



Carlton-le-Willows School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 122850
LEA NOTTINGHAMSHIRE LEA
Inspection number 281359
Inspection dates 14 December 2005 to 15 December 2005
Reporting inspector Dr. Kenneth Thomas LI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	School address	Wood Lane
School category	Community		NG4 4AA
Age range of pupils	11 to 18		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01159565008
Number on roll	1319	Fax number	01159565009
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs. Gill Lane
Date of previous inspection	9 October 2000	Headteacher	Mr. Michael Naisbitt

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 18	14 December 2005 - 15 December 2005	281359

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by five Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Carlton-le-Willows School and Technology College is a mixed 11 to 18 comprehensive school. The school is of above average size, although the size of the sixth form is average. The school has had specialist status since September 2002. The large majority of pupils are of White ethnic origin and a small proportion of students are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is about average while the proportion with special educational needs (SEN) and statements of SEN is below average. Pupil mobility is slightly less than in most other schools.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The school provides a consistently good education across all the major aspects of its work. This judgement closely matches the school's own evaluation of its performance. The strong leadership provided by the headteacher and other senior staff ensures that there is a strong commitment to continued improvement. The good standards noted in the last inspection report have been maintained and the weaknesses have been tackled successfully. These improvements, together with the achievement of specialist technology college status, exemplify the positive impact of school management and demonstrate the school's good capacity to improve further. Senior staff have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Areas for improvement are accurately identified and the school's development plan is strongly focused on raising standards and achievement. The monitoring and evaluation of performance by middle managers are becoming increasingly effective, but there are weaknesses in this respect in the management of special educational needs. Teaching and learning are good overall. In some lessons, however, progress is slowed because pupils spend too much time listening to their teachers. Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils attend school regularly and in discussion say that they enjoy school life. Although a few parents express concerns about behaviour, the vast majority of pupils behave well both in lessons and around the school generally. As a result the school is very orderly. The curriculum is good and meets the needs of all groups and individuals. This, together with the good care and support pupils receive, enables them to achieve well.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 1

Inspectors judge the effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form to be outstanding rather than good, as judged by the school. Sixth form students achieve outstandingly well in reaching standards that for several years have been well above average. Very high quality care, support and guidance, both before entering and while in the sixth form, ensure that students are very well suited to the courses they take. As a result few drop out early. Outstanding leadership and management of the sixth form ensure that students' progress is closely monitored and well-focused support provided where necessary. Links with higher education are strong. Students' personal development is outstanding. They greatly enjoy and appreciate their education and make a significant contribution to the school and wider community through their initiative and involvement in activities such as drama productions and charity fund raising. They benefit from a good range of mainly academic courses and much very good teaching, which contribute significantly to the excellent value for money that the sixth form offers.

What the school should do to improve further

- ensure further improvement in the quality of teaching and learning by building on the existing good practice so that pupils' learning experiences are of a consistently high quality
- improve the management of special educational needs by ensuring that

rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluating progress and performance are implemented in the area.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

The achievement of pupils is good. Pupils start at the school with attainment which, although covering the full attainment range, is average overall. By the end of Year 9, pupils from all social and ethnic backgrounds, including those with special educational needs, make equally good progress to reach standards that, taken overall, are above average. The performance in the National Curriculum tests in 2005 was marked by an improvement in the science results to match the good results in English and mathematics. Particularly good results were also achieved at the higher levels in mathematics. Pupils' good progress is maintained through Years 10 and 11, and GCSE examination results have been maintained at an above average level since the last inspection. The proportion of pupils gaining five or more GCSE A* to C grades is above average. Consistently good results are achieved in English and mathematics and as a result the proportion of pupils achieving five or more A* to C grades including these subjects is also above average. Although girls attain higher standards than boys, the difference in performance is less than that observed nationally. Students make excellent progress in the sixth form and examination results are consistently well above the national average. In the examinations taken at the end of Year 13 the majority of students achieve significantly higher grades than would be expected by their earlier performance at GCSE. The school sets and achieves challenging targets for pupils based on an accurate and aspirational analysis of their potential.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils' behaviour is good, as is their attendance, and they display positive attitudes to learning. Pupils are encouraged to stay safe and the rare incidents of bullying are swiftly and effectively dealt with. The school has responded to the concerns of some parents about the security of the site by engaging security workers as supervisors at lunchtime, and by repairing and replacing perimeter fencing. Pupils' social development is good and they have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong. A well planned personal, social and health education programme, including clearly focused careers education, helps to develop the knowledge and skills that pupils will be able to use in their working lives. Pupils readily support fund-raising events and raise significant sums of money for charitable causes. Pupils' cultural development is enhanced by frequent opportunities to appreciate the customs and beliefs of other cultures. Although spiritual development is promoted through opportunities for reflection in many subjects, pupils' experiences are not consistent in this respect in all subjects. The school is making good

