

# Chase Terrace Technology College

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	124443
<b>Local Authority</b>	Staffordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	292997
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 March 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Sue Harrison 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>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	1177
6th form	166
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Lorna Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Heather Bowman
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 March 2003
<b>School address</b>	Bridge Cross Road Chase Terrace Burntwood WS7 2DB
<b>Telephone number</b>	01543 682286
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<b>Age group</b>	11–18
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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

The school is based in Burntwood, which is made up of five ex-mining villages. The overwhelming majority of students are from White British backgrounds. There are higher-than-average levels of students with learning difficulties and disabilities. Attainment on entry is broadly at the national level but with below-average numbers at the higher levels. The school gained specialist status in Technology in 2002. It suffered a fire in the same year, which led to significant rebuilding and the opening of a new school building in 2004. The school gained redesignation as a Technology College in 2007. It also recently gained a second specialism in the Arts; this comes into effect in April 2007. The school collaborates with other schools and the local further education college, particularly in the development of vocational courses and the post-16 curriculum. There is a purpose-built adult learning centre on site.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

This is a good school. The period after the fire was managed very well to ensure students were not disadvantaged. Standards are rising. They are above average in the main school and average in the sixth form. Students across all the age ranges make good progress against their starting points and achieve well. This is brought about by strong leadership and a team of staff who are dedicated to bringing out the best in individuals. Students speak highly of the help they receive. The school works hard to involve parents and the overwhelming majority of them are very supportive of the school. Features mentioned by parents include the caring nature of the school and the enthusiasm of staff for their subjects. A few expressed dissatisfaction with particular elements of their child's education, though they often recognised other strengths in the school.

Improvements have come about through a clear focus on raising aspirations, backed up by careful monitoring of teaching and learning and of students' progress. A rewards system, based on 'personal best', is popular with students. Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Teaching and learning are generally good but in some lessons students are not developing sufficient confidence to help them become real partners in their own learning. There is a strong culture of respect in the school, students are well behaved and their personal development is good.

The school has a good understanding of its own strengths and areas for improvement and most of the judgements in its self-evaluation form are accurate. Managers know the areas of weaker performance and are taking steps to address them, for example, in science, where results at Key Stage 3 improved significantly in 2006. However, Key Stage 4 science results remained low for many students in 2006. There are effective strategies to improve the performance of boys in all subjects. This includes additional support and some single-gender teaching groups. Results in 2006 saw a significant narrowing of the gap between boys' and girls' achievement. Work is taking place to ensure the curriculum matches the needs of individual students and there is a strong inclusive ethos in the school. The curriculum is good, although the school recognises the need to coordinate work-related aspects better.

The school has made good progress in addressing almost all the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) is now widespread and used imaginatively to engage students' interest. The school works well with a range of external partners. Financial management is good. The new building provides an excellent resource for learning, but it is the efforts of the staff and students that make this a good school. It provides good value for money and there is good capacity for further improvement.

## Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

### Grade: 2

The sixth form provides a good education for its growing number of students. Nearly all students are engaged on academic courses. Students speak highly of the guidance prior to entering the sixth form and the excellent induction programme. There are good links with other providers to help students choose a course appropriate to their needs. As a result, nearly all of those who enter the sixth form take relevant courses and retention rates are high. The school recognises the need to review the provision offered to the small number of students who stay on into the sixth form but who are not following an advanced level course. At all stages, the care, guidance

and support for sixth formers, including more vulnerable ones, are excellent. There is an inclusive culture of cooperation and respect between students and their teachers. Standards are rising and students are achieving well, with many exceeding what might be expected from their starting points. The sixth form is led and managed well, with thorough systems to monitor progress so that problems are identified quickly and effective action taken. Sixth formers participate extensively in a wide range of activities and are flourishing in the mature atmosphere of the sixth form.

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

- Improve achievement in science at Key Stage 4.
- Ensure all lessons help students to develop their confidence as learners.

