



# Waingels College

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 110070  
**Local Authority** Wokingham District Council  
**Inspection number** 288581  
**Inspection dates** 17–18 January 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Tom Winskill HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive	<b>School address</b>	Denmark Avenue
<b>School category</b>	Community		Woodley
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18		Reading RG5 4RF
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0118 9690336
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	1449	<b>Fax number</b>	0118 9442843
<b>Number on roll (6th form)</b>	241		
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr M Tarling
		<b>Principal</b>	Mr R Green
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 March 2001		

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
11–18	17–18 January 2007	288581

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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

Waingels College is a large Mathematics and Computing specialist school serving the suburb of Woodley to the east of Reading. Attainment on entry is generally at, or above, average. The proportion of students with statements of special educational needs is broadly average. The proportions of students from minority ethnic groups and those whose first language is not English is below average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Standards are above average in Key Stages 3 and 4 and broadly average in the sixth form. Teaching and learning are satisfactory leading to satisfactory achievement at the end of Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. Much of the teaching seen was good but teaching and learning overall are inconsistent as there are significant variations in quality both within and between subject areas. Recent strategies and staffing changes aimed at improving the quality of teaching and learning across the school have yet to take full effect. The school, while innovative in much of its practice, lacks the rigorous focus needed to ensure that the quality of teaching is consistently high across the school. Students with learning difficulties make good progress as a result of effective support and curriculum programmes matched to their needs.

The curriculum and other activities are good overall and satisfactory in the sixth form. The curriculum effectively meets the needs of different groups of students in Key Stages 3 and 4 but less so in the sixth form. Personal development and well being are good. Students are keen to learn and there is a good working atmosphere in the school, where students feel safe. Behaviour in the great majority of lessons and around the school is good although some parents have expressed concerns. Care, guidance and support are good all through the school as a result of the effective work of highly committed staff and good leadership. The school has recently made major changes to the provision of care, guidance and support and arrangements for parent-teacher consultations. It is too early to judge the impact of these changes on achievement and standards and students' personal development and well being. A significant minority of parents have expressed concern about the effectiveness of these initiatives and the way the school communicates with parents about such major changes. Despite these specific concerns, the school is well regarded by parents and is over-subscribed.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The principal, senior leaders and the governing body have a comprehensive vision for the development of all aspects of the school. This has resulted in a wide-ranging programme of changes introduced this academic year. For example, more effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school have only recently been introduced. They provide school leaders at all levels, including the governing body, with an accurate picture of its strengths and weaknesses. Improvements since the last inspection include good provision of information and communication technology (ICT) across the school and satisfactory management of the sixth form. There are also recent improvements in the quality of provision, leadership and management and standards in science. These improvements, together with self-evaluation leading to effective improvement planning, indicate the school has good capacity for improvement.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Standards in the sixth form are average although the percentage reaching the highest grades in 2006 examinations was slightly lower than the national figure. Achievement is satisfactory as a result of satisfactory teaching and learning. Achievement improved in 2006 compared to performance in the previous four years. The quality of teaching varies but better teaching provides good opportunities for independent learning with interesting, challenging content and activities. Personal development is good and the majority of students are enthusiastic, well motivated and eager to serve the school and the wider community. The team of students led by the head girl and head boy play a full part in the life of the school. Students are well prepared for life after Waingels with most going on to higher education. A good range of courses at Advanced level is offered and a small number of students follow the International Baccalaureate. The provision of vocational courses in the sixth form is limited although links with other local schools to extend this provision are in the planning stages. The new leadership team provides satisfactory leadership and management.

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

- Raise achievement at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form by improving the consistency of teaching and learning so that all students have the opportunity to make good progress.
- Senior leaders should ensure clear expectations about the quality of teaching and learning, including planning, are met through rigorous monitoring and evaluation.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

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

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. GCSE results in 2006 indicate standards are above average in most subjects at Key Stage 4. In particular, the proportion of students achieving five grades at C or above including English and mathematics is well above average. Boys' attainment is not as high as that of girls. The main exception to these high standards is science, where results in recent years have been below average. Standards reached by students in the current Year 11, however, show that standards in science are beginning to rise. This is because of improvements in the quality of teaching, leadership and management in science. Overall, students make satisfactory progress by the end of Key Stage 4.

Standards in Key Stage 3 are improving and are now well above average in English and mathematics as shown by national test results at the end of Key Stage 3 in 2006. Standards in science have improved, as shown by a significant increase in the proportion of the year group gaining Level 5 and Level 6 or better in national tests. This has halted the four-year decline in standards in science. Consequently, overall progress in Key Stage 3 has improved and is now good.

Students with learning difficulties make good progress in both Key Stage 3 and 4 because of effective support. Curriculum programmes which meet their needs and their determination to achieve well also contribute strongly to their success. Students whose first language is not English receive effective support and also make good progress.

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

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Personal development and well-being are good. An extensive range of activities in lessons and after school ensure the students' social, moral and cultural development is good and their spiritual development is adequate. Students enjoy their lessons and attendance is good. They do not consider bullying to be a major problem. When it does occur, they are confident that it is dealt with effectively and that there is always a member of staff or student mentor who will support them.

