



Hameldon Community College

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 134995
Local Authority Lancashire
Inspection number 298618
Inspection dates 21–22 February 2007
Reporting inspector Garry Jones HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Byron Street
School category	Community		Burnley, Lancashire
Age range of pupils	11–16		BB12 6NU
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01282 775111
Number on roll (school)	1557	Fax number	01282 779350
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mr David Pickles
		Headteacher	Ms Gill Broom
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11–16	21–22 February 2007	298618

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Introduction

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

Description of the school

This is a larger than average comprehensive school serving the area of south west Burnley. The school was opened in September 2006 as part of the Building Schools for the Future initiative in this part of Lancashire. A significant proportion of the school population is drawn from areas with above average indicators of social and economic deprivation, but the number of students eligible for free school meals is in line with that found nationally. The proportion of the students drawn from minority ethnic groups is broadly average. The school contains a special educational resource facility for hearing impaired students. The number of students with a statement of special educational need is above that found nationally, but the proportion of students with learning difficulties and disabilities is well below the national average. The college has specialist school status for business, enterprise and science. The school currently occupies an extended site using the buildings of two former schools, but there are plans for a new school on a different site by 2010.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 4

In accordance with section 13(3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvements in the school.

This is a new school that has not had sufficient time to successfully address the wide range of issues which it has faced since its opening in September 2006. It has failed to gain the confidence of a significant proportion of parents. The parents who responded to the inspection questionnaire overwhelmingly expressed concerns about the behaviour of some students, the quality of teaching, in part, due to the large number of temporary teachers and the school's response to their concerns. However, a school survey of parents who attended review meetings gave a more favourable view of provision.

Students' attitudes to learning are unsatisfactory and a significant minority show little interest in or commitment to their studies. The development of social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness is unsatisfactory. There is limited integration between students from different ethnic groups during breaks and lunchtimes. Attendance is well below average and there is too much unauthorised absence. Punctuality to lessons is poor, partly because of the sprawling nature of the site. The poor behaviour and disenchantment of a significant proportion of students are resulting in very high levels of fixed-term exclusions. Some students reported to inspectors that they do not feel safe around school and that their progress is hindered by the poor attitudes of many of their peers. The extent of the school site and the internal design of buildings make the effective supervision of students extremely difficult.

In recent years students have entered the two previous schools with standards of attainment that were broadly average, but the attainment of the current Year 7 students on entry to the school is slightly lower. The school's monitoring of students' attainment in the current Year 9 suggests that students are on target to reach broadly average standards. However, observations in lessons indicate that students' progress across the key stage is unsatisfactory. The school's monitoring data for the current Year 11 show that standards are below average and that some students are failing to reach their targets. Observations in lessons confirm that progress for these pupils has slowed during Key Stage 4. In addition, school monitoring data illustrate that boys, particularly those from minority ethnic groups, underachieve. Overall achievement is unsatisfactory.

The unsatisfactory achievement reflects the quality of teaching and the poor attitudes of many students to learning. There is too high a proportion of teaching that is unsatisfactory. Although there is some good teaching there is too little of this to raise overall achievement significantly. In too many lessons that are satisfactory overall, the pace of learning is too slow and students are not fully engaged by the planned activities. The curriculum is satisfactory in that it meets the needs of the students, but this is an area identified for improvement by the school.

There is a satisfactory range of systems to ensure the care and guidance of students and effective links with outside agencies. However, the co-ordination of systems is not fully developed and this is limiting their impact on the personal development and well-being of all students. The provision of support for the most vulnerable students through the learning support centre and the hearing impaired unit is good. There are systems to ensure that staff who work with children are suitably screened and that procedures for health and safety are followed. Academic guidance is provided to students and systems for setting targets for all students are developing. However, targets are not referred to sufficiently and the use of marking to support improvement is underdeveloped.

Overall the leadership and management of the school are inadequate. The senior leadership team of the school is hard-working and committed and shares a vision for the development of the college. The considerable challenge of bringing together the two school populations and building a new team has prevented a sufficient focus on improving provision. The quality of management at all levels within the college is inconsistent. Strategies for self-evaluation are underdeveloped and do not involve stakeholders sufficiently. However, the school's self-evaluation, although over optimistic, identified the areas for development accurately. The strategies for improvement are yet to make a consistent impact on provision and outcomes and, in view of this, the school's capacity for improvement is not proven. The newly formed governing body is well led by an experienced chair of governors, who knows the strengths and areas for development well. The school provides inadequate value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise levels of achievement.
- Improve students' behaviour and attitudes to learning.
- Improve the quality of teaching so more of it is good or better.
- Improve the consistency of leadership and management.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 4

As Hameldon College is a new school, it has no previous examination and test data. However, 2006 data for the schools which amalgamated to form the new college indicate that standards at the end of Year 11 and Year 9 were broadly average in one school and below average in the other. Students in Year 11 in both schools failed to meet their GCSE targets. Students made the fastest progress in Key stage 3 and either met or were close to meeting their targets in national tests at the end of Year 9. Given their starting points these results represented satisfactory achievement for the students concerned.

