



Kirkby College

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122826
LEA NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 281353
Inspection dates 26 January 2006 to 27 January 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs. Lynne Blakelock LI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Tennyson Street
School category	Community		NG17 7DH
Age range of pupils	11 to 18		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01623455925
Number on roll	745	Fax number	01623455923
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr. Richard Needham
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Ms. Lynn Parkes

Age group 11 to 18	Inspection dates 26 January 2006 - 27 January 2006	Inspection number 281353
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Kirkby College is a mixed 11 to 18 comprehensive college in Kirkby in Ashfield, Nottinghamshire. The number of students on roll is below the national average with 745 on roll, including 54 sixth formers. The vast majority of students are of White British heritage. Most of its students come from areas which face significant social and economic deprivation. The number of students entitled to free school meals is high. The academic standards of students on entry to the school tend to be very low and literacy levels are particularly low. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and disabilities is well above average but the number of students with a statement of special needs is below average. Mobility of students is well above the national average. The college was granted specialist Sports College status in 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

The college evaluates its effectiveness as satisfactory. The inspection judgement is that it is inadequate. Standards are satisfactory in Key Stage 3 but they are inadequate in Key Stage 4, where examination results have been low since 2003. Although there was some improvement in 2004, the 2005 results were below the government's minimum targets and students did not make the progress they should. Nevertheless, students in the sixth form make satisfactory progress. The curriculum is good at Key Stage 3 and at Key Stage 4 where the wider variety and level of courses are motivating more students to want to learn. Students' personal development is satisfactory with the student council now providing significant opportunities for students to take responsibility and ownership of issues which will improve their school. Students generally behave well in most lessons and satisfactorily around the school. However there is a variation in the quality of teaching which is restricting the learning and progress of students. There is also inconsistency in the monitoring of students' attainment and achievement. Attendance is far too low and is a crucial factor in the underachievement of too many students. They are well cared for but the quality of support and guidance is as yet insufficiently focused on achievement. The leadership and management of the college are satisfactory. The headteacher and senior staff made a successful bid for sports college status and have demonstrated their understanding of the issues that are preventing the school moving forward. The governing body is supportive but there is still non-compliance with regard to a daily act of worship. In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to the standards, achievement and attendance of students.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 3

Inspectors judge this to be satisfactory although the school evaluated it as inadequate. Attainment on entry to the sixth form is often well below average. Students make satisfactory progress during their time in the sixth form although standards are well below average. Teaching is good. Students work hard and help their younger peers develop new skills. The sixth form offers a variety of courses helped by its links with the local further education college. There are only a small number of students so the sixth form does not offer good value for money. However, almost all students complete their courses. Students are well cared for and are given good careers advice. Leadership and management are satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning, particularly at Key Stage 4. - Improve the standards, achievement and attendance of students - Improve the effectiveness of leadership at all levels.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

Grade for sixth form: 3

Inspectors agree with the school's judgement that standards are very low and progress is inadequate overall. Students enter the school with very low levels of attainment. Although progress in Years 7 to 9 is satisfactory, students overall, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, do not make the progress that they should, particularly in Years 10 and 11. As a result, a significant minority of students leave school with few qualifications. The proportion of students who achieve five or more A*-C grades at GCSE is very low. Less than one in five of the 2005 cohort obtained five higher level GCSE grades that included English and mathematics. Standards are particularly low in art, science, design technology, humanities, information and communication technology, mathematics and physical education. Students perform well in geography and, overall, girls do better than boys. In the sixth form, many students start advanced courses with attainment which is well below that usually expected for this level of study. In general, results of advanced courses were well below average in 2005. However, students' progress and achievement were satisfactory. Some students achieve highly and secure competitive places in higher education. Sound results are gained in Key Skills courses.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

The personal development and well-being of students are satisfactory in the main college and good in the sixth form. Students get on well with each other and with their teachers. They like coming to college and enjoy the opportunities that it provides outside college hours. However, their attendance remains well below the national average and is not good enough, despite the strenuous efforts of the college to improve it. In contrast, the attendance of sixth formers is excellent. The college has an orderly and calm atmosphere. Students behave well in lessons, and their behaviour around the college is satisfactory. They feel safe, secure in the knowledge that bullying is not tolerated in the college and that any instances of harassment are dealt with effectively. Students contribute well to college life, for instance through the student council, or by acting as mentors for younger students. They also contribute well to the local community and to charity work. Sixth formers help younger students with their reading and also assist in running holiday sports sessions. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. They have a well developed sense of right and

