



# Coopers Technology College

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 101667  
**Local Authority** Bromley  
**Inspection number** 286142  
**Inspection dates** 13–14 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Michael Lynes HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive	<b>School address</b>	Hawkwood Lane
<b>School category</b>	Foundation		Chislehurst
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18		Bromley BR7 5PS
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8467 3263
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	1630	<b>Fax number</b>	020 8295 0342
<b>Number on roll (6th form)</b>	332		
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Andrew Downes
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Robert Dilley
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 October 2002		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
11–18	13–14 December 2006	286142

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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Coopers is a specialist technology college which is larger than average. It has a comprehensive intake, and is oversubscribed for entry into Year 7. The vast majority of students are of White British origin. Levels of social deprivation are at about the national average, as are the number of students with learning difficulties or disabilities. The school shares its site with the Marjorie McClure School which caters for students with a range of physical disabilities and complex needs.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 3**

Coopers is a satisfactory and improving college. This is because the principal and the governing body have acted robustly to address the underachievement of students in some subjects in 2005. Their actions have had a good impact and resulted in improved achievement at Key Stage 3, which is now above average, and in the sixth form. However, this has yet to impact fully upon examination results at Key Stage 4.

The college is very well managed and runs smoothly on a day to day basis. Relationships amongst students, and between students and teachers, are based on mutual respect. This positive ethos ensures that students feel safe and they are confident that any problems will be dealt with effectively. They enjoy college and behave well. The curriculum is innovative at Key Stage 4, and students receive good levels of care and support. However, these good foundations are not yet ensuring that all students achieve as well as they could considering their starting points. There has been underachievement for some students in mathematics and science. The college has taken action to address this; recent improvements to examination results in Key Stage 3 are supporting better achievement in Key Stage 4.

At present teaching and learning are satisfactory but there is inconsistency across the college. Inspectors observed outstanding lessons in English and science. The best teaching is based on a clear understanding of where students are and what they need to do to make progress. The college collects good information on students' progress but not all teachers make consistent use of this to plan learning. Inspectors observed an outstanding science lesson that was full of variety, pace and challenge. Student's enjoyment was palpable, as was their progress. This lesson was taught by a member of staff who began at Coopers as a newly qualified teacher. This is testament to the very effective way in which the college supports and nurtures new entrants to the profession and, along with improvements in Key Stage 3, is a clear indicator of senior leaders' good capacity to improve the college further.

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 3**

The effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form are satisfactory. The college accepts students of all ability levels and a good induction programme ensures that very few students actually drop out. The five curriculum pathways meet the needs of most students but the lack of vocational courses means that a few undertake inappropriate courses. Overall students make satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points. Teaching and learning are also satisfactory. In lessons students have good relationships with their teachers and consider the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to be a strength. They also welcome the ability to email teachers through the learning gateway if they have a problem. Students on the whole enjoy being part of the sixth form, feel well cared for and consider the quality of the guidance on application to universities to be very good. They value the fact that they are treated as young adults and that the college is willing to listen to their views as demonstrated

by recent changes to the dress code. Students' personal development is good and the 'Interact' programme enables some to play an active part in both the life of the school and the local community.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards in mathematics and science at Key Stage 4.
- Sharpen the analysis of student progress so that teachers can consistently enable students to take the next steps in learning.
- Involve students more actively in lessons.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 3**

Standards are average in both the main college and in the sixth form. Students, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, achieve satisfactorily from their starting points in Year 7. There was some underachievement in 2005 but results in 2006 show good improvement, particularly at Key Stage 3. Data provided by the school indicates that students in Key Stage 4 are on track to meet their 2007 targets.

Key Stage 3 results improved in 2006 and were above average in each of English, mathematics and science. This rise is the direct result of recent robust actions to improve both mathematics and science. Students' progress in English is good and faster than that in mathematics, which is satisfactory. Despite improvements, test results in science remain below the school's targets. The school acknowledges that students do not achieve equally well in all subject areas. Students, particularly boys, make good progress in English. Business studies and geography are very successful. Within the specialist college technology subjects, students achieve well in ICT and make satisfactory progress in design and technology.

The proportion of students gaining five or more A\*–C grades at GCSE has fluctuated from year to year but has remained at least in line with national averages. In 2006, these results were above national figures reflecting the good improvement that has taken place over the last year. However, less than half of the year group gained grade C or better in both English and mathematics, mainly because of lower than expected standards in mathematics.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 2**

Students' personal development and well-being are good. Students enjoy life at college and participate well in lessons. Many students involve themselves in the wide range of clubs and extra-curricular opportunities that the college offers. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good.

Students feel safe at school. Incidents of bullying are rare and are dealt with swiftly and effectively. Students feel that they can readily approach staff to sort out matters. Students' attendance is satisfactory and they behave well.

