



Wilsthorpe Business and Enterprise College

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112935
Local Authority DERBYSHIRE
Inspection number 289468
Inspection dates 4–5 October 2006
Reporting inspector Gwen Coates HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive	College address	Derby Road
School category	Community		Long Eaton, Long Eaton
Age range of pupils	11–18		Nottingham, Nottinghamshire NG10 4WT
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	0115 9729421
Number on roll (college)	1055	Fax number	0115 9461974
Number on roll (6th form)	150		
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr R Paulson
		Headteacher	Mr D Smith
Date of previous college inspection	1 October 2001		

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Introduction

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

Description of the college

Wilsthorpe Business and Enterprise College serves a socially mixed suburban area. Students from minority ethnic backgrounds form a much smaller proportion than usual. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is lower than average. The college works in partnership with local primary schools in an extended school pilot. It is a member of the Long Eaton Area Partnership (LEAP), which jointly provides courses for sixth form students. It gained specialist business and enterprise college status in September 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the college

Grade: 3

Inspection confirms the college's judgement that its overall effectiveness is satisfactory. The college has established good links with external agencies that enhance the support for students and promote their personal development and economic well-being. Good partnerships with other schools ensure good transition arrangements for Year 7 students and broaden opportunities for sixth form students. Effective strategies have been put in place to promote improvements since the last inspection and the college has good capacity to improve further. This is evident in the rigour with which the strategy to improve behaviour has been implemented and the effective monitoring and review systems in place to improve teaching and learning. The process of self-evaluation is good and takes into account the views of all major stakeholders. The college has a clear view of its strengths and weaknesses. However, inconsistencies in the implementation of strategies relating to marking, assessment and the use of assessment information across the college indicate that the impact of self-evaluation is not as effective as it should be. Marking does not always advise students on how to improve and is not consistently followed up. The achievement of students overall is satisfactory, although the standards they reach are below average. Achievement at Key Stage 4 and particularly among boys is a matter of concern. However, good links with other agencies and schools, and clear strategies to improve teaching and learning, broaden the curriculum and improve behaviour are beginning to have a positive impact on students' progress. Attendance has improved but is still below average for students at Key Stage 4. This and, sometimes, low expectations about what students could achieve among some staff and students contribute to underachievement among students at Key Stage 4 and among boys. Students enjoy their education and feel that the college is a safe, caring community. Their behaviour is good and they make a very effective contribution to the community. Students are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles by making healthy eating choices and by their involvement in the wide range of physical activities offered by the college. A new shared vision in relation to the college's business and enterprise status is encouraging a common sense of purpose in the college and in its partner schools. This is leading to an enterprise ethos that is beginning to permeate all aspects of the college and is having a positive impact on preparing students for their future economic well-being.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 3

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form are satisfactory. Students' achievement is satisfactory and they gain broadly average results. Standards are improving as a result of effective monitoring of progress against realistic targets. Students are appreciative of the expertise of their teachers and the opportunities they have to take an active part in their learning. The college works in partnership with other local schools to improve the range of courses available to sixth form students. Its entry policy is sufficiently flexible and its curriculum sufficiently broad to meet the needs of all students and to provide them with opportunities to progress. The college is successful

in meeting the needs of the small number of sixth form students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, who make good progress as a result.

What the college should do to improve further

- Improve consistency in the use of assessment information to monitor students' progress against targets in all subjects. - Ensure that marking of students' work consistently provides clear guidelines on how to improve and that action is taken to ensure that this is followed through. - Raise achievement, particularly at Key Stage 4 and among boys, by improving attendance and the expectations of staff and students.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 3

In the college overall, the achievement of students is satisfactory but the standards they reach are below average. Students enter the college with prior attainment that is below average to broadly average. They make satisfactory progress overall but progress between Key Stages 2 and 3 is better than that between Key Stages 3 and 4. The progress of boys is disappointing. The progress students in all key stages made in the lessons observed during the inspection was at least satisfactory and often good. Year 11 students attained broadly average results in their GCSE courses in 2005, although in some subjects few students gained passes at the highest grade. According to the college's data, GCSE results declined in 2006. The progress of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is comparable to that of their peers. The progress of minority ethnic students and of those whose first language is not English is above average. Prior attainment of students entering the sixth form is below average. They make satisfactory progress and the standards reached in their AS and A-level courses are broadly average. Indications from the college's 2006 results are that progress has improved significantly.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

