



Eltham Hill Technology College for Girls

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 100182
Local Authority Greenwich
Inspection number 285736
Inspection date 14 November 2006
Reporting inspector Meena Wood HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Eltham Hill
School category	Community		London
Age range of pupils	11–16		SE9 5EE
Gender of pupils	Girls	Telephone number	020 8859 2843
Number on roll (school)	935	Fax number	020 8294 2365
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Margaret Wasdell
		Headteacher	Marjorie Findlay-Stone
Date of previous school inspection	18 November 2002		

Age group	Inspection date	Inspection number
11–16	14 November 2006	285736

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Eltham Hill Technology College is an average sized school specialising in technology. Most pupils' attainment is average when they start school. A high number of pupils are eligible for free school meals. A sizeable proportion of pupils are bilingual but only a small proportion have English as an additional language. One fifth of pupils have learning difficulties or disabilities. The school draws one fifth of its pupils from Black African and Black Caribbean groups and about one fifth of pupils from other minority ethnic groups.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Eltham Hill Technology College provides a good quality of education for its pupils. The headteacher and her team have successfully instilled a strong ethos of respect for learning and positive relationships in pupils. This has contributed towards their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The headteacher's clear commitment to the quality of the pupils' education has resulted in a rigorous focus on managing low pupil attendance and unacceptable behaviour. Around the school and in many lessons, pupils' behaviour is very good and, in some cases, excellent. Since the last inspection, attendance has improved and is now satisfactory and the punctuality of pupils is good.

Pupils' achievement is good; most enter the school with slightly below average ability and make very good progress overall. Pupils make outstanding progress between Years 7 to 9, but progress is satisfactory in Years 10 and 11. Pupils' standards are broadly average at the end of both Years 9 and 11 and the school is working towards raising these.

Teaching is good and in some lessons it is outstanding, as teachers know their pupils well and plan stimulating and enjoyable lessons enabling most of them to make good progress. However, a few teachers do not plan sufficiently for the range of pupils' abilities and do not rigorously check all pupils' learning. Excellent procedures are in place for setting challenging academic targets, tracking pupils' progress, and raising aspirations. This has helped most pupils, especially those in Years 7 to 9, to better understand how to achieve their academic targets. The curriculum is broadly satisfactory and meeting most pupils' needs. Rightly, the school is committed to developing more appropriate vocational and academic learning pathways and links with business and industry. Pupils are guided well towards their choices in Year 9 and for further education and training in Years 10 and 11. Pupils are safe and well cared for and the support of vulnerable pupils is very good.

Skilled staff and learning mentors successfully support most pupils with behavioural and learning difficulties, as well as those with English as an additional language, to improve their achievement.

Effective leadership by senior staff has increased the sharing of good teaching practice across the subjects. The school's self-evaluation has correctly identified its strengths and most of the areas it needs to improve, and the school's capacity to improve is very good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise achievement in Years 10 and 11.
- Ensure that all teachers check all pupils' learning and progress in lessons.
- Extend vocational learning pathways for pupils and develop school links with business and industry.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Overall, pupils' achievement is good and pupils' standards are average. Pupils make very good progress between Years 7 and 11 and there are no significant differences between groups of pupils. Most pupils arrive in school with slightly below average attainment in Year 7 and make outstanding progress between Years 7 and 9 with pupils of different abilities achieving equally well. The school is in the top ten percentile of similar schools' achievement for Years 7 to 9. However, in Years 10 and 11, progress is satisfactory. Whilst pupils' progress in English is above average in Years 7 to 9, pupils' progress in English in Years 10 to 11 is average.

