

# Cranford Community College

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102540
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hounslow
<b>Inspection number</b>	308046
<b>Inspection dates</b>	18–19 March 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Scott

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>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	1448
6th form	421
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Roger Owen
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Kevin Prunty
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	15 September 2003
<b>School address</b>	High Street Cranford Hounslow TW5 9PD
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8897 2001
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<b>Age group</b>	11-19
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by five Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Cranford Community College, a specialist language college, serves a local community that is very diverse, socially, economically and culturally. The overwhelming majority of the students are from minority ethnic heritages. Most have a home language other than English although few are at the very early stages of learning English. The proportion of students eligible for a free school meal is almost double that nationally but the number of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is above average. Numbers in the sixth form are augmented yearly by a significant proportion of students joining the school for the first time in Year 12. The school is oversubscribed but more students than is typical nationally join or leave the school at customary times of the year.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Cranford is a good and rapidly improving school. Parents strongly support the school's drive for improvement. They consider that 'teachers are really helpful and keep you in touch with children's progress'. Students, too, consider Cranford a 'safe and friendly place to be'.

The improvements at Cranford since the last inspection owe much to the drive and passionate leadership of the headteacher and the committed senior team. This strong leadership and management have ensured an on-going rise in students' performance so that they now reach above average standards in GCSE examinations and achieve well. The sixth form, too, has improved and standards are now average by the end of Year 13. They also achieve well. Nevertheless, students throughout the school consider that aspirational targets would encourage them to aim even higher.

Senior leaders are untiring in their work to develop in all staff a culture that places students at the heart of the school. Middle leaders manage their areas of responsibility increasingly rigorously. They are well supported by very effective professional development programmes, reflecting the college's aim to become a training school. There is a strong culture of self-evaluation that permeates all areas. Governance is good. Governors contribute actively to the school's programme of self-review. The school's on-going progress demonstrates its good capacity to improve.

Care guidance and support are good. A real strength of the school is its caring ethos and emphasis on nurturing positive relationships so that students' personal development is outstanding as is their spiritual, moral, cultural and social development. Vulnerable students are especially well cared for. A Year 7 parent commented that her daughter, although very unassuming, had made 'new friends and was getting on well with her lessons.' Students behave well and come to school regularly although attendance in the sixth form is not as good. They enjoy learning and the rich opportunities for extra curricular activities. Their understanding of healthy living is excellent and they appreciate the importance of making sensible food choices. Participation in physical pursuits is high. Students take responsibilities seriously and provide exemplary service to others. The fashion show, for example highlighted the diverse communities within the neighbourhood.

The outstanding curriculum caters well and flexibly for students' aspirations and needs. Because of good teaching and learning and the many stimulating opportunities afforded by the specialist languages status, the overwhelming majority of Year 11 choose to move into the sixth form and remain to complete courses. Students are particularly appreciative of the opportunity to study their home languages but feel that the school could display signage in a range of languages more overtly. There is more scope to use the specialism in languages to improve communications both with and within the school.

## Effectiveness of the sixth form

### Grade: 2

Cranford does well by its sixth form students. Through its excellent curriculum, it provides a wide range of opportunities for students of all levels of attainment to aspire to further education and training. High numbers from Year 11 stay on into Year 12 and remain to complete Year 13 because of the personalised and flexible pathways open to them. They are joined by significant numbers of students from other local institutions who are inducted well into Cranford's way

incorporating 'the right to be safe, the right to be respected, and the right to learn'. Students appreciate the supportive study facilities and enrichment activities including overseas journeys in Europe and beyond.

Standards overall are average by the end of Year 13. The majority of students achieve well from their individual starting points. Students are particularly successful in advanced vocational courses. Many then successfully move on to advanced programmes. Checks on current students' progress indicate that over three quarters of Years 12 and 13 are on track to meet their targets. Nevertheless, students report some concern that targets are not always adjusted to take enough account of on-going achievements and as a result do not always challenge them sufficiently.

