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?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	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?	2	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	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	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	NA

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Following our visit to inspect your college, I am writing to tell you about our findings. I would like to thank you for the very friendly welcome you gave us and your honest responses to our questions. We found this helpful in deciding what is good about your college and what needs to be improved. We think the education you receive at your college is satisfactory overall with many good features.

These are the strengths of your college:

- you enjoy your education and work hard in your lessons
- you feel safe at school and appreciate the help you can get if you need it
- behaviour and relationships are good
- the range of lunchtime and after college activities is good
- the college is bright, clean, and well maintained with good displays of your work
- the good leadership of your principal is making the college better.

There are some aspects of the college's work which we think can be better. In some lessons, you are not involved early on and everyone is always set the same tasks. Other lessons proceed too slowly. We have asked your principal to ensure that all lessons are interesting and have a good pace. We have also asked that you have more opportunities to work independently. You can help by using this greater freedom in lessons responsibly. I wish you every success in the future.