



Monks' Dyke Technology College

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120713
LEA LINCOLNSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 280879
Inspection dates 25 January 2006 to 26 January 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. Martin Cragg LI

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Monks' Dyke Road
School category	Foundation		LN11 9AW
Age range of pupils	11 to 18		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01507606349
Number on roll	1178	Fax number	01507600856
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Steve Middlebrough
Date of previous inspection	9 October 2000	Headteacher	Dr. Chris Rolph

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Monks' Dyke Technology College is a mixed, 11-18 modern school operating in a selective system of admissions and serving the town of Louth and the surrounding area. The college has foundation status and has been a specialist Technology College since 1995. It has also recently achieved Training School status. It is slightly larger than average. The proportions of pupils who are eligible for free school meals, from minority ethnic backgrounds and with English as an additional language are below the national average. The proportion with special educational needs is broadly in line with the average but there is a higher proportion of pupils with a Statement of Special Educational Need. The college is part way through a substantial building programme. Pupils enter the college with attainment which is fairly typical for their age, although there are fewer pupils than usual that have reached a high level of attainment by the end of Year 6.

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 provides good education across all the major aspects of its work. Inspectors' judgements closely match the college's own evaluation of its performance and effectiveness. Pupils attain standards which are generally above average. They make good progress overall. Progress is good in Key Stage 3 and very good in Key Stage 4. Pupils have good attitudes, behave well in lessons and respond maturely when given responsibility. Teaching is good overall. The best teaching motivates pupils and encourages them to participate enthusiastically. However, in less effective lessons, pupils are not given enough responsibility for their own learning nor encouraged to learn in a variety of ways. The curriculum is suitably broad and meets pupils' needs well. There is a good range of vocational courses at Key Stage 4 and an extensive programme of extra-curricular activities. Technology status has improved the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and the college has worked successfully in partnership with local primary schools. The curriculum in the sixth form is in transition and a broader range of courses is required to meet the needs of all students. The college provides very good care and guidance for pupils, particularly in teachers' and tutors' knowledge of individuals and the specific provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities. The college has a strong commitment to inclusion. Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher and senior team provide very good vision and direction for the college and encourage participation from staff and governors. The college's self-evaluation is suitably rigorous. However, the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning by subject leaders is not yet of consistent quality. Parents generally support the college, although a small minority feel that their views and those of pupils are not sufficiently taken into account. The college has made good improvement since its last inspection and has good capacity to improve further. There has been very effective financial management in difficult circumstances and the college provides good value for money.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 3

Inspectors agree with the college that sixth-form effectiveness is satisfactory. Students achieve satisfactorily on their chosen courses and reach standards which are broadly in line with the national average. They have positive attitudes and contribute well to the college community. The large majority complete their courses successfully. Teaching is good overall, but many students have not developed the skills to learn independently. The curriculum is satisfactory. There is a good choice of advanced courses, but limited choice below this level restricts opportunities for students of lower prior attainment and this is why achievement is only satisfactory overall. Students are well cared for and receive helpful support and guidance with their work and choice of careers and courses in higher education. Leadership and management have improved and are now good, with a strong focus on the extension of the curriculum. Accommodation, particularly study space, is insufficient to meet students' needs.

What the school should do to improve further

- increase opportunities for pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning through structured pair, group and practical activities - extend the curriculum in the sixth form to meet the needs of students at all levels of ability more effectively - ensure that all subject leaders monitor and evaluate learning and teaching rigorously to improve achievement further.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 3

The achievement of pupils is good overall and satisfactory in the sixth form. Standards achieved by pupils by the end of Year 9 are above average overall. By the end of Year 11 pupils achieve standards which are generally above the average for all schools and well above the average for similar types of school. In the sixth form, results have been below the national average in recent years but in 2005 performance improved to be broadly in line with the average. Pupils make good progress overall. They make good progress by the end of Year 9 and very good progress by the end of Year 11. In 2005, the improvement for pupils between Year 6 and Year 11 was in the top 15% of schools nationally. In the sixth form, students make satisfactory progress overall. Pupils with learning difficulties, disabilities and the small number from minority ethnic backgrounds make similar progress to the rest of the pupils. The college sets challenging targets for pupils, based on high expectations, and these have generally been achieved.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the college that provision for pupils' personal development and well-being is good. Pupils enjoy being part of the college community, behave well and have satisfactory attendance. Opportunities for pupils' moral, social and cultural development are good. The college's aims are underpinned by a firm moral stance. Pupils feel secure in their relationships with staff, and cases of bullying are dealt with effectively. Pupils respond spontaneously and generously to charity events and collections. College links with other countries and a good range of educational trips develop pupils' understanding of the diversity of world cultures. However, pupils' spiritual development is limited and opportunities to promote it are frequently overlooked. Pupils are involved in community matters and take responsibility by becoming peer mentors and making visits to primary schools. Sixth-form students give valuable support to younger pupils, for example with 'paired reading'. Good contact with local employers enables pupils to understand business practice and helps them in planning their transfer to employment. The college council raises important issues which affect pupils. The promotion of a healthier life style has brought about significant changes to the canteen menu and choices in vending machines. There are good opportunities to take part in a range of sports and activities.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Inspectors' judgements of teaching and learning closely match those of the college. This teaching and learning has led to good and improving standards. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good. In the better lessons, teachers plan well, explain objectives clearly to classes, motivate pupils and encourage independence in learning. These teachers know their pupils well and support their learning in the classroom and in extra sessions beyond lessons. Their use of assessment and target-setting make a strong contribution to learning and standards. In the few less effective lessons, teachers talk for too long and do not give pupils sufficient opportunity to learn in pairs or groups. Lesson objectives often describe what is to be done rather than what is to be learnt. The recent revision of the college's teaching and learning policies to focus on learning is reflected in pupils' good awareness of how they learn effectively. However, this is not yet exploited by all teachers. Teaching and learning in the sixth form are good. The best lessons were outstanding and engaged students actively in thinking and developing their understanding. However, many students lack the confidence to learn independently and, consequently, although standards are improving, they remain broadly satisfactory overall.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 3

