

# Clyst Vale Community College

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113501
<b>Local Authority</b>	Devon
<b>Inspection number</b>	289655
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 May 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Christopher Russell 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 category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	1039
6th form	146
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Chris Cranston
<b>Headteacher</b>	Kevin Bawn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 November 2002
<b>School address</b>	Station Road Broadclyst Exeter EX5 3AJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01392 461407
<b>Fax number</b>	01392 460594

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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

Clyst Vale Community College is an average sized comprehensive school serving a rural area close to Exeter. The college is popular and a significant proportion of students from the city attend. There are plans over the coming 3–5 years to relocate the college to the proposed new settlement of Cranbrook. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and disabilities is close to the national average, although the proportion with statements of special educational needs is slightly higher. The college houses the local authority's provision for hearing impaired students in East Devon. There are few students from minority ethnic backgrounds and very few are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The college collaborates with three East Devon schools and two local colleges to increase the range of courses available to students at Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. The college is a specialist college for science, mathematics and computing.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Clyst Vale Community College provides a satisfactory standard of education overall and a good standard of education in the sixth form.

Good care and support are strong features of the college's work. Staff are very committed to the needs of students and they know them well. Relationships are very good and students feel well supported. Parents appreciate the college's caring and supportive environment. As one parent wrote 'The little things matter so much...the support of excellent staff at CVCC has ensured the success and happiness of my children. I will always be grateful for that.' The college's curriculum is broad and varied and meets the needs of students well. The college also offers a wide range of activities outside of lessons, some linked to the college's specialisms; these opportunities are popular and well supported by students. These good aspects of provision help to ensure that students' personal development and well-being are good. Behaviour in lessons and around the college is good and students are friendly, positive and confident.

Standards at Key Stages 3 and 4 are slightly above national averages and have risen in recent years. This level of attainment represents satisfactory progress given the students' starting points in Year 7. Students make good progress in the sixth form. Teaching and learning are satisfactory in the college as a whole and good in the sixth form. Many lessons are good and some are outstanding. However, the profile of teaching and learning is not consistently good across the college. Additionally, the way in which the college sets challenging targets for students and monitors their progress is good in some areas, but is not yet fully developed and consistent across the college. Consequently, while all students are able to make satisfactory progress at Key Stages 3 and 4, many could achieve more.

The principal is highly committed and provides good leadership. A number of significant changes have been made to the college's leadership and management over the past two years. A new and expanded senior leadership team is in place and the college has restructured the middle leadership team. These changes have been well managed and are giving a strong impetus to further development. Many recent changes are already having a positive effect on the direction of the college and there is good capacity to improve further. Specialist status has had a positive impact on the college as a whole, as well as in the specialist departments of mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). However, leadership and management are currently satisfactory rather than good, as the actions of leaders and managers across the college are yet to make a full impact on students' academic progress at Key Stages 3 and 4.

## Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

### Grade: 2

The sixth form provides a good standard of education. The achievement of sixth form students has improved significantly in the last two years. Examination results are just above national averages and students make good progress from their starting points at the beginning of Year 12. Teaching and learning are good, with particular strengths in teachers' subject knowledge, relationships and the use of group work to involve students actively in their work. The college offers a wide choice of AS and A levels, enhanced by effective collaboration with other local institutions. Vocational courses attract fewer students as a local college is able to offer a large number of such courses.

Students speak highly of the pastoral and academic support given by their teachers and say they feel very secure in college. In a recent survey, nearly all students said they thoroughly enjoyed lessons, although they would like better study facilities. Sixth formers make a good contribution to the college life of younger students. For example, they act as mentors and reading helpers. They appreciate the assistance they receive when applying for higher education.

The leadership and management of the sixth form are good. Numbers of students entering the sixth form are increasing overall, especially in the specialist areas of mathematics and science. The sixth form has an impressive trend of recent development and good capacity for further improvement.

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

- Increase the proportion of good or better lessons in Key Stages 3 and 4.
- Make greater and more consistent use of assessment information to monitor students' academic progress.

## **Achievement and standards**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Students generally enter the college in Year 7 with standards that are slightly above the national average. Standards at the end of Key Stages 3 and 4 are slightly above national averages, representing satisfactory progress given students' starting points and capabilities. Notably, the progress of different groups of students is consistent, with none making less than satisfactory progress.

Results in the Key Stage 3 tests and examinations have risen since the last inspection. In 2006 they were slightly above average in all subjects. English results have improved significantly in the past two years and are now similar to those for mathematics and science. GCSE results have also increased, particularly the proportion of students attaining five or more higher grades.

The sixth form has a broad entry policy. As a result, students entering the sixth form have slightly below average starting points. The progress made by students has improved considerably over the last two years. Progress is good and sixth form students attain standards that are slightly above the national average.

