

# Winstanley Community College

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	120260
<b>Local Authority</b>	Leicestershire
<b>Inspection number</b>	291684
<b>Inspection dates</b>	4–5 July 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Dilip Kadodwala 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>	11–14
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	600
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Peter Henton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rita Nixon
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 January 2002
<b>School address</b>	Kingsway North Braunstone Leicester LE3 3BD
<b>Telephone number</b>	0116 2898688
<b>Fax number</b>	0116 2893736

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<b>Age group</b>	11-14
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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

The majority of students are from White British backgrounds. Around 14% of students are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The largest group of these, around 6% of students, are from an Indian background. Around 8% of students speak English as an additional language although all speak English fluently. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The proportion of students identified with learning difficulties and disabilities is broadly average, but the proportion that have a statement of special educational need is above average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The college's overall effectiveness is satisfactory with some aspects that are good. It successfully ensures that students' personal development and well-being are good through the safe and supportive environment it provides for them. Students also receive good care, guidance and support. A Year 9 student's comment, 'This college is very mixed and people respect each other's culture', reflects the college's strong emphasis on valuing diversity. Students' views are routinely sought and taken seriously, instilling confidence and giving students a sense that they matter. The great majority of parents surveyed during this inspection are positive about the college's work. It provides a good curriculum, underpinned by a broad range of extra-curricular activities which students enjoy. A range of successful strategies are used to support students who are at risk of disaffection so that they continue their studies. Students are prepared well for the next stage of their education and for future life. Most attend regularly, have positive attitudes to learning, and behave well. A small minority present challenging behaviour which is managed well by staff.

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. Students join the college with broadly average standards, although their literacy skills are less well developed. They leave with average standards in mathematics and science, but standards in English remain below average and have been so over recent years. Progress is not as rapid in English as in other subjects. Students' achievement across the college is satisfactory but improving because of the increasingly good, and sometimes outstanding, quality of teaching. However, the overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory because teaching does not yet consistently take sufficient account of students' different abilities. Consequently, not all students receive the challenge needed to enable them to progress as quickly as they could. Senior leaders recognise that the expertise and very good practice, clearly present in some curriculum areas, should be shared more effectively to improve students' achievement.

Leadership and management are good. The principal, with good support from senior leaders, provides a purposeful direction, sharply focused on raising standards. The impact of the good work of the leadership team has been held back by difficulties in recruiting and retaining high calibre staff, especially in English. Nevertheless, improvement since the last inspection is good because staff have worked hard to maintain achievement in challenging circumstances. The greater stability in staffing that now exists and rigorous self-evaluation, coupled with well directed action, are leading to improvements in teaching, though the impact of this has yet to be confirmed in national test results. The college has good capacity for further improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Increase students' progress in English.
- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that work is suitably matched for the different abilities represented in classes.
- Ensure that teaching strategies that are very effective are disseminated in areas where teaching is not as strong.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

Achievement is satisfactory and standards are broadly average. However, both are improving steadily as students' progress in lessons improves. Achievement in the 2006 national tests was satisfactory, but significantly better in mathematics and science than in English. Provisional results for 2007 show improved standards, and if these are confirmed, the college will have met most of its challenging targets. This improvement reflects the better quality of teaching and the students' response towards their learning. Although they are rising, standards remain below the national average in English. Standards in mathematics and science are broadly in line with national figures. The achievement of students from minority ethnic groups, and boys and girls, is similar to their peers. Students from the traveller community and those in the care of the local authority make satisfactory progress. Middle ability students make better progress than those with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those identified as gifted and talented. These students make good progress when taught separately, but in their main lessons their needs are not always fully met.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 2

Students' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Most students are keen to learn and enjoy their education. They work well together and show mutual respect. There are very occasional incidents of bullying but students confirm that staff deal with incidents promptly so that they are resolved, ensuring that students feel safe and secure. Students are proud of the college's Healthy School status, having contributed to its award. They know how to stay fit and well through active participation in sports and by healthy eating, although this is not always demonstrated in the lunches brought from home.

Behaviour is usually good. The college's strategies to manage the challenging behaviour of a small minority are having a positive impact. The number of fixed-term exclusions is relatively low and most students respond well to the college's reward system. The attendance rate is in line with the national average, but there are slightly more unauthorised absences, mainly due to family holidays taken during term-time. The college continues to work with parents to address this issue. The student council is very active and is a strength of the college. Students value the opportunities provided for them to contribute to the college community through peer mentoring, as receptionists for visitors and playing an active part in important decisions, for example, by being involved in the appointment of senior staff. Students are involved in the life of the local community through sport and charitable activities. Careers education and guidance ensure that students make suitable option choices and are prepared well for their future lives. Whilst this preparation is good overall, some weaknesses remain in the development of students' literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, but there are examples of good and outstanding teaching, including in English. Teachers use a satisfactory range of approaches to

gain and maintain students' interest and concentration. Questioning is generally used well to encourage them to think for themselves and develop their understanding. Teaching assistants provide good specific support, particularly for students with learning difficulties and disabilities. However, provision to raise students' aspirations in lessons, including for those who are identified as gifted and talented, is insufficiently developed.