The college's curriculum is suitably broad and meets the needs of pupils in Years 7 to 11. In Key Stage 3, pupils are taught all subjects required by the National Curriculum and also broaden their experience in expressive arts, media, music technology and enterprise. A weekly programme extends pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. There is a good range of courses available in Key Stage 4, with further provision of vocational courses to commence in 2006. The personal, social, health and citizenship programme is comprehensive. Work-related learning opportunities are extensive. Extra-curricular activities extend pupils' learning and the range of trips and events provide good social and cultural experience. Preparation for GCSE examinations outside timetabled lessons is extensive and much appreciated by pupils. The college meets its specialist status targets well and has received recognition for the progress made by pupils to Year 11. Teaching and learning have benefited from the Technology College status through increased access to, and application of ICT in all subjects. The sixth form curriculum is satisfactory. There is a good range of advanced courses but insufficient courses for middle and lower attaining students. The college plans to expand the range of vocational and lower-level courses through joint provision with other institutions. Students do not receive their full entitlement to religious education. Sixth formers enjoy good opportunities to enrich their learning beyond the classroom.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support for pupils are good. Relationships, based upon teachers' very good knowledge of pupils' needs, are friendly and secure. All requirements for child protection are met and the annual review of risks ensures pupils' safety. The induction programme for Year 6 pupils includes an innovative e-buddy scheme which helps to reduce parents' and pupils' anxieties over the transfer from primary school. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs. Strenuous efforts are made to adjust the curriculum on behalf of a few disaffected pupils. Pupils report that they are carefully advised about options for each stage of their education. Clear monitoring systems identify and support pupils who are likely to achieve less well than they should. Careers advice is systematically provided to all pupils and leads to a successful programme of work shadowing and work experience. However, as the school recognises, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to take initiative and make independent decisions.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher, supported by a strong leadership team, provides the vision and strategy to continue to raise standards. There is strong commitment to including all pupils and providing an appropriate curriculum to meet their needs. Thorough and effective self-evaluation is in place at whole-college and subject level. Leadership and management of the sixth form are also good. The college is developing partnerships with other providers to increase the range of sixth form courses in vocational and minority subjects. The leadership team has clearly demonstrated a good capacity to make further improvement. The college has a majority of strong middle managers who have raised standards within their subject areas through good self-evaluation and development planning. However, the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning does not yet focus sufficiently on learning outcomes and is not rigorous enough across all subjects. Governance is good. Governors are aware of the college's strengths and areas for development and challenge the leadership team as appropriate. Committed and dynamic support of the college and the headteacher by governors has successfully overcome a large budget deficit. Despite this deficit, the college is well-resourced and has managed a programme of improvements and extensions to the buildings. Staff are deployed effectively. The college provides good value for money.

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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?	2	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	2

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

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

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 all, on behalf of the inspection team, for your co-operation during our visit. We greatly appreciated your comments and opinions. The inspection found that your college was good overall. You are encouraged to learn and aim for challenging targets. Results in tests in Year 9 and exams in Year 11 are above the national average. You make at least good progress from when you join the college. You have generally good attitudes and behave well. You get on well with your teachers. Particularly, you appreciated the extra help given to you outside lessons to help prepare for exams and coursework. The college provides a good range of courses including media, music technology and vocational options. The advice you get to prepare you for choices and careers is good. There is a good range of activities and trips for you to be involved in. In the sixth form, results are improving and are now in line with the national average. You have good attitudes to lessons but some of you lack the confidence to learn independently. There is insufficient space for study and too few courses below advanced level. As a result, some of you struggle with your work. There are some aspects of the college's work that need to improve. We feel that your teachers should give you more responsibility for your own learning and provide a greater range of ways for you to learn. We also want subject leaders to monitor lessons more regularly to help your teachers to improve your results further. We feel that there needs to be a wider range of courses available in the sixth form to cater for the needs of students at different levels. We are confident that your college can continue to improve, particularly as the buildings and facilities also expand. We wish you well in the future.