

# Wyvern Technology College

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116429
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	290531
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 October 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Bill Stoneham

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>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	1316
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Danny Stupple
<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss Sheila Campbell
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 March 2003
<b>School address</b>	Botley Road Fair Oak Eastleigh SO50 7AN
<b>Telephone number</b>	02380 692679
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<b>Age group</b>	11-16
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by five Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Wyvern Technology College is a larger than average mixed community comprehensive college for students aged 11–16. The college is a high performance specialist school in technology with a second specialism of humanities and is a full service extended school. The college is popular and expanding. It serves the eastern suburbs of the Hampshire town of Eastleigh plus some neighbouring villages. The large majority of students are White British. The number entitled to free school meals is low. The proportion of students with learning difficulties is below the national average, as is the number for whom English is a second language. Levels of deprivation are well below the national average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Wyvern Technology College is a good college with many outstanding features; it provides a good education for all its students. The college is a large one and yet there is a strong sense of community based on a clear and inclusive ethos and on the outstanding care, guidance and support that are provided for students. Parents value the college and most who replied to the inspection questionnaire praised the quality of work undertaken. As one parent commented: 'I have two children in school. Both have achieved beyond my expectations. Thanks to the school.' Many other parents made similar comments.

Standards by the end of Year 11 are well above average. This represents good progress overall and is a testimony to the very good work done by the college. However, though many boys do well, there is a need to improve the rate at which boys overall make progress, especially in Years 10 and 11. Students with learning difficulties make progress at the same rate as their peers. The curriculum is outstanding and is enhanced by an excellent range of extra curricular activities. Teaching and learning are good overall, with some lessons featuring outstanding teaching. Most lessons are characterised by a varied range of activities. The college has a good understanding of the quality of teaching and its own monitoring programme provides an accurate assessment of students' learning.

Relationships between students and between students and staff are excellent. Consequently, students work well together in an orderly atmosphere based on trust and mutual respect. Attendance is good and behaviour is outstanding. The students feel very safe in the college environment. Most enjoy coming to college and understand well the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

Students contribute particularly well to college life and to the wider community. They are offered many opportunities to accept responsibility. The college council is an effective forum for issues to be raised and discussed with college managers. Considerable sums are raised for charities, including supporting schools in Kenya. Activities that promote cohesion in the college community, such as high quality music and drama and sports events, are arranged. Most students mature into responsible and articulate young people by the time they leave the college.

The opportunities made available to the students have been enhanced by specialist technology and humanities status enjoyed by the college. This has led to rising standards, especially in technology and to the college forging many highly successful community and business partnerships. Specialist status, allied to the college's commitment to the extended schools programme, has resulted in the college playing a prominent role in the community that it serves.

Leadership and management are good. Success is based on a strong team performance involving all staff. Over a number of years, the college has benefited from the outstanding leadership of an inspirational headteacher; this has significantly raised the college's profile. The outstanding work of the headteacher is mirrored by the excellent contribution made by a very skilled and knowledgeable governing body. The college knows itself well and its excellent self-evaluation provides an accurate assessment of the relative strengths and the weaknesses in provision. Senior managers recognise the need to improve the way in which academic targets for students are set and monitored to fuel further improvements. They have identified and are addressing some issues with boys' achievement particularly in Years 10 and 11. The college has developed very well since its last inspection. Specialist status is managed well and there is a good capacity for it to improve further. The college provides good value for money.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the progress made by boys, especially in Years 10 and 11.
- Make more consistent use of targets to raise standards further.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 2

Students enter the college in Year 7 with attainment that is above the national average. Over the next five years they make good progress because they improve their standards to well above average levels during this time.

In Years 7, 8 and 9 students maintain their above average standards. Because they complete this key stage in two years instead of the usual three, taking their national tests at the end of Year 8, they make less progress than students nationally. However, they more than make up for this in their subsequent progress. Higher achieving students attain particularly highly in mathematics. Standards seen in lessons in Years 7 and 8 during the inspection were above average.

By the end of Year 11 students reach well above average standards, with some higher achieving students achieving exceptionally well, especially in modern foreign languages. The proportion of students reaching 5 or more A\*-C grades at GCSE has been over 70 per cent in each of the last seven years. Girls reach higher standards than boys, and the gap widened a little further from 2006 to 2007 because girls' attainment improved while boys' attainment declined slightly. Standards of literacy, numeracy and information and communications technology (ICT) are well above average. Students with learning difficulties and or disabilities make good progress in relation to their starting points.

Challenging targets are set for all specialist subjects. Though there has been some inconsistency in meeting targets in English, the college regularly reaches standards that are well above these targets, especially in technology and history.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 1

