



# Bilton School A Maths and Computing College

Inspection Report - Amended

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**Unique Reference Number** 125749  
**Local Authority** Warwickshire  
**Inspection number** 293354  
**Inspection dates** 6–7 November 2006  
**Reporting inspector** David Biltcliffe

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>	Modern (non-selective)	<b>School address</b>	Lawford Lane
<b>School category</b>	Community		Bilton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16		Rugby CV22 7JT
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01788 840600
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	1188	<b>Fax number</b>	01788 840610
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Diana Turner
		<b>Principal</b>	Lynda Brodie
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 October 2001		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
11–16	6–7 November 2006	293354

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## **Amended Report Addendum**

Report updated to resolve formatting inconsistency

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by five Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is a specialist mathematics and computing college. Pupils' attainment on entry to Year 7 is broadly average, although around 20% of pupils in the area attend local selective grammar schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average, though the proportion of pupils with statements of special educational needs is greater than in most secondary schools. The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The entitlement to free school meals is below 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 school provides a satisfactory quality of education for its pupils. It has some good features as well as a few weaknesses. It is steadily improving the quality of education it offers, as a result of the school's management putting clearer emphasis on the central importance of teaching and learning. However, the process of improvement is not brisk enough to secure a good level of achievement quickly.

The school has some academic strengths. For example, the proportion of pupils gaining at least five grades A\* - C at GCSE, with English and mathematics included, matches the national pattern; standards overall are close to the national average. Management has eliminated the major weaknesses at the last inspection by significantly raising standards in mathematics and in information and communication technology (ICT), building well on the opportunities its specialist status has brought.

The school's management, which is satisfactory, also recognises that it needs to raise pupils' overall achievement further. Here it has had some, but more limited, success, because it has not always ensured that whole-school policies are implemented consistently and that the messages from its extensive analysis of academic data and its classroom monitoring of teaching and pupils' behaviour are used to provide a uniformly good quality of education. As a result, academic standards, although satisfactory overall, are not quite as high as they should be. The school did not quite reach all its key targets at GCSE in 2006.

Achievement is aided by the fact that the majority of pupils arrive punctually for school and lessons, work sensibly in class and behave appropriately. A minority, however, are silly and waste time in some lessons, thereby hindering the learning and progress of others as well as themselves.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, but the quality of lessons varies widely. Pupils' classroom experience is therefore too much of a lottery. Although around half of lessons are well, and sometimes outstandingly, taught, a significant minority lack sufficient pace, depth or rigour. Some have weak classroom control.

Pupils' personal development and well-being, and their care, guidance and support, are satisfactory. Pupils' progress is enhanced by good study facilities and by a well-balanced curriculum that embraces work-focused courses and the development of skills that pupils need in adult life. Pupils clearly enjoy school. Most pupils feel safe and cared for. Some smoking in toilets detracts from the otherwise successful promotion of a healthy lifestyle. Pupils feel that their views are listened to and acted upon. The school receives strong support from most parents. As one said, 'My children thoroughly enjoy school'. A minority are, rightly, concerned about some low-level misbehaviour.

Senior managers have a clear and realistic view of the school's achievements and quality. Despite some staffing problems, they have ensured satisfactory progress for pupils since the last inspection. They and the governors are capable of securing the necessary higher standards in the future.

## What the school should do to improve further

- Raise pupils' overall achievement by improving the pace and depth of learning in a significant minority of lessons.
- Eliminate the immature behaviour in a minority of lessons that hinders pupils from learning well.
- Ensure that whole-school policies are implemented consistently, so that pupils receive a uniformly good quality of education.
- Ensure that the information held on academic achievement, teaching quality and pupils' behaviour is coordinated more effectively to pinpoint priorities for action.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

When pupils start in Year 7 they have the expected level of knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils' achievement across the school is satisfactory and standards are close to average.

By the end of Year 9, pupils' level of attainment is broadly average. More pupils than usually seen nationally attain high standards in mathematics, a school specialism. Overall achievement is satisfactory in Years 7 to 9. Underperformance in English in 2005 was improved to satisfactory progress in 2006, because of effective action by senior and middle management. The 2006 national test results were in line with the school's reasonable targets in all the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

By Year 11, standards are close to, although a little below, average. The proportion of pupils gaining five or more grades A\*-C (including English and mathematics) is in line with the national pattern. This represents a sound achievement. Boys and girls achieve equally well, a considerable improvement for boys since 2001. The school did not, however, quite reach all its challenging GCSE targets in 2006.

Most pupils, including a small number of particularly vulnerable pupils and those with learning difficulties or disabilities, achieve satisfactorily. In a few cases, underachievement stems from poor attendance, lack of effort or undemanding teaching. Higher ability pupils usually do well.

## Personal development and well-being

### Grade: 3

Pupils' personal development and well-being are satisfactory overall, with some good features. Pupils attend well and the vast majority enjoy their education. Most behave sensibly in lessons and so make satisfactory progress. In a minority of lessons, however, immature behaviour or chatter disrupts teaching and hinders pupils' progress.

Through the school council, 'Student Voice', pupils make an enthusiastic and worthwhile contribution to their school community. Those directly involved appreciate the opportunities they have, saying, for example, 'It has given me more confidence to speak out'. Pupils readily take on responsibility. They develop well the skills that will

be of use to them in adult life, as, for example, by working in teams to organise fundraising events for charities and through work experience.

Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Their social development is strong. Most pupils have a solid understanding of right and wrong. Pupils generally act safely in and around school. Many understand how to live healthily by, for instance, participating in sports and choosing healthy food. A minority of pupils, however, still opt for less healthy food and some smoke in school at break times.

## Quality of provision

### Teaching and learning

#### Grade: 3

Pupils' learning is satisfactory, in line with the overall standard of teaching they receive. Teaching quality is, however, inconsistent, with the result that achievement varies from year to year and subject to subject, and standards are not quite as high as they should be.

In typical lessons, teachers plan well, incorporate an appropriate range of activities and make adequate use of the time available. Pupils know what they have to learn and, generally, are successful in doing so. Staff use ICT well to demonstrate or illustrate teaching points for pupils. Although most pupils learn at an acceptable rate, few display a strong level of inquisitiveness. Pupils have confidence in their teachers, so that they are not afraid to ask questions or seek advice. Pupils value the help that most staff give them. Most work is marked, but few teachers give precise written advice to pupils on what they have to do to improve their work.

In a minority of lessons, pupils do not learn as much as they should because of low-level disruptive behaviour which is not swiftly and effectively dealt with by some teachers. In some other lessons, learning is inefficient, because teachers allow too long for each task. Not infrequently, both questions and discussions lack depth.

In the best lessons, in marked contrast, learning races ahead. Pupils enjoy the demanding challenges they are given and respond imaginatively. Importantly, they think deeply about their work, often asking searching questions, such as pupils in Year 9 did in their study of the conservation of energy.

### Curriculum and other activities

#### Grade: 2

The school provides a good curriculum for its pupils, appropriately meeting a wide range of needs. It also works well with other schools and colleges, providing courses that it could not do on its own. Collaboration with local industry results in a fair number of pupils learning in local companies, such as when following apprenticeship programmes. Suitable vocational courses meet well the needs of those pupils who do not desire a curriculum that is heavily academic. The school is at the early stage of

planning to incorporate a deeper emphasis on skills that assist learning for Years 7 to 9.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Sports, art, drama and music are strong. The school organises many visits, including some to residential centres. Detailed records are not, however, kept of which pupils take part in these activities, so that the school cannot assess fully the impact these experiences make on individual pupils.

The school's specialist status makes a strong impact. Courses incorporate ICT imaginatively and extensively to aid learning, not least by providing web-based resources that pupils can use from home. Praiseworthy steps are being taken to ensure that all pupils have computers at home. Thoughtful links with industry and commerce raise pupils' aspirations, such as introducing girls to women who work in computing. Standards in mathematics have risen significantly and the mathematical elements in other subjects are being suitably enhanced.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

The school's provision for pupils' care, guidance and support is satisfactory, with good features. The required procedures for health and safety and for child protection are in place. Staff quickly, although very occasionally inaccurately, contact parents to check on unexplained absence. Governors and key staff take very seriously their role of ensuring the welfare of pupils. Occasional incidents of pupils' misbehaviour lower the confidence of a small proportion of parents in the school's systems. Procedures for the recruitment of staff comply with current requirements.

A new pastoral system, designed to identify and support individual pupils in need of extra help more quickly, gives early signs of enhancing pupils' progress and well-being. Most staff use tutor time well. Vulnerable pupils are well supported. The extensive data now held on pupils' attainment, although only recently thoroughly coordinated, is beginning to make an impact on raising pupils' achievement. Other aspects of academic guidance are good. Pupils receive sound advice on career choices and future pathways of study.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Despite some strong features, a few weaker aspects of school life require improvement through concerted action. Senior staff have an accurate view of the school's quality.

Management has been successful in removing some significant weaknesses that existed at the last inspection by raising standards in mathematics, ICT, and design and technology to a level that is a little above average. The outcome of the school's status as a specialist college has been a considerable improvement in access to computers and a wider range of teaching and learning styles for pupils. Through the good

curriculum on offer, pupils experience a wide choice of courses that are well matched to their needs. The school's management structure has recently been reorganised to focus more clearly on raising pupils' achievement. One result of this has been to specify responsibilities for securing improvement in quality much more precisely.

Senior leaders provide very good role models as teachers. They work well together as a team, providing a satisfactory, and improving, direction for the school's work. There is, however, too much variability both in the quality of teaching and learning and in the way that some school policies, such as the code of conduct for behaviour, are implemented.

The school seeks, and values, the views of others. Pupils feel they have a voice that is listened to and acted upon. Through their commitment and knowledge, governors have satisfactorily addressed the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. The school has both the will and the capacity to improve further.



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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<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	3
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>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
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>	3

<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.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
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
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, inspectors recently visited your school to check on its progress. We should like to thank you all very much for your views and your welcome.

Overall, your school gives you a satisfactory standard of education. Your standard of work in most subjects is similar to that of pupils across the country. The teaching you receive enables most of you to make satisfactory progress. You are helped thoughtfully to grow up as confident young people. Your school is soundly managed.

We found many positive things:

- you enjoy being at school and attend well
- you are punctual for school and for lessons
- most of you are very sensible and want to learn
- you help to make the community around you a better place
- you can study a wide range of subjects and enjoy many out-of-school activities
- your school is steadily getting better.

There are also a few things that need to improve. Please think carefully about them and do all you can to make your school a still better place.

- in some lessons, you are not required to think hard enough or work fast enough
- a few of you misbehave in class and stop others from concentrating and learning
- information about your progress in lessons and how well the whole school works is not always used quickly enough to sort out weaknesses.

We send you our best wishes for the future.