



Lees Brook Community Sports College

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 112955
Local Authority City of Derby
Inspection number 289472
Inspection dates 20–21 September 2006
Reporting inspector Mr. David Simpson HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Morley Road
School category	Community		Chaddesden, Chaddesden
Age range of pupils	11–16		Derby, Derbyshire DE21 4QX
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01332 671723
Number on roll (school)	1134	Fax number	01332 280794
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs. Hazel Till
		Headteacher	Mrs. Carol Dibbs
Date of previous school inspection	16 September 2002		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11–16	20–21 September 2006	289472

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one HMI and four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Lees Brook Community Sports College is a larger than average secondary school which is continuing to grow. Almost all pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below average, although the number with statements of special educational needs is high. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. From January 2006 the college was successfully re-designated as a specialist sports college with additional subject areas: vocational education and modern foreign languages.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Lees Brook is a good Community Sports College with a strong ethos where students are valued, listened to and respected. Standards have been rising in recent years and students now attain in line with national averages by the time they leave the school. The students make good progress and the college is rightly setting even more ambitious targets in order that students' achievement is in line with the top quarter of students nationally. The outstanding leadership of the headteacher is characterised by a vision and commitment to providing an education which meets the needs of each individual. Her work has improved the lives of young people within the college's community and across the city. A parent described her as a 'fantastic head who gets the best out of her students.' She is well supported by a dynamic senior leadership team which has recently been restructured to draw in more talent. The team has accurately identified the key issues for the college to improve further and the range of initiatives they have introduced are beginning to have an impact. At present, there are frequent examples of good or outstanding practice in terms of teaching and learning and strategies to raise student achievement but these are not consistent throughout the college. In most lessons teaching is good or better and students respond well to challenging tasks, clear learning objectives and opportunities to reflect on their performance and how they could improve. However, the quality of teaching is too variable. In some lessons students are given too few opportunities to develop skills such as asking questions, problem solving and independent study, and work is not sufficiently well matched to the ability of individuals. Teachers have too few opportunities to use information and communication technology (ICT) in order to make the study of their subjects more stimulating. A strength of the curriculum is the innovative use of a broad range of accreditation and vocational opportunities to engage the interests of students and recognise their achievements. The care, guidance and support given to students is good and has many outstanding features. Staff have a passion to develop their students into confident, mature and caring individuals. The monitoring of conduct and behaviour helps to identify students who need help and any issues are quickly addressed. However, academic monitoring is less effective and consistent. The college is beginning to hold middle managers more to account for student progress. The data available to them has the potential for sophisticated monitoring to tackle underperformance and further raise the rate of progress of students across the ability range. The college works outstandingly well with other schools, agencies and community links to enrich the students' education and ensure their well-being. As a result the students' personal development has many outstanding features. They feel safe, well cared for and able to contribute to the improvement of their college. Specialist sports college status has been well used to raise standards, to help students appreciate how to live healthily, and to broaden the curriculum in order to better meet the needs of individuals as well as to prepare them for the world of work. The college provides outstanding opportunities for students to demonstrate leadership and responsibility both in the college and beyond. Their self-esteem develops as they progress through the school. A parent of a student who recently joined the college wrote to the inspection team,

'I am looking forward to my child growing and learning in this environment where all the staff are so committed.'

What the school should do to improve further

- Increase the proportion of teaching which is good or better through providing more opportunities for students to be actively involved in their learning. - Use the data available on student performance more effectively to better target support and meet the needs of individuals across the ability range. - Hold middle managers more accountable for the progress of students.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement is good. Students' attainment on entry has risen over recent years and is now broadly average. Their good progress is reflected in the rising trend in end of Key Stage 3 national tests, which are now above average. Because of successful action taken to tackle underachievement in science, the 2006 test results rose to match the students' performance in English and mathematics. Students' good progress is maintained through Years 10 and 11, and GCSE examination results have risen to close to average. In 2006, over half of the students gained five or more A* to C grades for the first time in the college's history. The proportion of students gaining five or more A* to G grades is consistently significantly above the national average. These results represent good achievement given these students' below average starting points and reflect the care and support given to all. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported and make particularly good progress. Inspection evidence shows that because of successful management initiatives, including improved arrangements for monitoring students' progress and the provision of additional support for those in danger of underachieving, the rise in standards is being maintained. Both the college and specialist targets were met in 2006. However, targets are not yet challenging enough to support the continuing drive to raise standards further.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The personal development of students is outstanding. Staff and students have a shared understanding of their rights and responsibilities. This results in a happy and safe community which helps students to develop the skills and attitudes for work and leisure in later life. Students are mature, tolerant and supportive of others. They are able to share concerns with staff, for example about bullying or racism, knowing that they will be taken seriously. This supports newcomers to the college and those with learning difficulties and or disabilities to be accepted and to make progress. Most students attend regularly and are punctual for lessons. The college works hard to ensure that all students and their families realise the importance of good attendance. Students behave very well in class, and also around the college site and on visits. They thoroughly enjoy and make the most of the wide variety of clubs on offer and other activities such