efforts to promote healthy lifestyles. There are, for example, firm plans to increase the amount of time pupils spend on physical activities and many pupils take part in the excellent range of extra-curricular sporting and other recreational activities. Pupils' understanding of the importance of nutrition to a healthy lifestyle is demonstrated by the changes to the lunchtime menu, initiated by the very active school council. However, many older pupils show how difficult it is to change attitudes by their continued preference for fast food.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. The Inspectors' judgement of teaching closely matches the conclusions reached by the school leadership team in their own monitoring of lessons. In the best lessons, brisk pace and challenge engage the pupils' interest and enable them to make good progress. In these lessons teachers use their good subject knowledge to skilfully question pupils and encourage them to think. As one Year 9 pupil said, these are the lessons that 'allow me to use my imagination'. Classroom management is good and because the vast majority of pupils respond positively to teachers' high expectations, lessons are orderly. Planning is good and lessons often have a variety of activities and a lively style. In the less successful lessons, learning activities are not well matched to pupils' attainment levels and as a result, pupils are not actively involved and less progress is made. Learning is at the heart of school improvement planning and much innovative work is being done to enhance teachers' understanding of how teaching strategies can be varied to match the different ways in which pupils learn. The school's assessment practice is generally good and pupils know their targets and how they are progressing towards them. In most subjects the marking of pupils' written work provides clear guidance on the standard of the work and what must be done in order to improve. However, in a few subjects marking is irregular and provides pupils with too little guidance on how to make progress.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Inspectors agree with the school that the quality of the curriculum is good, both in the main school and in the sixth form. The curriculum is designed well to meet the needs and aspirations of pupils and students. It promotes achievement well and meets statutory requirements. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection. The issues raised for action have been tackled. The provision of religious education in Years 10 and 11 and the use of information and communication technology have much improved. The school's technology specialist status has created additional opportunities for pupils to increase their technological skills and understanding. The number of vocational courses and opportunities for work-related learning has been increased and these, together with a well-organised programme of careers education and work

experience, help to prepare pupils well for their future working lives. The curriculum is complemented by an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities. Many pupils and students take part in the numerous arts and sporting activities that enhance the curriculum. These enhancements have been recognised by the school's achievement of the Artsmark Silver and Sportsmark awards.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

Provision for the care, guidance and support of pupils is good. Because the induction arrangements for new pupils are good they settle in quickly. Teachers support pupils effectively in their learning and pupils' progress and effort are carefully monitored. They are given realistic targets for improvement and parents and carers are kept well informed through regular and informative progress reports. However, although detailed individual education plans are used to ensure that learning activities are modified to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs, there is a lack of rigour in the monitoring of the progress of these pupils. The school makes great efforts to ensure that pupils are educated in a secure environment in which they can develop confidence and independence. Health and safety procedures are clear and fully in place, and all staff know and understand the arrangements for child protection. Regular risk assessments are carried out to ensure that potential hazards are identified and minimised. Staff work effectively with external agencies to support any pupils who may be at risk. The vast majority of parents also indicate that communication between the school and home is effective. Gifted and talented pupils are identified through the careful analysis of information on entry to the school. While many of these pupils are provided with additional challenge through the excellent range of enrichment activities, the school is currently reviewing provision in order to ensure that their needs are fully met. Careers guidance is very good, and greatly appreciated by pupils at all stages.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 1

Leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher, well supported by a very effective senior management team, sets a clear direction for the school and provides the drive and dynamism to move the school forward. This is seen, for example, in the achievement of specialist technology college status. Senior staff have established a positive climate for learning and set high expectations for both staff and pupils. The school runs very well on a day- to- day basis, despite the constraints of the accommodation. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the performance of the school are excellent, and the school's self- evaluation is accurate overall. The school knows its strengths and identifies the right areas for improvement. Procedures for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning are well established amongst senior

staff and are now being extended to increase the effectiveness of middle managers. The school has identified and is tackling weaknesses in the management of special educational needs. Satisfactory account is taken of the views of pupils and parents, and surveys of parental opinion indicate that the leadership of the school is well regarded by the majority of parents. There are good links with local schools, colleges, businesses and the community. Resources are managed well and value for money is good. Governance of the school is good. Governors fulfil their role as critical friends effectively and provide challenge for further improvement. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the standards achieved and progress made by pupils. There is good capacity for further improvement.

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	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	1
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
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	1
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	1
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	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The attendance of learners	2	
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	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	1

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	1
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	1	
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 school 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 politeness and co-operation during our visit. We greatly appreciated your comments and opinions and were very impressed with your enthusiasm and attitude to school. The inspection found that your school was consistently good. You are encouraged to learn and aim for high targets. Results of tests in Year 9 and examinations in Year 11 are consistently above the national average. Examination results in the sixth form are even better and consistently well above average. You make good progress from the time you join the school. You generally behave well in lessons and around school. There is a friendly and positive atmosphere and good relationships between yourselves and the staff. Teachers review your progress carefully and give you good support to improve when necessary. The school provides a good range of courses which give you choices to suit your interests. The advice you get on making choices and on careers is also good. There is an excellent range of extra-curricular activities for you to be involved in and many of you enjoy these. You have good opportunities to find out about the world of work. However we think your school can be even better still. In the best lessons we saw, the teachers made the learning so interesting that there was a real sense of enjoyment amongst pupils. We have asked your headteacher to ensure that more of your lessons are like this. We have also asked the headteacher to ensure that the progress of pupils with special educational needs is more carefully monitored. We were very pleased to see you that so many of you are keen to make the most of the opportunities the school is providing for you. We wish you continued success in the future.