Pupils' overall standards in Year 9 in English, mathematics and science were below national averages in 2005. However these improved in 2006, and pupils attained broadly average standards in all three subjects. In Year 11, overall standards in GCSE and equivalent examinations are average. However, they are improving year-on-year and more pupils gained A*/A grades in 2006. The rate of improvement in the last two years for numbers of pupils achieving 5 A*-C GCSE is faster than the national average. In 2005 and 2006 the school exceeded its own targets for Year 9 pupils who were expected to achieve level 5 and above and for pupils taking 5 A*-C GCSE. In 2006, pupils performed better in English, design and technology, French, German and history than in 2005, however the numbers of pupils taking GCSE in French and German has reduced substantially in the last year.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Overall, personal development and well being are good and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school's ethos is based strongly on respect for a disciplined and safe environment where pupils enjoy their learning and work productively with their peers and with adults. Through tutorials, assemblies and a stimulating display of posters around the school, most pupils understand that there is a zero tolerance of bullying and swearing. They learn to overcome their own prejudices and attitudes, developing greater tolerance and good manners. Pupils are polite and well behaved. They willingly take responsibility for and make a good contribution to the school and the wider community. Year 10 pupils produce a successful magazine called *Dand;eacute;jand;agrave; vu* and pupils in art contributed to the 'Eltham Lights Up' event this year. Pupils are consulted on their learning; for instance, Year 9 pupils were recently surveyed on the appropriateness of the learning pathways open to them.

The school pupils' forum has a genuine influence on the running of the school. Pupils are currently identifying ways to deal with 'cyber bullying' (bullying through the internet). Pupils are encouraged to have a safe and healthy lifestyle through physical, social, health education. The provision of healthy food is better at lunchtime, than it is at break. The lack of lockers is a health and safety concern to some parents, as this means pupils have to carry their books and equipment with them throughout the

school day. Attendance has improved and is now satisfactory, but a minority of pupils (and their parents) are still not convinced of the importance of regular attendance. Pupils learn to work well in teams and independently and recognise that these skills are useful to them in their future education or employment.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good, and in some lessons, excellent. In most lessons, teachers are very aware of pupils' levels and abilities, and plan well structured and enjoyable lessons. Teachers make very good use of electronic

white boards and produce effective materials that engage pupils in their learning. In one Year 10 English lesson, pupils gained a good understanding of Juliet's emotions in the context of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, through writing an imaginary 'blog' that replaced Juliet's soliloquy. In an applied science lesson, Year 10 pupils enjoyed acting out the movement of liquids being transferred from one container to another, in order to learn about volume and the differences between liquids, gas and solids. Teachers very effectively assess pupils' understanding and progress in lessons, through stimulating quizzes, simple games and careful explanations. Pupils display a real sense of achievement when they are assessed correctly. One pupil reported 'it's great when teachers know we have different learning styles and help us learn in different ways!' However, a minority of teachers do not plan adequately for all pupils and do not check all pupils' learning. For instance, in French and German lessons, pupils were not given sufficient opportunities to improve and extend their language skills and there was insufficient use made of the target language in teaching. A significant number of pupils across all subjects need help with literacy skills, and there were good examples of teachers planning work to meet these needs.

The majority of pupils' assessed written work contains clear, high quality feedback that relates well to pupils' targets. In some instances, however, teachers do not sufficiently inform pupils about their progress and simply tick work, glossing over errors and inaccuracies.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory overall. The quality of enrichment activities enables pupils to learn new skills and develop individual interests. Lunchtime and after-school clubs develop pupils' self-confidence through team sports and 'catch up' revision classes. Pupils' independent learning is encouraged through 'Super Learning Days'. The school works hard to ensure that all pupils are included in every aspect of school life. Pupils are able to access homework and lesson materials on the school Intranet from home although under half of pupils make use of this facility. The curriculum in Years 10 and 11 has been improved to include vocational education for a small minority

of pupils. For example, there is a health and social care course offered in school and a few pupils attend courses at Plumstead Manor, Greenwich College and Charlton Athletic Football Club. As of this year, more able pupils, can take the vocational CIDA course in ICT, and pupils, for whom it is appropriate, follow a Skillsforce course. Work related learning is developing well; pupils record relevant activities in their contact books and the school has achieved the Work Related Learning Silver Quality Award this year. However, as the school recognises, it needs to further develop links with business and industry and to ensure it offers a more appropriate range of courses and learning pathways to better meet the pupils' needs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Pupils' care, guidance and support are good. In most cases, teaching assistants and curriculum support workers support pupils well, both in and out of lessons. In a few cases, the role of the support teacher in lessons is not sufficiently well planned. Pupils at an early stage of learning English are supported very closely through the Integration Unit and through individual and group sessions at lunchtimes and make good progress.