wrong. They benefit from several college initiatives to boost their self-esteem and to encourage teamwork. They are keen to adopt healthy lifestyles. In response, college meals now offer a range of healthier options. Students make good progress in acquiring many of the skills that will equip them for work. However, too many students still have weak literacy skills.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Inspectors observed lessons ranging from outstanding to inadequate but overall teaching is not consistently good enough to raise standards. In most lessons, students settle well and respond positively to the planned activities because classroom management is usually strong. In many lessons teachers and assistants co-operate effectively to monitor and support the progress of lower-attaining students. In the best lessons good planning ensures that students are challenged to think and explain, and there are good opportunities for independent learning. The college's assessment procedures have improved since the last inspection and now include rigorous data analysis but the extent to which teachers closely monitor and assess progress is too variable, therefore not all students are clear about their target grades and how they need to improve. When learning is less successful, expectations are not high enough and activities are not always suited to the range of abilities, so that higher-attaining students are not sufficiently stretched. Additionally, insufficient attention is paid to emphasising the importance of literacy and the need to closely monitor it, in order to correct errors in students' work. Homework is not set often enough to extend students' learning and enhance progress. Teaching in the sixth form is good because good relationships and small groups result in good support for individual learning.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 3

The quality of the curriculum is good. The college has successfully addressed some of the issues raised in the last inspection report and has made progress in areas such as the wider use of computers. The curriculum is suitable for all learners. The range of opportunities for students in Years 10 and 11 is good and has expanded considerably through liaison with local colleges and other providers. The flexibility of the curriculum in these years means that the needs of learners, including those with learning difficulties, are well met by a broad range of courses including vocational options. These are further enhanced by the identification of students across all years who benefit specifically from targeted provision in the form of, for example, nurture groups and booster classes. Personal, social, health education and careers make a good

contribution to the curriculum and prepares students well for the world beyond college. A variety of extra-curricular activities is giving students opportunities to extend their learning and is attracting increasing support. The successful bid for specialist status is already beginning to enhance the curriculum. The sixth form curriculum is satisfactory with choices being mainly restricted to advanced level courses due to the small number of students.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

The college provides satisfactory care, guidance and support for its students in Years 7 to 11. Parents are appreciative of the care their children receive. The college has established robust systems for safeguarding students' health and safety. It provides an effective programme of personal and social education, which has begun to raise students' self-esteem. Teachers offer sound advice to students on their choice of courses at the end of key stages. They give good guidance on careers and higher education. The college provides extensive support for students with learning difficulties and disabilities, and has recently developed an exciting programme for gifted and talented students. However, these initiatives have not yet had an impact on students' achievement, because the monitoring of their work and progress has not been sufficiently rigorous. Teachers provide good guidance and support for the college's sixth formers. They know their students well and monitor their progress closely.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher understands the need to move the school forward and has communicated an increasing sense of purpose to the staff. Recent initiatives, including the further development of literacy as part of the specialist school status, are being planned carefully. The college has shown that it is clear about the direction it needs to take as seen in the successful bid for specialist sports college status and by focusing on the areas preventing students from attaining higher standards. The headteacher is well supported by the senior team and has the confidence of the staff and governors. The work of middle managers has become more focused with greater expectations and more regular evaluation of their work by senior management. However, there is a need to be much more rigorous in overseeing the monitoring of students' work and progress. Improved procedures for monitoring the performance of the school are in place although they have yet to have an impact. Governance of the college is satisfactory and provides good support for the headteacher. Governors are involved in the attempts to improve the performance and standing of the college although they do not ask enough searching questions of leadership. The college is still not providing a statutory daily act of worship and this situation has not improved since the last inspection. Value for money is satisfactory in Years 7 to 11 but not in the sixth form because of the small numbers. Although the

school has tackled most of the issues from its last inspection, standards of attainment remain too low.

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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?	4	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	3	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	No

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4	

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	
The behaviour of learners	3	
The attendance of learners	4	
How well learners enjoy their education	3	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	
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	3	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	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?	3	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?	3	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	4	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	
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

On behalf of the inspection team I am writing to tell you the results of your inspection. First, however, I want to thank you for your politeness and helpfulness towards us during our visit to the College. The inspection found a lot of things that the college can be pleased about. Many of you told us you enjoy college. You usually behave well in lessons and your behaviour is satisfactory around the building. You work hard and enjoy lessons where you have chances to learn things for yourself. You appreciate the good range of courses the college is providing for you and more of you are taking part in a variety of activities outside lessons. We were impressed with the work of the student council and the mature way you are working with the staff to bring about improvements in the college. You spoke to us about enjoying being trusted enough by the staff to be given the responsibility to plan the new uniform. However there are certain ways in which your college needs to improve considerably. The attendance of some of you is far too low. You should be in college every day you are meant to be, unless you are too ill to attend. Poor attendance is part of the reason why so many of you are not making as much progress as you should be doing in your lessons. Also not all of the teaching is at the correct level for you all to make better progress. Many of you are not learning well enough in your time at the school and therefore your Year 11 examination results have not been nearly as good as they should be. There are important actions that need to be taken about these matters and the college has been told it must improve quickly. It is important that you all help in this process. We hope you will. We wish you well in the future.