



Castle Donington Community College

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 120254
Local Authority Leicestershire
Inspection number 291682
Inspection dates 22–23 November 2006
Reporting inspector Dilip Kadodwala HMI

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary	School address	Mount Pleasant
School category	Community		Castle Donington
Age range of pupils	10–14		Derby DE74 2LN
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01332 810528
Number on roll (school)	447	Fax number	01332 850741
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	M Graham
		Headteacher	Ken Bayliss
Date of previous school inspection	27 January 2003		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
10–14	22–23 November 2006	291682

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

The college is bigger than most middle-deemed secondary schools. Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds and there are very few pupils from minority ethnic groups. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average, as is that identified with learning difficulties and disabilities. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs is slightly above average. The socio-economic background of pupils is broadly average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The overall effectiveness of the college is good. Pupils, parents, staff and governors are rightly proud of it. Around 96% of the parents surveyed during this inspection strongly favour the college's work. Parents commented that their children 'like going to school and are very happy there' and that 'they reach their potential both academically and in extra-curricular activities'. Their views are well founded. The college deserves its good reputation.

The principal shows good leadership because he provides a clear direction for the college and enables staff to take action aimed at continuous improvement. High standards and the outstanding progress made by pupils by the time they leave the college in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are a result of the drive provided by senior leaders. The pupils attain challenging targets and their achievement ranks the college in the top 5% of schools nationally. Overall, action taken to improve standards and pupils' progress by the end of Year 6 is satisfactory. But there is room for much more improvement in mathematics. Pupils' progress in this subject is not as good as it is in English and science.

Pupils' personal development and well-being are good. Pupils are happy and they behave very well. They enjoy attending the college, learning and participating in the wide range of extra-curricular activities. The college's pupil council is a notable strength because it enables pupils to be actively engaged in decision making. This makes an appreciable difference to what is provided for them. Pupils' contribution to the community is outstanding, as is their choice to lead healthy lifestyles.

Teaching and learning are good. At its best, teaching is imaginative and stimulating, capturing pupils' attention and bringing about noticeable progress. In subjects where teachers set short-term targets for improvement and check work through careful marking, pupils make the best progress. However, this practice is not consistent across all subjects. It is most effective in science, humanities, PE, modern languages, music and English. The college recognizes the need to ensure greater consistency in target setting across all subjects and has already taken some remedial action.

The curriculum and other activities are good. They make a significant contribution to pupils' achievements. The pupils develop into thoughtful and responsible citizens because the college has a harmonious and purposeful atmosphere. Pupils' care, guidance and support are good and contribute well to the pupils' enjoyment and well-being.

Good leadership and management mean that the college has an accurate view of its effectiveness. The college knows where it is going and how to get there. Its capacity to improve is good because it analyses its performance carefully and takes action to make things better. This has led to good improvements since the last inspection, notably in raising standards in French and information and communication technology. Improvements in Key Stage 3 have been very good: pupils' achievement and standards have risen significantly.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve pupils' progress in Year 6 in mathematics so that it reflects the progress made by the end of Year 9.
- Improve the use of target setting in those subjects where it is inconsistent and monitor pupils' progress in attaining the targets.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Achievement and standards are good overall. Pupils enter the college with standards which are broadly average. The pupils make satisfactory progress during their one year of Key Stage 2 at the college. The 2005 test results at the end of Year 6 were broadly average in English, mathematics and science. The 2006 provisional results show a rise in standards in English and science but remain broadly average in mathematics.

Standards and pupils' progress in mathematics have been consistently lower than in English and science since 2003.

Standards at the end of Year 9 are significantly higher than average and have been so over recent years. The 2005 results were high and the provisional results for 2006 show that the high standards have been sustained. Pupils' progress by the time they leave the college is outstanding. They attain challenging targets and their achievement ranks the college in the top 5% of schools nationally. This is significantly better than the progress pupils make during Year 6.

Pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve as well as their peers because their needs are recognised and met well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils enjoy coming to college. They are punctual, attend regularly and have a high regard for their teachers. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils look forward to their lessons, and many willingly participate in the large number of extra-curricular activities on offer. Behaviour is very good. Pupils make an outstanding contribution to their community through their involvement in charity work, feeder primary schools and by taking on additional responsibilities. A very strong pupil council makes a genuine contribution to the running of the college. It enables pupils to work well in teams and learn how to take on leadership roles. The Healthy Schools programme within the college is outstanding and pupils adopt lifestyles that reflect a clear understanding of the need to be safe and healthy. Pupils say bullying is not tolerated, and if it does occur, it is dealt with promptly and effectively. Pupils have a good understanding of the skills needed for their future working roles.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Teaching and learning are good because teachers have high expectations, good command of their subjects and plan well-structured lessons. Teachers create a positive climate for learning so pupils thrive and are given good support when they find the work difficult. Questioning is used well to check pupils' understanding and to ensure that all pupils are engaged with learning. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very positive. Pupils are keen to give their best and clearly enjoy challenging work. Support for pupils with disabilities and learning difficulties is good because it is based on good teamwork between teachers and learning support assistants. Pupils who are identified as gifted and talented are suitably challenged by the type of activities provided for them. Assessment procedures are inconsistently applied across the college. Where assessment information is used effectively, teachers know the pupils' prior attainment and match their planning and teaching to meet the pupils' specific learning needs. Teachers also set challenging short-term goals and pupils' progress towards these is carefully tracked. Careful marking clearly identifies what pupils have done well and how they can improve further. However, this level of rigour in assessment procedures is not consistent across all subjects.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum and other activities are good, with some remarkable features. The school received external recognition for the high quality of its provision for careers education for a second time in 2005. The curriculum in Year 6 is enhanced by the inclusion of French. Statutory requirements are met effectively, including those for personal, social and health education and citizenship. Provision for pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is good. All pupils have almost two hours of physical education a week. A high proportion of the pupils participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities and clubs. These give opportunities to all pupils, including those who are gifted and talented, to develop their interests, abilities and skills. This is particularly so in physical education and music.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The college provides good care, guidance and support. Robust systems are in place to ensure the welfare, protection and safety of pupils. Links with parents and outside agencies are effective and ensure that vulnerable children are supported well. Learning support assistants provide good support for pupils with learning, emotional and physical disabilities, so that they make good progress. Parents are kept well informed about their children's attainment and progress. The careful marking of pupils' work helps them to improve. However, the practice of setting and tracking targets for pupils varies

between subjects. Parents are very pleased with the arrangements made with local primary schools that help their children to settle into the college quickly. Pupils are also carefully prepared and supported as they move onto the next stage of their education.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The quality of leadership and management is good. The principal provides good leadership, which results in staff and governors working together effectively towards shared goals. These include encouraging excellence in pupils. There is a strong focus on providing all pupils, whatever their capability, with opportunities to succeed. These result in outstanding achievement by the time pupils leave the college. Staff who have responsibility for subjects have a clear grasp of strengths and weaknesses and so are able to make a good contribution to the college improvement plan. Some action has been taken to improve standards and achievement in mathematics in Year 6 but this has not yet had the desired impact. Systems for monitoring are well established and the college's self-evaluation is accurate. Areas for further development and plans to address them are identified clearly, taking into account the views of parents and pupils. Governance is good. Governors take a keen interest in the college and show their commitment through their links with departments and regular visits. This enables the governing body to provide support and a strategic direction and to hold the senior team to account.

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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?	2
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	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?	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	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	2

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

As you know, your college was recently inspected and this letter is to tell you about the results of the inspection. However, first I would like to thank you for your cooperation during our visit. We really enjoyed meeting you and appreciated your comments and opinions.

The inspection found that yours is a good college. I know that you were hoping that we were going to be happy with your college, and we are! This is for the following reasons:

- The principal and other senior staff have a good understanding of what works well in the school and what needs to be improved. They provide good leadership. They ensure that you enjoy coming to college, attending regularly, working hard and behaving well.
- Teachers, including the learning support assistants, make sure that you have lots of interesting work to do which is challenging. They provide you with good support when you need it.
- You make outstanding progress by the time you leave the college in English, mathematics and science.
- You value the work of the pupil council because it really encourages you to be fully involved in its work and it makes a difference to the quality of your life in the college.
- The extra-curricular activities are popular with a good many of you and they help you to excel, especially in music and sports activities.
- You impressed us with choosing to lead healthy lifestyles because the college works hard to enable you to do so.

There are some things we think the college needs to do more work on. These are:

- Improving your standards and progress in mathematics in Year 6.
- Making target setting in all subjects as good as it is in the best, for example, science and PE.

We left the college confident that it will continue to improve in these areas. I wish you every success in the future.