Students are effectively encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles through physical education, the healthy-eating options vigorously promoted by the school catering service and the strong personal, health and social education programme. The school environment is safe and there are sound procedures for ensuring this is maintained. Students make a good contribution to the school and the wider communities through, for example, community service activities and raising money for charities. The school council is effective in ensuring that the students' views are noted. Under the guidance of an enthusiastic 'student champion' it is beginning to expand its role. There is a good programme of work-related and enterprise learning including work experience and effective careers guidance. This provision, together with good achievement in English, mathematics and ICT, ensures students are developing suitable work-place skills.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Relationships between students and teachers are good as reflected in students' good and sometimes outstanding behaviour in lessons. Teachers deal with minor incidents of misbehaviour quickly and effectively. Students treat each other with respect and work together cooperatively and sensibly. In good or better lessons teachers have high expectations of students' work and behaviour and create a good learning environment. As a result, students work hard, enjoy these lessons and make good progress. A weakness in teaching is the quality of planning as it is inconsistent between and within departments. As a result, in some lessons provision for students with different abilities does not provide the opportunity

for them to make more than satisfactory progress. For example, more able students are given insufficient opportunities to work in ways which are less dependent on the teacher and enable them to tackle more challenging work.

Teachers assess students' progress regularly and useful information is effectively shared with the students and their parents/carers. Students know what target grades they should aim for but do not always know what they need to do to achieve them in specific pieces of work in different subjects. In some lessons they are effectively encouraged to assess their own progress and learning but this is inconsistent.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The curriculum is well balanced in Years 7 to 11 and enhanced by the opportunity for students to take GCSE English and mathematics in Year 10. A good range of subjects is available to students in Years 10 and 11 which improves student motivation. The school is increasingly effective in matching their needs and aspirations. The main school curriculum is inclusive in providing combinations of vocational courses, further education college courses and work experience programmes alongside more traditional subjects. The highest attaining students and the gifted and talented are catered for particularly well via a number of initiatives including summer schools and enterprise education. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities are well provided for with programmes designed to meet the specific needs of groups and individuals. The planning, development and evaluation of the curriculum are well executed. Students appreciate the good range and quality of extra-curricular activities, trips and visits as shown by their high level of participation.

## **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

There is a high level of commitment by staff to improve the well being and progress of students. Monitoring and tracking of students' academic progress is good. Students are set challenging targets based accurately on their ability and prior attainment. Underachieving students are identified and provided with further support. Although these interventions are recent, students' progress is beginning to improve. Parents receive informative reports and are involved when there is concern about lack of progress. Good links with local primary schools ensure that the needs of all students are identified to ensure a smooth transfer to Waingels. There are established and effective links with outside agencies to support student welfare. Effective child protection procedures are secure and understood by all staff.

Arrangements for care, guidance and support in the school were radically changed in September 2006. Formerly organised on a year group basis, there are now six mixed age 'learning communities' each with a number of mixed-age tutor groups. It is too early to judge the effectiveness of this change.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

#### Grade for sixth form: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. In this academic year there have been major changes in the structure and procedures of leadership and management in the school. These include changing roles in senior and middle leadership as well as reorganising the arrangements for leading and managing adults other than teachers. The rationale behind these changes is clear but their impact on achievement has yet to be discerned as they are so recent. For example, a programme of professional training is supported by a 'teaching development team' to enable teachers to update and develop their teaching skills and to share good practice and ideas. This has yet to impact fully on the quality of teaching and learning.

A weakness in leadership and management is the lack of rigour in which senior leaders maintain high expectations of the quality of teaching and learning. For example, the school has a clear, well thought-out policy for teaching and learning but this is not always followed in lessons. Consequently, the quality of teaching and learning is inconsistent. In addition, lesson planning is weak because there has been insufficient direction from senior leaders, through middle leaders, to ensure a consistent approach across the school.

New procedures for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are proving sound as are new arrangements for monitoring and tracking students' progress. As yet, information from these processes has not been used consistently and rigorously to tackle identified weaknesses. The school's wide-ranging vision for improvement in all aspects of its work is clearly set out in its improvement plans. The school provides satisfactory 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>	<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	3	3
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	2	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	2	

### 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	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

<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	2
<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>	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	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**

We inspected your school recently and I am writing to inform you of our findings. Thank you for making us welcome and particularly those of you that we spoke to in lessons, at break and lunch time and in meetings.

Waingels College provides a satisfactory quality of education. Standards are generally above average and students make good progress in Key Stage 3 and satisfactory progress in Key Stage 4 and the sixth form. Much of the teaching is good but it varies in quality too much. This limits the amount of progress some of you can make.

Your behaviour is good and you get on well with your teachers, which helps you to learn. You have a good choice of subjects in Key Stage 4. The sixth form has a good range of Advanced level courses but vocational options are limited. You are well cared for and supported in school. We were impressed with your school meals and the range of things for you to do outside lesson times.

The school has introduced a lot of changes which it hopes will help your personal development and your achievement. The school council provides a good mechanism for you to tell the school whether or not these changes are helpful and effective.

- We have told the school to make sure that more teaching is of higher quality so more of you, particularly older students, can make good progress.
- Senior staff should work closely with teachers to ensure that the quality of teaching, including planning for lessons and units of work, is consistently good across the school.

Tom Winskill

Her Majesty's Inspector