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

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Personal development and well-being are good. The college is characterised by very good relationships between students and staff. Students are considerate to each other. As one student said, 'People are nice to each other here'. The good support given by staff is highly valued by students. As a result, they feel safe, enjoy college and attend well. Bullying is rare; both parents and students have complete confidence that staff will deal with any incidents that do occur quickly and effectively. Behaviour is good around the college and in almost all lessons. Students are very aware of the need to adopt a healthy lifestyle.

Students' social, moral and cultural development is good. They demonstrate a strong commitment to racial equality and a good awareness of cultural diversity. Spiritual development has improved and is now satisfactory. Members of the college council are enthusiastic about their ability to

influence developments. In particular, the work of the council sub-committees is having a significant impact on several areas of college life, for example in helping the college to reduce incidents of bullying still further. Despite limitations imposed by the college's location, there are good opportunities for students to contribute to the wider community, for example by fund raising activities and through outreach work to support sporting activities in a local special school. Students develop a wide range of skills for employment and future economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Many lessons are good and a small number are outstanding. However, lessons are not yet consistently good enough to enable students to make good progress at Key Stages 3 and 4. Teaching and learning in the sixth form are more consistent, enabling students to make greater progress.

A variety of teaching and learning practice was observed during the inspection. In many lessons teachers use a variety of strategies that are closely tailored to students' learning needs. Students respond very well to these opportunities; they are closely involved in their own learning and make rapid progress. However, the learning that students are expected to make is not always made sufficiently explicit by the teacher. Work is also not always matched closely enough to the learning needs of all students, and in some cases excessive teacher direction provides too few opportunities for students to work independently or collaboratively. Consequently, not all students are fully challenged to make the progress of which they are capable.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The curriculum is good. The college provides a broad and balanced curriculum for students of all ages, with a wide variety of courses for students aged 14 to 19. In Years 10 and 11 some students follow work related placements which are more suited to their needs than a fully academic programme. The college closely monitors the suitability of the curriculum for its students and makes changes where appropriate. The curriculum is enhanced by a rich and diverse programme of trips and activities outside of lessons. Students enjoy these opportunities and, particularly given the constraints of travel, participation rates are high. These opportunities support students' good social development.

### **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. Arrangements for protecting and safeguarding students are robust. Staff know individuals well and work effectively as a team to support their needs. A range of initiatives gives strong support to students' welfare, good behaviour and attendance and personalised support strategies have resulted in some notable individual successes. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities and other vulnerable students are well supported; those in the hearing support base are given strong individual support, including a very well

considered induction programme. The way in which the college sets targets for students and monitors their progress is satisfactory and currently under development.

All students are well supported for the move from primary school, in choosing their options in Year 9 and in progressing into the sixth form or beyond. The provision for careers guidance is satisfactory and improving.

## **Leadership and management**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The principal and his senior colleagues form a strong team and provide clear direction. As a result, a number of aspects of the college's work are good. Senior leaders have a clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve further. Governors provide appropriate support and challenge. The long period of uncertainty over the proposed relocation of the college has made it difficult for leaders to plan for the future of the college's buildings. Resources have been used very wisely during this period to make the best use possible of the limited and rather 'tired' accommodation. Leaders have made use of specialist status to support the college's further development. There has, for example, been innovative work in ICT that is helping to support students' transition from primary school.

There have been recent, far-reaching changes to the college's senior and middle leadership. These changes are well thought out and, while extensive, have been carried out in a way that has maintained good staff morale. As a result, senior and middle leaders are working effectively together to set a strong direction for the college's further improvement. Much development is currently underway. For example, changes have been made to the way in which departments evaluate their performance and plan for the future. These are already leading to better evaluation and planning across the college, although targets for improvement are not always sufficiently sharp. However, while many changes are already leading to improvement, much development is quite recent and is yet to make a full impact on students' academic progress across the college.





## Annex A

## 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	2
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	2
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	2
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	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	2
<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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	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	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 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

Dear Students

Clyst Vale Community College, Exeter, Devon, EX5 3AJ

Thank you for your help and for taking the time to talk to us during the recent inspection. I am writing to you to tell you about our main findings. We judged the college to be satisfactory with some good features. We judged the sixth form to be good.

We were very impressed by your attitudes and behaviour. The atmosphere around the college is very good and we found students to be sensible, friendly and confident. We were also impressed by the way in which the college cares for you and helps you to develop as young people. Many students spoke enthusiastically about the support that staff provide.

The curriculum has developed well. This helps ensure that you are able to follow the right courses. We saw many good and some outstanding lessons during the inspection and we could see that you respond positively to good teaching and enjoy learning. We did, however, find that some lessons are not as good as others. We have asked the college to work on this area, so that more lessons are as good as the best. We also found that the college could make more use of assessment information to track your progress more closely. The college is developing this area and we think that they are right to make it a priority. Although examination results are higher than in most schools, we think that these improvements would help some of you to achieve even more.

There have been many changes to the college's leadership and management in the last year or two. This is leading to much positive change and development. The college has good capacity to continue improving over the coming years. The inspection team wishes you well for the future.

Yours faithfully

Christopher Russell Her Majesty's Inspector