Students are articulate and communicate confidently with adults. They make valuable contributions to the running of the school and the local community, including peer mentoring, fund raising and supporting in local primary schools. They prepare well for their future economic well-being through work shadowing, overseas work experience linked to the languages specialist status, and through a wide range of international experiences. Attendance in the sixth form, although improving, remains lower than it should be but punctuality to school has improved since the last inspection.

The sixth form is well led. Students enjoy learning because of warm working relationships with staff, good teaching and purposeful mentoring. They know that their views are respected by staff and they appreciate the mature and respectful way they are treated. 'I am proud of my school' said a Year 13 student. They are very well involved in events that engage local groups and make a positive contribution to community relationships, a priority for the college and its partner schools.

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

- Take steps to ensure more flexible target setting in all subjects so that targets consistently drive the progress of individual students.
- Use the languages specialism to enhance communication skills within the school.
- Raise attendance in the sixth form.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 2**

Standards are above average by the end of Year 11. Students, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, achieve well from broadly average starting points. Those students with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties make especially fast progress towards their personal and academic targets. Students' progress accelerates as they move through the school because of the good teaching and the strong focus on improving literacy.

At the end of Year 9, students reach average standards and achieve satisfactorily. However, students' rates of progress have varied from year-to-year and across subjects with achievement in mathematics lower than in English and science. Checks on current achievement in Year 9 indicate that students are on target to make good progress.

Students make good progress in Years 10 and 11 and standards are above average. There has been a steady rise over a number of years in the proportion of the students gaining five or more higher GCSE grades that include English and mathematics. Over half of the students

successfully did so in 2007. The school's robust information on Year 11 students shows a likely increase of five percentage points in higher GCSE grades, including English and mathematics.

Within the specialist languages area none of the languages offered have yet contributed positively to the whole-school 5 A\*-C results. Recent checks on students' progress, including modular examinations, indicate that Year 11 students are likely to exceed the school's specialist language targets in 2008 because of robust action to bring the programme back on track.

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

**Grade: 1**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Students' personal development and well-being are excellent in the main college and good in the sixth form. Students value education and want to succeed. Attitudes and behaviour are good. Relationships between the students and adults are excellent in this harmonious community. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness is outstanding. Students enjoy their education and attend very well in the main school.

Students know the importance of healthy living and the need to work safely. They engage enthusiastically in a wide range of physical activities and competitive sports. The school council is effective in promoting students' rights and responsibilities. Students were involved in selecting and monitoring the quality of the catering contract and fund-raised for charities such as a 'water-aid' project in Africa. Learners are well prepared for economic success because of their academic standards and exciting work-experience placements both in the local community and overseas. They regularly inspire and organise events, prepare and present assemblies to younger students and make presentations to the governing body. Roles such as sports leaders and tutors in primary schools enable students to become independent, self-motivated and confident young people.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Excellent working relationships between teachers and students create a very good ethos for learning. Students come to lessons willing to learn and often take a leading part in lessons. One student said 'We learn best when we get to do things'. Teachers are enthusiastic, have good subject knowledge and make lessons fun with varied and interesting activities. They ask well-chosen questions to help students deepen their understanding and apply what they have learned to different situations. Literacy is emphasised well, enhancing language skills. This enables students for whom English is not their first language to make good progress equalling that of their peers. Teachers encourage students to play an active part in assessing their work. This was very effective in an information and communication technology (ICT) lesson where students were carefully guided to evaluate their work on designing games.

Planning generally caters well for the needs of all students, but occasionally the work is too hard for some and too easy for others. Most students have a good understanding of their level of working. Marking is regular and generally shows students how much progress they have made and how they can improve their work, although the quality of written feedback is variable.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 1**

**Grade for sixth form: 1**

The curriculum is outstanding because of its flexibility in meeting the needs of different groups of students. At times, for example, students benefit from an alternative curriculum that keeps them engaged in learning. The impact of the languages specialism is evident in the provision for able linguists to take GCSE examinations early. Many participate in a 'more-able strategy' club after school. Students who have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties are given the chance to work with external agencies on 'entry to employment' skills. All students take a vocational course during Years 10 and 11 and they are prepared well for the world of work through a 'preparation for work' course. This has helped to raise attainment in ICT and business courses. Students have access to an exciting range of work experience opportunities and overseas trips and visits. The school actively seeks the views of students to review the curriculum offer.