## **Achievement and standards**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Students' achievement is good. The GCSE examination results improved considerably in 2006 and were above the national average. This represents good progress for most students in a majority of subjects, including English and mathematics. Students often produce work of a high standard, for example, in art and technology. The science results in the GCSE double award were low in 2006 and many students did not make sufficient progress. The school has taken action to address issues in science and this is leading to improvement, which is reflected in results lower down the school. The results of national tests in science at the end of Key Stage 3 were much improved and well above the school target in 2006. The Key Stage 3 mathematics results in 2006 were above average. English results declined from the very high level they had reached in 2005 but were still average. Overall, students are making good progress at Key Stage 3.

Standards in the sixth form are in line with the national average. Results show an improving trend, with significantly more students gaining higher grades in GCE A-levels in 2006 than in the previous year. This represents good progress for students in the sixth form.

Across the whole school, boys do not achieve as highly as girls. The school is taking action to address this situation and the 2006 results showed a significant narrowing of the gap. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress across the school.

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

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The personal development and well-being of students are good and most Chase Terrace students enjoy their education a great deal. This is demonstrated by their good attitudes in class and around the school. The attendance rate is above the national average. The number of exclusions has been significantly reduced by the provision of the Focus Room which offers personal and curriculum support, aiming always at maintaining continuity of classroom work.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and they assume significant responsibilities within school, for example, as mentors and school council members. The school places a high emphasis on good behaviour and the vast majority of students meet these expectations, demonstrating care, consideration and respect for all. Within the supportive ethos

of the school, students feel safe from bullying and other forms of discrimination and are confident that there are many staff to whom they can turn for support if needed.

Students show great pride in their school and the efforts made by their teachers. They have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and appreciate the extra-curricular provision available to them. Through the personal, health and social education (PHSE) programme and elsewhere students develop skills to prepare them for life after school. They develop satisfactory work-related skills. Older students have a clear and realistic view of their career options, the majority of Year 11 students choosing to extend their education at Chase Terrace or elsewhere. Students respond well to the many opportunities to display active citizenship and make a positive contribution to their community.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Teaching and learning are good because teachers have high expectations, students respond well to the challenges set for them and most are enthusiastic about their work. As a result many achieve well. Typically, lessons are well planned and teaching is lively and interactive. Relationships are good. Teachers know their students very well and they help to make learning fun by matching activities to students' interests and abilities, often through effective use of whiteboards and digital projectors. Students say they feel valued, and that they appreciate the ways in which many teachers make lessons interesting. This was borne out in an art and design lesson about Staffordshire pottery, where energetic presentation and the use of stimulating resources inspired high levels of interest and motivation. In the best lessons, teachers prompt students to think for themselves through skilful questioning. Some teachers are developing opportunities for students to discuss their work with each other, to enable them to develop further their understanding and to increase their confidence in speaking and listening. However, not enough lessons yet challenge and extend all students, to a high enough level, to learn independently, be confident learners and reflect critically on the progress they are making. Teachers generally use learning objectives well to assess what has been learned, and to pitch subsequent learning at an appropriate level. Students' books contain helpful comments that provide advice on how they can improve their work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The curriculum is good and effectively meets most students' needs. It is built on students' prior attainment, and promotes good achievement and enjoyment. Specialist technology college status has made a positive contribution to the re-design of the curriculum, particularly in Years 10 and 11 where there is a growing number of vocational courses. The school has recognised the need to extend this flexibility into Years 7 to 9, and has begun to explore opportunities for students to complete National Curriculum programmes within different time scales, according to need. Provision across Years 7 to 11 is enhanced by a strong programme of personal, social, health and citizenship education that tackles healthy lifestyles, key principles of democracy and personal effectiveness.

Close links with local employers support appropriate work-experience programmes and there are some good enterprise initiatives, although the school recognises the need to extend these further. Aspects of the curriculum that are designed to help students prepare for employment are not well coordinated. Relationships with other schools and the local further education college are well used to inform curriculum development. A primary headteacher in a partner school spoke positively of the projects involving Year 6 children. Students in Years 10 and 11 benefit from practical options such as carpentry and stonemasonry, hairdressing and media studies offered in partnership with other providers. These options are well researched to reflect local employment opportunities. An extensive range of enrichment activities, including residential and one-day visits, both locally and internationally, is well supported by students in all years. Fashion evenings and regular drama and musical productions extend students' learning and increase their motivation.