The college has implemented rigorous procedures to monitor and improve teaching, which are raising the quality of teaching and learning and starting to lift achievement. Students enjoy their work when the learning is planned to be fun; they are made to think by their teachers and to share their ideas, which they do well. Students work hard and learn quickly when relationships with their teachers are good and the atmosphere in classrooms is calm. Students are also benefiting from having more stability through more permanent teachers and fewer temporary staff.

The pace of learning drops in lessons when question and answer sessions take too long, and when the work does not consistently meet students' different abilities and needs. This is especially so when too many unsuitable worksheets are used. Effective learning is also held back when marking and assessment information is not used rigorously enough to identify a student's next steps.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum is good. It has breadth and balance and meets students' interests well. Good use is made of aspects of the national strategy for secondary schools, which is also helping to improve the quality of teaching and assessment. The provision for improving students' skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT is satisfactory, but attention to students' literacy and ICT skills is sometimes not sufficiently planned in other subjects. ICT provision is improving as all subjects gain the expertise and resources to address students' needs. Some specific events are provided for gifted and talented students as well as those who are underachieving or have learning difficulties and disabilities. The citizenship and personal, social and health education programmes are effective. Good links exist with the local family of schools. There are some bridging projects that help to link the curriculum between Year 9 and the next stage of students' education at the 14 to 18 college. Additional activities in sport, music and drama enrich the curriculum, and are well supported. These activities add to students' experiences and enhance their personal development well.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The provision for care, guidance and support is good. It promotes an environment where students feel safe and are able to seek help from adults should they need it. Staff show a high level of commitment to students. Most students are clear about their progress and what they need to do to improve, though guidance through marking is of variable quality. Guidance and specific support for students with learning difficulties and disabilities is good. The college is particularly successful in meeting the needs of more vulnerable students. Mentoring is targeted well so that those at risk of disaffection are encouraged. Links with outside agencies are used to good effect to provide additional support. Health and safety procedures are clear, and child protection procedures are robust. Arrangements for safeguarding students are securely in place and risk assessment is undertaken meticulously. Students are set suitable targets and these are checked periodically. Students are given a voice in the school through the school council

and this enables them to be active citizens. They are supported well at transition and good links with the 14 to 18 college provide for a smooth transfer at the end of Year 9.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The principal and the senior leadership team provide good leadership and a strong sense of direction. Staff are hardworking and subscribe to the college's goal of continuous improvement. Their morale has remained high in challenging circumstances. Senior leaders' unrelenting focus on improving students' achievement has resulted in the rapid reduction of inadequate teaching through their careful evaluations and support. They have sought and achieved successful outcomes, supported by governors, when faced with recruitment and retention difficulties, especially in English. The professional honesty of the senior leaders permeates the college's rigorous self-evaluation so strengths and weaknesses are well known and acted upon. Middle leaders monitoring is good so most weaknesses in provision are identified. They are held to account and their individual development needs are met. This has enabled them to bring about some hard won improvement in students' progress but the action taken so far has yet to be fully sustained. As yet best practice is not effectively shared with curriculum areas where practice is weaker.

Governors are good advocates for the work of the college. They are knowledgeable about what it does well and what needs to improve. Their support and challenge are balanced, resulting in good governance. Leaders ensure that a wide range of views, including those of students and parents, inform the college's planning so the right priorities are identified in the college's strategic plan and outcomes evaluated against measurable targets.

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## 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>
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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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
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
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

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	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>	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	2
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	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

6 July 2007

Dear Students

Inspection of Winstanley Community College, Braunstone Town, Leicestershire LE3 3BD

Many thanks for helping us with the inspection of your college. We enjoyed talking to you and the things you told us helped us to complete our job more easily.

We judged that your college is satisfactory with some notable strengths. You told us that you get on well with one another, and we agree. You make a good contribution to life in the college through the student council and your participation in the extra activities, including for sports. You understand the importance of keeping fit and healthy. We found that you are well looked after and supported so that the great majority of you attend regularly and enjoy your education. You told us that when you are experiencing difficulties or are not happy, staff help to sort things out. We consider that the college provides a good curriculum which gives you opportunities, in addition to studies through subjects, to participate in visits, music and sports activities.

We judged that the people who lead the college are doing a good job. They know the college's strengths and weaknesses well and are taking suitable action. For this reason we judge that the college has good capacity to improve further. We agree with senior leaders that some of you are not achieving as well in English as in other subjects, but improvements are beginning to raise standards. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and increasingly becoming better than that. We think that more of you could be making better progress in your lessons if teaching took more account of your different abilities and gave you tasks that are hard enough to really make you think. We have asked the principal and senior teachers to make sure that this happens. We have also asked them to ensure that the good practice in teaching is shared across the staff and subjects to help you make even quicker progress.

Finally, although we found that the great majority of you behave well and have positive attitudes to learning, a small minority of you could help your staff by being more cooperative and taking more responsibility for your own learning.

With all best wishes for your future.

Dilip Kadodwala Her Majesty's Inspector