The school's specialism enriches the curriculum well. This includes providing opportunities for students to study community languages as well as the opportunities to study a second language. Students in the sixth form appreciate the chance to visit China and some students and staff are learning Mandarin. Students are encouraged to broaden their horizons through the impressive range of extra-curricular activities, including conservation activities to Choi Kwang Do.

## **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The school shows a high level of care for students and gives them excellent guidance on the importance of health and exercise. Students are made aware of risks, such as drug abuse and cyber-bullying. They feel safe and confident and there is always an adult available when need arises. One parent wrote, 'I know my children are safe'. The school prepares students well for later life through work experience and by raising the level of their basic skills. The school has extremely robust arrangements for safeguarding students.

Students' attainment is reviewed regularly, but targets are not always adjusted, even when exceeded. A scheme of rewards that recognises students' efforts and contributions to school life is motivational and very popular. The school guides students well in their choices at key points. Vulnerable students and those at the early stages of learning English receive excellent support so they are fully included in every aspect of school life and achieve as well as their classmates. The school has very good links with external agencies that provide swift access to services for students.

## **Leadership and management**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Leadership and management are good. Some aspects are particularly strong such as the leadership of the headteacher who is passionate about putting the needs of students at the

top of the school's agenda. This is reflected in senior leaders' relentless drive to improve standards.

The leadership of the growing sixth form is good. The senior team and the governing body also share the headteacher's exceptional drive to move the school on. Self-evaluation is good. Managers know the school well and recognise that there are some inconsistencies in how well staff implement procedures. Target setting, for example, is not always used well enough to improve the progress of individual students. Middle leaders undertake self-reviews increasingly competently because of excellent professional development opportunities. The leadership of the language specialism, however, has not focused enough on provision within the school. Recent robust action by senior leaders is ensuring that the management of the specialist language college is brought back on track so that it more effectively directs whole school improvement, particularly the school's innovative work on community relationships, which is a strength.

The governing body is a skilled and highly committed force to help the school develop and improve. Under the guidance of an able chair, governors are very effective in challenging the school to improve. The views of parents and students are sought regularly and used effectively to inform worthwhile changes. Parents and students, for example, are involved in awarding major catering and maintenance contracts. Nevertheless, a minority of parents are concerned about communications with and within the school. Inspectors agree and have recommended that this is included in the school's improvement plan.



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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall	16-19
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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	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	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

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The attendance of learners	2	
The behaviour of learners	2	
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	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	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	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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	

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

01 April 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Cranford Community College, Hounslow, TW5 9PD

You will remember that we came to inspect your school just before the Easter break. You made us very welcome and we would like to thank everyone who helped us by sharing your thoughts about the school and showing us your work.

It is my pleasure, on behalf of the team, to let you know our inspection findings. Cranford Community College is a good school. The opportunities that you have, especially in languages, help you to achieve well overall. We are pleased you behave in a calm and sensible manner around the school showing consideration and respect for each other and your teachers. The commitment and dedication of your teachers and support staff to keep you safe in school is outstanding. We know you and your parents/carers appreciate this greatly. Many of you make a big difference to others through your support and care for younger students and through the many projects in the community.

You have an exceptional headteacher who is very well supported by senior staff and governors. They are working tirelessly on your behalf to ensure you get the best possible education the school can provide.

To make Cranford Community College even better, we have asked your teachers to ensure that they focus on providing you with more challenging targets that will help you achieve higher grades across all subjects. We have also asked them to improve communication within the school.

Despite your good attitudes to school and work, and despite the school's untiring efforts to help, there are a few of you, particularly in the sixth form, who do not attend school regularly enough and therefore miss valuable learning time. Unless you are ill, you should attend school every day. Inspectors liked your idea to display more signs around the school in other languages. We think it would be a great opportunity for you to exhibit your creative skills by designing these signs yourself.

We wish you well in all that you hope to achieve for yourselves in the future.

David Scott

Lead Inspector