as fund raising events for charity. Many students act as class officers to help with the smooth running of their tutor group and a significant number train as leaders and mentors for younger students. The School Council is an effective and articulate group of students discussing matters of concern in the college and taking action on issues as varied as the talented athlete scheme, improving ICT, and chewing gum. Sports College status ensures that students can take part in a wide range of physical exercise and develop good habits of healthy eating. A range of initiatives including an industry project prepares students for the particular challenges of the world of work. There is a well planned programme for personal and social education, including the excellent learning skills course in Year 7, which alongside enriching across the curriculum fully supports the students' outstanding spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good and inspectors' judgements reflect the college's from their own monitoring of lessons. Typically lessons have good pace, appropriate challenge and frequent opportunities to discuss which ensure that students are constantly involved with activities, developing their insight and understanding. Teachers' expertise, enthusiasm for their subject, and understanding of how to manage the behaviour of classes and individuals encourage students to be excited by new knowledge and skills. As a result, students develop a strong sense of purpose and concentrate and co-operate very well. Lessons are under-pinned by good planning, clear learning objectives and the efficient use of time. Students are encouraged to think for themselves, and to express ideas and opinions because they know they will be listened to. As a result, students learn well. However, there are some inconsistencies in teaching and learning. Where lessons are less than good, planning does not fully take account of students' different needs and abilities. Teachers do not give students enough time to work out an answer before providing the explanation, spend too long describing tasks or provide too much information. This deprives students of the stimulation and challenge of independent enquiry.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The quality of the curriculum is good, and meets the needs and aspirations of students. The move towards a broader range of vocational subjects, in addition to a wide range of academic subjects, has proved popular and has contributed significantly to raising standards. For example, the outstanding construction course at Broomfield College motivates students and helps them appreciate how Lees Brook is equipping them for adult life. Work experience balances well students' interests and capabilities and the demands of the community. However, the requirements for teaching citizenship are not currently given sufficient attention, although plans are in hand to redress this shortcoming. Since the previous inspection the curriculum has improved. The planning

for design technology are now more coherent. Provision for ICT is better, for example more classrooms equipped with computers are now available and the use of a digital camera in an outstanding physical education lesson enabled students to promptly discuss and assess their own performance. However, inspectors rarely saw teachers use ICT as part of their day-to-day teaching. Many students take part in the impressive range of extra-curricular sporting and other activities. These enhance the curriculum as well as pupils' personal development. There is also an extensive programme of visits and foreign trips.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The quality of care, guidance and support is good with many outstanding features. The college is a well ordered and a secure place for learning. It helps Year 7 students to settle quickly. Good use is made of the student planner to reinforce routines and expectations. Tutor groups, which mix students from Year 8 to 11, enable older students to forge relationships with new students and take on responsibilities. Tutors regularly check behaviour and progress. The learning and behaviour managers are used effectively to help those students who are at risk of misbehaving or falling behind with work. The behaviour management of students is excellent. The college takes its duty of care very seriously with child protection and health and safety procedures well set up. Innovative group programmes and teaching strategies to meet the needs of individuals ensure that the students with learning difficulties and disabilities are helped to do their very best. Equally, high achieving and talented students are beginning to be challenged further. Termly reports on achievement and progress are discussed with parents. Students who are slipping behind are identified but specific intervention strategies to address individual needs are under-developed. Students are guided to courses which best suit their abilities and aptitudes and there is a comprehensive programme for careers advice. Excellent links with local colleges and the community help students to move on to further study and employment.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The highly supportive atmosphere in the college owes much to the vibrant leadership of the headteacher and her determination to provide the best possible education for the students. This is acknowledged by staff, students, parents and governors. Her drive to take the college forward is fully supported by members of the senior leadership team and other staff. This is seen, for example, in the successful application for re-designation as a specialist sports college. Senior staff have established a calm and productive climate for learning and set high expectations for both staff and students. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the performance of the college are good, and the school's self-evaluation is accurate. Procedures for regularly analysing the performance of students, which are well established in some areas, are now being extended to ensure that all subject and pastoral managers are equally effective and

accountable. Governance of the college is good. Governors fulfil their role as critical friends effectively and are actively involved in promoting improvement. This is seen, for example, in the improved quality of provision in music. Resources are managed well. The capacity for further improvement is good and the college provides 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?	1
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	1
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

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?	2
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	2
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

22 September 2006 Dear Students Lees Brook Community Sports College, Morley Road, Chaddesden, Derby, Derbyshire, DE21 4QX Thank you for welcoming me and the inspection team into your college. An inspection is never easy for you or the adults who work with you and so we appreciated your readiness to talk to us and to help us when we got lost. Your views and the opinions of your families have helped us to understand what Lees Brook is really like. We think that you make good progress during your time at the college and that you grow into mature, courteous and confident individuals who are ambitious for your future. This is the result of your attitudes and readiness to learn and the adults at the college who take such good care of you. You've described Lees Brook to us as a 'telling college', a place where you are listened to and your views make a difference. You have many opportunities to take responsibility and show leadership in your tutor group, the college and the wider community, including helping with sport and physical education at local primary schools. We agree with you and your families' view that your headteacher, Mrs Dibbs, is very special. After two days in your college we know how passionate she is! She wants you to get the most out of your education and to aim high for the future. Our recommendations for what the college can do to improve further match her own: - in your lessons, give you more opportunity to learn through asking questions, conducting your own investigations and evaluating how well you and other young people in the class did; and - the information the college collects and shares with you and your parents is used most effectively to ensure that all of you meet your potential. One of you described Lees Brook as 'an always improving college' and we know that you continue to play an important part to play in that. Thank you again for making our inspection so enjoyable and rewarding. Yours sincerely David Simpson HMI