Students contribute well to the life of the college community. The college council and year group councils play a successful role in prompting improvements, for example in healthy eating. They know about keeping fit and many take part in the range of extra-curricular sporting activities. Sixth formers act as mentors to younger students and take on a range of responsibilities. They contribute well to the community beyond the school and regular fund-raising activities support a number of charities. Students are developing good skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being such as their success in ICT and English and in taking on responsibilities to work effectively with groups.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Some teaching is good. The good teaching in English results in students making good progress. Lessons are well planned to meet their different learning needs. There are high expectations and good use of praise to build confidence and self-esteem. In some of the lessons observed the pace of teaching was too slow and as a result some students are not as actively engaged as they could be.

In most lessons students are keen to contribute and most enjoy learning. Relationships with adults and between students are good and students generally listen to adults and each other with care and respect. Too many lessons give students insufficient opportunities to discuss their learning or to work with others. The school recognises this and is beginning to address it with greater urgency. Teachers are confident and have good subject knowledge. The quality of marking is variable. The best marking tells students how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve further. However, less effective marking does not refer students back to earlier guidance to give them a clear idea of their progress.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

The curriculum is good. From the start of Year 7, there are clear pathways to match students' individual needs. This innovative approach ensures that students benefit from clear and personalised routes through the college. Some students are able to take their GCSE examinations in French and religious education early whilst others can study the three separate sciences in Years 10 and 11. Links with further education

colleges together with the introduction of a range of vocational courses ensure that the different needs of older students are met. Citizenship is taught by specialist teachers and has improved since the last inspection. All students have the opportunity to take part in work experience as well as developing their understanding of the world of work through enterprise activities. The satisfactory curriculum in the sixth form still lacks a wide enough choice of vocational courses to meet needs of some students.

The college provides an extensive range of trips which extend students experiences and learning. Some plan to take part in a World Challenge trip to Bolivia. Others visited Flatford Mills on a geography fieldtrip. There is a good range of after school clubs and activities which are well attended.

## **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The care, guidance and support of students are good. The necessary requirements for child protection and health and safety are fully met and regularly reviewed. Students are taught to handle equipment and materials safely in lessons, and are made aware of the need to conduct themselves in a manner that ensures the general safety of students. Risks assessments are conducted effectively; this was a key area for improvement at the last inspection.

Students receive good information on their progress in Key Stage 3 and guidance in the sixth form is good because students have a clear idea of the standards of their work and the targets that have been set for them. Students are guided onto curriculum pathways that most appropriately meet their needs.

The college provides good support for students with special or complex needs. A range of help is available for students in relation to academic issues and emotional or behavioural problems. For example, the college has a team of primary trained teachers who provide transitional programmes in maths and English to support some students before they join mainstream lessons. Good links with external agencies enable the college to extend the range of support and guidance available to students, particularly for those students at risk.

The personal, social and health education and citizenship programmes effectively develop students' awareness of the need for healthy lifestyles.

## **Leadership and management**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Leadership and management are good because of the high standard of care that the college provides, and the improvement in standards and achievement since the disappointing examination results in 2005. This was due to some difficulties with the recruitment of suitable teaching staff, but also the significant underachievement in

mathematics and science at both Key Stages 3 and 4. The principal has successfully engaged governors and senior leaders in an honest appraisal of the reasons for this underachievement. The resulting school improvement plan accurately identifies weaknesses and good strategies for improvement.

The good range of intervention strategies and secure monitoring of performance has resulted in good improvement in examination results in Key Stage 3 and in the sixth form. However, there is still some variability in the way that the school tracks the performance of students. Although the school systematically collects information on their progress it does not always use this well enough to improve students' learning.

The college has also provided good induction and professional development for a significant number of inexperienced teachers. This has ensured that there has been no drop in the quality of teaching and standards have risen. This demonstrates good capacity for further improvement.

The specialist technology status has brought about good improvements in the curriculum and in resources. The main impact has been in the use of information and communication resources across the curriculum and in the learning gateway. Vocational courses, including manufacturing and engineering, have expanded and offer useful alternative pathways for some students.

The college is managed very well on a day to day basis and there is a high level of care and support for all learners. Governors carry out their statutory responsibilities well and manage finances effectively. They provide good challenge to the leadership team on the quality of student performance.



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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>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	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

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

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	3
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	3	
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, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	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**

As you know we recently visited your college to inspect it. Thank you for your contribution to the inspection. You talked to us very openly and honestly about the college. I am writing to let you know our findings. If you want to read the whole report you can download it from [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

We judged the college to be satisfactory and improving. Many of you told us that you like the college, and it was clear that you have good relationships with your teachers. You told us that when there were any problems you were confident that your teachers would listen and take appropriate action. You feel safe, you behave very well, and you enjoy college.

You will be aware that results in the college in 2005 were not as good as they could have been. The principal, his senior team, and governors have taken effective action to improve these results and there was improvement in 2006. However, there is more to be done. We have asked the college to improve:

- examination results in mathematics and science at Key Stage 4
- the way in which it analyses your progress so that teachers can clearly help you to take the next steps in learning
- the ways in which teachers get you actively involved in lessons

I have every confidence that you and your teachers will work hard to achieve these improvements.

With best wishes

Michael Lynes

Her Majesty's Inspector