Students are a credit to the college in their positive attitudes towards learning and to the college generally. Their outstanding personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, contributes strongly to their good academic achievement; it is also evident in many students' confidence when articulating the benefits of attending Wyvern College. Moral and social development, in particular, are outstanding. Students have excellent working relationships in the classroom and enjoy taking responsibility for others as well as for their own learning. For example, they greatly value the work done by peer mentors and representative bodies like the college council. Students have a satisfactory appreciation of the issues involved in living in a multicultural society, with a stronger understanding of their own indigenous culture. Students recognise the value of adopting healthy and safe lifestyles. Attendance is above average and the college works hard to make it even better. Behaviour in lessons and around the college is excellent, reflecting what students say about how much they enjoy college life. The college is imaginative in successfully exploring alternative approaches to exclusion for the small minority of students who do not adhere to its rules. Students develop well above average skills in numeracy, literacy and ICT, in addition to excellent interpersonal skills; they leave college very well prepared for the next stage of education or life.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good and this enables students to make good progress in their learning. The college's programme of monitoring teaching shows that high quality teaching is the rule. Teachers plan lessons thoroughly and ensure that they make the learning aims obvious to the students. Instructions are given clearly and precisely. Misunderstandings by students are used to develop their knowledge in an atmosphere where it is acceptable to make mistakes and learn by them. ICT is used well as a learning resource to illustrate ideas and stimulate interest. Relationships between staff and students are excellent and are enlivened by good use of humour. One Year 10 student said that a major strength of the college is the enthusiasm of the teachers, a sentiment shared by her peers. Teachers take care to ensure that students understand very clearly what is expected of them and how they can achieve high standards. Occasionally, progress is only satisfactory. This occurs when lessons have a slower pace and students are more passive in their attitude to learning but, in the majority of lessons, teachers use challenging questions to promote students' knowledge and understanding. Students are encouraged to develop self-assessment skills, which assist them in their move to independent learning. Marking is variable but in the best examples it encourages and motivates students and shows them how to improve their performance. There is a need to continue to improve teachers' use of assessment procedures to raise standards further.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 1

The quality of the curriculum is outstanding. The college has shortened the Key Stage 3 curriculum to two years, and it is able to offer a very wide range of optional subjects to Years 9, 10 and 11. The students are enthusiastic about this change and describe it as 'both challenging and fun'. There are considerable opportunities for more able students to follow accelerated courses such as AS level French and critical thinking in Years 10 and 11. The college, in conjunction with the local schools' consortium, has also responded well to the need to increase the number of vocational courses. The choice is varied and appeals to all abilities. The college has worked hard to devise a curriculum that has something for everyone. 'Every day when I look at my timetable, I see some of my favourite lessons' was a comment from a Year 9 boy. In response to its excellent self-evaluation, the college has successfully revised the way in which citizenship is taught. The extensive range of extra curricular activities, including the extended schools programme, is a huge strength of the college that enriches and enhances the students' personal development. The college's specialist status has influenced the curriculum, with students benefiting from stimulating events such as enterprise days, which occur throughout the year.

### Care, guidance and support

#### Grade: 1

Students appreciate the outstanding care, guidance and support that have boosted their confidence and achievement. Students enjoy a rich programme of events that provide guidance on living a healthy lifestyle, anti-bullying, citizenship, and moral issues. They feel safe because the robust procedures for health and safety and child protection are effectively implemented and reviewed. A steadfast commitment to include all students involves very effective use of

external agencies and educational partnerships. Older students are trained to make a significant contribution to the harmonious atmosphere by supporting the well-being of younger students. Students aspire to further study and many have started to consider higher education. The extensive programme of careers education and work experience has been awarded the Investors in Careers status.

Although a small minority of parents and carers feel the communication between the college and the home is lacking, this view was not universal. Many parents praised the college's efforts and inspectors found that families benefit from regular and innovative practice that provides them with good quality information.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The leadership offered by the headteacher and the governing body is outstanding. They are well supported by good and committed senior and middle management teams and by the whole staff, including a strong and dedicated team of support staff. The senior team and the governing body share a clear vision about the direction in which the college should be moving. Self-evaluation is excellent. The senior management team know their college very well and are aware that there are some inconsistencies in practice that mean that the pace of improvement is not always as fast as they would like it to be. Inconsistencies in the use of assessment procedures by some departments, especially in setting students challenging target grades, and then monitoring their progress, have been identified as an area for improvement. Progress made by boys, especially in Years 10 and 11, is another area highlighted for improvement and well-considered strategies are being implemented. Good procedures exist for monitoring teaching and learning. These arrangements are systematic and thorough. Senior staff and governors know where there are strengths in teaching and learning and where further development is needed. For example, in the recent past, some staffing issues in science hindered progress. These issues have been addressed and learning in this area is now improving.

Governance is outstanding. The governing body is a skilled and effective force that is highly committed to helping the college develop and improve. The governors have an impressively accurate view about its strengths and areas for development. Though they are supportive, they are rigorously critical in their approach. Their detailed, yet sensitive, monitoring is a key factor in promoting improvement.

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## Annex A

## 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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
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 extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	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?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

<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>	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
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	1
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**

5 November 2007

Dear Students

Inspection of Wyvern Technology College, Eastleigh, SO50 7AN

Thank you for welcoming me and my colleagues to your college. We greatly enjoyed our visit. We were very impressed by many of the things you told us about and that we saw. Overall, we have concluded that your college offers a good education with many outstanding features. Your college has an outstanding headteacher, who is supported by a strong governing body and a good staff who teach you well. Consequently, standards are well above average and the progress you make in your work is good. Many other impressive features were identified. The curriculum is excellent and you have many opportunities for enrichment activities. Sport is strong and we enjoyed listening to your orchestra rehearsing for a forthcoming performance. You are taught well and the college provides a safe and stimulating environment for your studies. We were also highly impressed by your attitudes and your excellent behaviour.

We have suggested two areas for improvement. These are listed below.

- Improve the progress made by boys, especially in Years 10 and 11.
- Make more consistent use of targets to raise standards further.

Thank you again for your valuable contribution to this inspection. I would like to wish you every success in your future endeavours.

Yours sincerely

Bill Stoneham Lead inspector