The mentoring of pupils with behavioural difficulties is very effective in improving behaviour for those pupils. However, the level of fixed term pupil exclusions is still relatively high. The 'Inclusion Unit' works very effectively with external professional agencies to support vulnerable pupils at risk and parents are kept well informed.

Academic monitoring is excellent for most pupils. To raise pupils' and parents' aspirations, teachers set challenging targets for all pupils and closely monitor their progress in subjects, using assessment criteria and value added graphs. This has been most successful with pupils in Years 7 to 9, who make outstanding progress, are familiar with the assessment criteria and know what they need to do to reach their targets. In one excellent Year 9 English lesson, pupils working on aspects of persuasive writing, successfully assessed their own progress against the criteria, so that they could see how well they had performed in relation to their individual targets. Some pupils of average and lower ability, in Years 10 and 11, whilst aspiring to improve their grades at GCSE from D to C, are not sufficiently guided as to how this can be achieved. Pupils receive clear and suitable information and guidance in relation to Year 9 choices and post 16 courses.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good. The headteacher is highly committed to continuous improvement, and to raising standards and inspires her staff to work towards this end. She has recently restructured her senior team to enable them to manage this even more effectively. The headteacher and her senior leadership team have been very successful in significantly improving most pupils' progress in their time at the school. They have achieved this through establishing excellent monitoring procedures for teaching and learning and successfully integrating academic target

setting for pupils into the majority of lessons. A 'Learning to Learn Directorate' has been established that sustains a clear focus on teaching and learning and steers forward the sharing of good and excellent practice with teachers and support staff. Staff development sessions are linked closely to areas of improvement identified during observations, are very well attended and have contributed significantly to raising standards in teaching and learning.

The self-evaluation process is largely well managed and rigorous. An excellent component involves developing the ethos of 'reflection' in the school; consequently, throughout the year, teachers are required to review their teaching, and pupils, their learning and targets. As part of the self-evaluation process, the school has not sufficiently analysed the effectiveness of its behaviour strategies, and the impact of exclusion and reintegration into school, for a disproportionately higher than average number of pupils from minority ethnic groups in 2005-06.

The governing body works very effectively with the school through links with curriculum directors and has recently set up a 'Parents Forum'. Communication with parents has improved, although a minority of parents believe they are not consulted sufficiently when changes take place relating to school uniform, and in relation to being kept informed about their children's progress. The school has undergone some serious staffing problems that have had an impact on pupils' learning and progress in subjects such as design and technology (DT) and ICT, but a greater stability in these areas in the last year, has led to improved results in, for example, DT. The school gives good value for money.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
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
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
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
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	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, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Following our recent visit to inspect your school, we would like to thank you for your contribution. We enjoyed sitting in your lessons, talking with you and looking at your work.

I am now writing to let you know about our findings.

- Your school is a good school and you receive a good quality of education and good care, guidance and support when you need it. Your head teacher and the staff are very caring and highly committed to improving your progress in learning. You make a very good contribution towards your school and the local community and the school actively involves you in your learning.
- Most of you make good progress in your subjects during your time at school. In Years 7 to 9, you make outstanding progress, but it is not quite as good in Years 10 and 11. Your teachers know you very well and plan stimulating and enjoyable lessons that help you to make good progress. They set challenging targets for you in your lessons and most, but not all, monitor learning very closely.
- We were impressed by your behaviour and respect for others and your good sense of self discipline. Most of you attend the school regularly and understand that if you do not, this will affect your learning and results in the examinations. A minority of you need to work harder at your attendance. The school is very clear with the standards of behaviour and rightly, will not tolerate bullying and swearing. A minority of you need to respect this and to copy the good manners, which most of you display.

We have identified some areas where the school can improve.

- Teachers need to work more closely with you to help you improve the progress you make in Years 10 and 11.
- All teachers need to check your learning and progress in lessons.
- The school needs to develop more appropriate vocational and academic learning pathways for you to follow in Year 9.

We hope that you will all do well in the future and with the help of the school realise your ambitions.

Yours sincerely

Meena Wood Her Majesty's Inspector