The personal development and well-being of students are good. Those who regularly attend enjoy their education and view the college as a safe, caring community. As a result of the introduction of successful strategies to improve behaviour, exclusions have fallen significantly. Incidents of bullying are dealt with efficiently and effectively. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good, as exemplified by the work that is being done to support a school in South Africa. Improving attendance is a continuing priority of the college. Initiatives have resulted in improvement so that during the inspection attendance was satisfactory overall, although that of students in Years 10 and 11 is still below average. Promotion of a healthy lifestyle is well developed and the college has achieved the 'National Healthy School Award' as a

result. Physical well-being is encouraged through a range of physical activities that are well attended, particularly by students in Years 7 to 9. Students are prepared well to participate in their communities and readily support fund-raising and charitable events. The specialist Business and Enterprise College status is having a positive impact in improving students' understanding of business and economic issues and in preparing them for their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The college continues to give improvement in teaching and learning a high priority and the benefits of this are seen in the many good and occasional excellent lessons observed during the inspection. Most lessons begin in a calm and orderly manner, reflecting the positive impact of the college's behaviour strategy. In the best lessons teachers take every opportunity to ensure that students are actively involved and encouraged to share ideas. In discussion students say that they like these lessons because the varied activities help to maintain interest. However, in many satisfactory lessons, progress is slowed because students spend too much time listening to the teacher or expectations are too low. In these circumstances interest wanes and some students become inattentive. A developing feature in many lessons, particularly in Key Stage 3, is the effective use of assessment to give students very clear information on what they need to do in order to improve. However, there is too much variation in the guidance given to students through the marking of their work. Whilst students' work is marked regularly, in many instances marking is not designed to bring about improvement and requests for work to be completed are not followed up. This is more likely to occur in the work of boys rather than girls.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

The curriculum is satisfactory with several good and developing features and this is helping to raise achievement. The college's specialist status is creating additional opportunities for students to increase their knowledge and understanding of business, and enterprise features as part of the curriculum of all year groups. This is supported by very good links with a number of local businesses. The extension of the range of vocational subjects and other options available in Key Stage 4, in addition to a wide range of academic subjects, is proving popular and is helping to maintain positive attitudes to school in students less suited to more traditional GCSE courses. There is a well constructed personal and social education programme which contributes successfully to students' understanding of responsible citizenship and helps to prepare them for life after school. Students with learning and other difficulties have good

access to the curriculum and the choices within it. The college offers a good range of enrichment activities, including a wide range of sporting activities, other clubs and educational visits. These activities make an important contribution in helping students develop into mature responsible adults.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support provided by the college is good. The needs of students who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties are met appropriately. Students feel safe and are well supported by staff. The management of a range of support services, including multi-agency support partnerships, available to students is clear and coherent. Effective careers advice and guidance help to ensure students are given appropriate information on further and higher education and on employment. Teachers in Year 9 prepare students well for examination courses in Years 10 and 11. The college collects information about the progress of pupils but its use to monitor progress against targets is inconsistent. Although most students have targets to work towards, neither they, nor their parents, have a clear understanding of the progress being made in different aspects of each subject.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

Leadership and management in the college are satisfactory overall and good in the sixth form where they have been instrumental in extending and enhancing the provision for students. The headteacher has the confidence of his staff, has a clear vision about how the college needs to develop and is well supported by his senior leadership team and middle managers. As a result of this, the college has made progress since the last inspection, particularly in relation to the behaviour of students and their personal development, and now has good capacity to improve further. Monitoring and review systems at senior and middle management level provide accurate assessments of the quality of teaching, identify underperformance among staff and provide appropriate support. The quality of monitoring and the use of target setting systems in order to raise students' attainment are, however, inconsistent across subjects. Procedures for safeguarding students are robust, all requirements for child protection are in place and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities. Governors are well informed about the strengths of the college and its main priorities for improvement.

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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>	College 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?	3	3
How well does the college work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
The effectiveness of the college'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

How well do learners achieve?	3	3
The standards ¹ 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	2

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	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

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	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?	3	2
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	3	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this college require special measures?	No	
Does this college require a notice to improve?	No	

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

6 October 2006 Dear Students Wilsthorpe Business and Enterprise College, Derby Road, Long Eaton, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, NG10 4WT Thank you for welcoming me and my team of inspectors to your college last week. We enjoyed meeting you and joining you in your lessons. Your college has many good features. You enjoy your education and are part of a safe and caring community. You behave well both in lessons and around the college. Your teachers work hard to provide you with lessons that interest you. The range of courses available to you at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form ensures that all of you are able to find something suitable for your needs. Achievement by students is satisfactory but it could improve, particularly for those of you in Key Stage 4 and for boys. We have asked the college to ensure that progress against your target grades is monitored closely in every subject so that support can be provided if you begin to slip behind. Your teachers have been asked to ensure that in marking your work they include clear guidance on how you can improve and that they follow this up and have high expectations about what you can achieve. You can help your college and yourself by working hard, following the advice teachers give you, having high expectations about yourself and what you can achieve and by attending college regularly. This applies particularly to those of you in Key Stage 4 and to boys. I wish you every success in the future Yours sincerely Gwen Coates
HMI