Current standards at Hameldon College are below average and achievement is unsatisfactory. This is because teaching and learning are inadequate in a significant proportion of lessons and some students' poor behaviour and attitudes inhibit their

progress. Problems of recruiting teachers and staffing turbulence, particularly in the English department, have contributed to students' underachievement.

Students' attainment on entry has declined in the last two years from broadly average for students now in Year 9 to below average for those in Year 7. The school's monitoring shows that many students in Year 9 are on target to reach broadly average standards. However, students' progress seen in lessons across Key Stage 3 is unsatisfactory. The school recognises that some students have weak literacy skills and is introducing measures to support their learning. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress in line with their peers.

From average starting points in Year 7, students in Years 10 and 11 reached average standards in tests at the end of Year 9. However, their progress, as seen in lessons, has slowed and the school's tracking information indicates that their standards are below average and some students are failing to meet their targets. Students are making the best progress in modern languages, religious education and physical education, but much slower progress in English, especially where classes have had several changes of teacher. The school recognises that some boys, particularly those from minority ethnic groups, are underachieving. Their progress is now being carefully monitored and strategies have been established to boost their learning.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 4

Students' personal development and well-being and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are unsatisfactory. This is because many students have poor attitudes to learning. Attendance is well below average and there is a high level of unauthorised absence. The punctuality of a significant minority of students at the beginning of the day and to lessons is unsatisfactory. The school has systems to improve attendance but they are not having sufficient impact because what the students are provided with is not stimulating enough to make them want to come to school. Many students said that they did not enjoy school. The high level of exclusions this year is indicative of students' unwillingness to comply with regulations and expectations. Asian heritage students are disproportionately represented in the number of fixed-term exclusions. Some students find the behaviour of others intimidating, especially at break and lunchtimes. Students' behaviour is unsatisfactory. It is satisfactory in those lessons where teachers have high expectations and students know what is demanded of them in terms of work and discipline. In a significant minority of lessons, students' behaviour is disruptive, which slows their progress and that of others. The quality of students' written work is not good enough. Too much of it is untidily presented and incomplete, indicating that students do not take pride in their work. The school is beginning to provide some opportunities for students to take responsibility, such as through representation on the school council and at the recent Students' Voice conference. At present, students do not feel that sufficient weight is given to their views. Students' personal development is supported by the 'learning for life' programme, which includes advice on the adoption of healthy and safe lifestyles.

Students understand and discuss the importance of social issues and good citizenship, but not all demonstrate this in their attitudes and behaviour about the school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 4

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate overall. There is too much variability across the school and a fifth of the teaching observed was unsatisfactory. Although, a third of teaching was good no outstanding lessons were seen. In a significant number of lessons, the rate of students' learning was hampered by the unsatisfactory attitudes of some students to their work. As a result of staff absence and recruitment difficulties, there are a number of temporary teachers; in English this proportion is particularly high. The number and turnover of supply teachers is a major concern of parents.

The most effective lessons are very well organised and have clear well-focused learning objectives. Such lessons are very purposeful and the students know exactly what they are doing and how well they are getting on. In such lessons the teachers had positive relationships with students and understood their learning needs well. Lessons started briskly, which motivated the students and did not allow them to become uninterested or disruptive. Clear learning objectives and good questioning techniques encouraged the students to think for themselves and consequently they progressed steadily. However, prompt starts to the lessons were sometimes hampered by the late arrival of some students. In the weaker lessons, relationships were strained and students' learning needs were not appropriately met. A lack of clear guidance from the teacher, along with students' inappropriate attitudes and immature behaviour, often made the situation worse. Consequently, teachers spent a great deal of time controlling students' behaviour and combating their unhelpful attitudes rather than promoting learning. As a consequence, students became passive listeners and did not engage sufficiently in tasks and activities to enable them to learn.

Senior managers are aware that teaching and learning require improvement and are developing strategies to improve consistency. However, managers at all levels do not monitor and evaluate teaching as well as they should.