The sixth form curriculum is good in that it offers a wide range of A-level subjects, additional work experience, and enrichment activities such as the community sports leadership programme, millennium volunteers, the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme and young enterprise.

## **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 1**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Students are well known, monitored and supported in both pastoral and academic matters. This is reinforced by the integrated approach to the specific needs of students provided through the Student Support Centre. Careful analysis of data on individual progress means that students know how to improve their work and they achieve well, challenged by the ASPIRE (All Students Putting In Real Effort) and PB (Personal Best) system. Targets are shared with parents on well-attended target-setting days and suitable guidance is given on option choices in Year 9. Vulnerable students and those with learning difficulties and disabilities are supported very well with personalised pastoral support plans and detailed individual education plans (IEPs) where appropriate. The 'Raising Boys' Achievement Club' is well attended and appreciated by students and parents. Student support officers maintain comprehensive records of contact with parents and students, and are able to deal swiftly with incidents and queries. Excellent relationships exist with bodies such as 'Youth for Christ' and the Connexions service to improve support for students, who particularly appreciate the novel text message advice system at revision times. The Bewley Garden offers a place of peace and quiet within a busy school. All requirements for child protection are in place and comprehensive risk assessments are undertaken.

## **Leadership and management**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Leadership and management are good, with many very strong features. After holding the school together very well following the disastrous fire in August 2002, school leaders are having an increasingly positive impact on the effectiveness of the school. Significant improvements in the last two years augur well for continued developments in the next few years. For example, the school has well-advanced plans to improve the coordination of enterprise and work-related learning.

The headteacher and her senior team have successfully created a common sense of purpose amongst teachers and support staff in a supportive environment that includes everyone. There are opportunities at all levels to be involved in the drive for improvement. Teamwork is of the essence within robust systems of self-evaluation that lead to a sharp analysis of what needs to be done. Senior leaders skilfully give responsibility to subject leaders and others, empowering them to put into practice their ideas whilst providing close support and challenge. Similarly, governors show a thorough understanding of the issues facing the school so that they can successfully hold senior managers to account whilst giving real practical and intellectual support.

The school uses its funding well. Technology college funds are successfully enhancing teaching and learning facilities and are being used well to cultivate further links with local schools and the community. Increasingly, the school is also making intelligent use of modern technology to support the tracking of students' progress and the efficient administration of the school. The decision to apply for the second specialism in the arts has been thoughtfully considered. Its implementation will further strengthen the creative dimension of the school and build on work to develop students' confidence, for example, through public performances. The attractive state of the buildings and grounds sends a powerful message to students and staff that their well-being and success are important.



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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>	<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>	2	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>	2	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

### 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	3	

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	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>	1	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	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	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

As you know, a group of inspectors recently visited your school. Thank you for the warm welcome you gave us and for your help in finding our way around, and also for giving us your views about the school. We really enjoyed visiting your school. I am writing now to tell you about our findings.

Chase Terrace Technology College is a good school. You told us how hard the staff work to help you succeed. Staff and students respect each other. The majority of teaching and learning is good and your work is carefully assessed to help you know how you can improve further. You told us the school treats you as individuals and we could see how your progress is monitored carefully. There are good systems in place if you need extra help and we think the care, guidance and support you receive are outstanding.

Most of you enjoy coming to school. You behave well and work hard in class. We saw a good standard of work in your books, art portfolios and other products of your learning. This leads to good achievement for most of you in most subjects. It was good to see how the gap between boys' and girls' achievement has narrowed. We saw how you enjoy the extra activities you can take part in and were impressed by your achievements in a whole range of areas, including the shows you take part in. You like the 'personal best' system of rewards and I enjoyed seeing how that works in the assembly I attended. The curriculum on offer to you generally meets your needs well, although we think the aspects that help to prepare you for employment in the future could be better coordinated.

Governors and managers know the school well and what it needs to do to improve even further. We have asked them to ensure everyone reaches their potential in science at Key Stage 4 and to help you develop your confidence further in some lessons. The new school building provides a very attractive place for learning but what really makes Chase Terrace a good school is you and the staff working well together and being proud of your school. Well done and I wish you all the best for the future.