The feedback given to students about their work is inconsistent and the quality of marking is too variable. Some of the students' books have not been marked for some time, although others are marked conscientiously. The best marking includes useful comments on how students might improve their work. The process of target-setting across the school is at an early stage of development, although some students talked confidently about their targets. Homework is usually set and recorded appropriately in the students' planning journals.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The merger of two schools with different curriculum provision has caused considerable difficulties that the school has addressed. The curriculum is satisfactory. At Key Stage 3 the curriculum is broad and balanced. In Year 11 the curricula of the two schools have been retained to ensure continuity and the pathways meet the needs of these students adequately. The Key Stage 4 curriculum currently offers opportunities such as extended work experience and a range of courses by training providers and the local college for vulnerable students. The school has plans to extend opportunities to meet the needs of specific groups of students from September 2007, for example, with the introduction of BTEC physical education, and BTEC music technologies qualifications. There are developing links with the Burnley sixth-form centre, and involvement in the Burnley and Pendle Consortium for the development of the new specialised diplomas to further enhance provision. The school is addressing the need to improve provision for information and communication technology across Key Stage 4 with increased option choices, for example, in an applied GCSE course. Citizenship and personal, social and health education are addressed through learning for life lessons in all years. The school has recently acquired science specialist status, which has yet to make a significant impact on the curriculum, but the business and enterprise specialist status is beginning to enhance provision, for example, through business and enterprise days. Links are being developed with five feeder primary schools, including involvement in the provision of physical education and through planned business and enterprise days. The register of gifted and talented pupils is being reviewed; the school is a member of the national organisation for these young people, and enrichment activities are being planned. There is some community involvement, for example, in charity work and musical performances. The school has a range of extra-curricular activities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Provision for care, guidance and support is satisfactory in that there is a good commitment to students' welfare. Systems are not wholly coherent however. Procedures for child protection are understood by all staff. Systems for risk assessment, including those for out-of-school visits, are thorough. The school has adequate procedures to tackle issues such as bullying and truancy from lessons, but the systems do not ensure the incidents are always dealt with quickly enough. Effective partnerships are being developed with outside agencies, for instance, in support of students who are referred to the learning support centre. This provides a quiet, calm atmosphere where students work very closely with staff qualified to counsel them and help them with their work. The school has worked hard to set up systems for inclusion, including the well-being team that works closely and effectively with managers responsible for students' overall welfare. Good support is also provided for students in the hearing impaired unit. Positive links with schools and colleges ensure smooth transition on transfer at Year 7 and Year 11. Year 11 students feel they have helpful careers guidance.

Leadership and management

Grade: 4

Leadership and management are inadequate. Nonetheless, the senior leadership team is hard-working and committed. The headteacher has a clear vision for the development of the school, which is shared by her senior team. However, the quality of senior and middle management is not sufficiently consistent. The processes for self-evaluation are underdeveloped. The school's assessment of the current situation is over-optimistic, although the areas for development are clearly recognised. The initial focus of senior leaders on establishing the new school community and effective operational systems during the first term is understandable. However, it has meant that there has been insufficient focus on improving the quality of provision and raising achievement. The monitoring of teaching and learning is underdeveloped. The strategies for the improvement of provision have yet to make a consistent impact and, in view of this, the capacity for improvement is not proven. A newly formed governing body is well led by an experienced chair of governors. It is beginning to hold the school to account, but the impact of this on key areas is not yet evident. The involvement of the governing body in self-evaluation is underdeveloped.

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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?	4
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	4
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	4
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	4
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	4
The behaviour of learners	4
The attendance of learners	4
How well learners enjoy their education	4
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	4
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	4
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3

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?	4
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	4
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	4
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	4
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	4
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	4
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	Yes
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Hameldon Community College

Byron Street

Burnley

Lancashire

BB12 6NU

23 February 2007

Dear Students

You will recall that recently I visited your college with four colleagues to carry out an inspection. Thank you for being so willing to talk to us about your work and to share your views on the college.

The college is at a very early stage in its development and there is much to be done to improve its provision. The current provision of education in the college is not good enough and we have decided that it needs 'special measures'. This means your school will receive extra help and inspectors will return to check that improvements are being made. Your headteacher and her senior leadership team have a clear idea of how they want the college to improve and are working very hard to bring about the necessary changes. They are keen to involve you and your parents in this process of improvement. It is important that you all work together to bring about the necessary changes. We recognise that there are some positive features in the college which can be built on. There are systems to look after you and to ensure that those of you who have the greatest need are given good support. The curriculum that you study is currently satisfactory, but there are good plans to extend this next year and to make it more exciting and relevant. There is some good teaching in the college and in these lessons you make progress and achieve well, but there is not enough of it.

We have asked the headteacher and her team to focus on improving a number of areas. Firstly we want them to continue to work with the teachers to ensure that all of the teaching is as good as that in the best lessons. We have also asked them to raise your achievement and to improve the behaviour of a significant number of you and your attitudes to learning. At present too many of you are not working hard enough and are preventing others from learning. You must attend more regularly and be more punctual. We have also asked all of the school leaders to work as effectively as the best to bring about faster improvement.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

G Jones

Her Majesty's Inspector