

# Coundon Court School and Community College

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103729
<b>Local Authority</b>	Coventry
<b>Inspection number</b>	308403
<b>Inspection date</b>	30 April 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Clive Kempton 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>	Secondary
<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	1371
6th form	316
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Peter Roach
<b>Headteacher</b>	Debbie Morrison
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 December 2004
<b>School address</b>	Northbrook Road Coventry CV6 2AJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	02476 335121
<b>Fax number</b>	02476 336842

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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 of schools and one Additional Inspector. Inspectors investigated the following issues:

achievement and standards

leadership and management

personal development and well-being

care, guidance and support. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation form, national published assessment data, the school's own assessment records and other documentation, and observation of the school at work. Parents' responses to the inspection questionnaire, and interviews with senior and other staff, students and parents also informed inspectors' judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments in these areas, as given in its self-evaluation, were other than justified.

## Description of the school

Coundon Court is a popular and heavily oversubscribed 11–18 fully comprehensive technology college. The school attracts students from a wide area surrounding, and including, the centre of Coventry. The students are mainly White British. A below average percentage of students are eligible for free school meals. The proportion with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also below average. The school works closely with a number of partners and takes a lead role in developing and sharing good practice. It became a Training School in 2000 and a Leading Edge school in 2003. There is a thriving sixth form which admits students from other schools in the area and provides a wide range of post-16 courses. The school supports its community with a youth club for out of school hours, an adult education facility and an Early Years Centre.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Coundon Court is a good school. It is rapidly improving and has become re-energised under the charismatic leadership of the new headteacher. There is a strong and increasing focus on achievement shared by all staff and students. Relationships between students and staff are very positive. The school provides a cohesive, supportive community where students thrive and develop into confident young adults. One Year 7 student commented, 'Students are kind and friendly to each other here.' Students are proud to say they come to Coundon Court School and their parents are pleased that they do so.

Students enter the school with standards similar to those found nationally and make good progress to attain standards that are above the national average at Key Stages 3 and 4 and in the sixth form. This good achievement has been somewhat patchy in the past due to a range of circumstances. For example, in 2007 students did not achieve as well as they could in mathematics due to the policy of entering them for mathematics GCSE early in Year 10 and then concentrating on statistics GCSE in Year 11. Another example is in English where some students, especially girls, did not make the expected progress in the main school.

The new headteacher, who took up post in September 2007, very quickly identified issues affecting students' achievement, and successfully focused leaders and managers at all levels on making sure that the progress of all students is carefully monitored. As a result, tracking of students' progress is now very rigorous and shared with parents every term. Current data on pupils' performance indicate an impressive improvement in standards at all key stages this year. Early identification of underperformance has ensured that all students are very well supported to make sure they do not get behind with their work. All groups of students, including looked after children, students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, those from minority ethnic groups and boys and girls, are all very well supported by a wide range of agencies and are making good progress. As one parent observed, 'The school addresses the needs of all the students'. The student data now held by the school are extensive and used well by staff and students. An e-learning initiative, currently being piloted with Year 10 students, allows them to access their academic and pastoral development records. Another good example of the exemplary care, guidance and support provided for students is the use of computer software which allows for anytime anywhere access to the curriculum. This package is used by students at home or at school to help with their homework and revision.

These information and communication technology (ICT) developments have been a result of the Technology Specialist school status which has attracted additional funding for the school and contributed to improved standards generally, and in particular in technology, mathematics, science and ICT. Networking with technology specialist school partners is strong. For example, the specialism has had an impact on local primary and special schools, where additional expertise, support and resources have raised the standards of those transferring to Coundon Court. Initiatives, such as the summer school and staff and students working in the partner primary schools, also allow new Year 7 students to make a smooth worry-free start to their secondary education.

Teaching across the school is good overall. The school has an accurate view of its teaching standards through careful monitoring. Managers are not complacent about teaching standards, and aspire to improve the quality of teaching even further. The most successful teaching is characterised by the consistent and supportive marking of students' work. The pace of teaching

is brisk and a variety of stimulating learning activities are provided in the lessons. Good ongoing consolidation of learning, and the quality of relationships between students and adults, result in very positive attitudes to learning. Where teaching is less successful, the teacher sometimes talks too much. In particular, the learning objectives for the lesson are not clear or measurable enough and not sufficiently consolidated as the lesson progresses. As a result, some students do not learn as much as they could.

The curriculum in the school and sixth form is good. It is very responsive to the needs of all students and constantly evolving. This year, even more courses have been introduced. New courses include forensic science Level 3 at post-16, and BTEC Level 2 courses at Key Stage 4. The partnership working with other schools in the Coventry North West Federation is strong. The federation co-ordinator, in a letter to the inspection team, described the school as 'playing a key role in developing and enhancing post-16 provision' and as having been 'fully involved in curriculum developments at Key Stage 4'.

The personal development and well-being of students are good. Students obviously enjoy coming to school, which is why attendance is improving and is now above the national average. One parent referring to her daughter's enthusiasm for school said, 'She just loves coming to school.' Students behave well in lessons and around the school. Concerns were expressed by some parents about the poor behaviour of a minority of students. However, inspectors judge the school to be an orderly community where behaviour is good. Some parents were also concerned about bullying, but discussions with a number of students revealed that there is very little bullying or racism in the school and any reported is quickly dealt with.

The school is a safe environment and procedures for safeguarding students are robust. Students are developing an active lifestyle through the wide range of extra-curricular sporting activities available before, during and after school. Around half the students regularly attend clubs that keep them healthy and active. The physical education department has plans to support those students who are not as active to become more involved. Whilst the school promotes healthy eating, there are a large number of students who bring a packed lunch to school, partly due to the lack of space in the cramped dining facilities. Some of these students decide not to adopt a healthy diet, bringing crisps and chocolate bars to school. Students have many opportunities to develop their personal and social skills through a wide range of trips to countries such as Peru, Thailand and America. They are encouraged to take initiative such as during Enterprise weeks and through activities such as organising events for charity. For example, on the evening of the inspection, four Year 10 boys had organised an 'X Factor' talent show involving staff and students. They organised professional lighting, music and refreshments, rehearsed the performers and successfully raised over £700 for charity.

Leadership and management across the school are good overall. The leadership of the new headteacher is outstanding. She has very quickly pulled all leaders together with fresh impetus, drive and boundless energy, bringing significant improvements to the school's provision. The dedicated and hard-working senior leadership team support the headteacher well. They are rising to the challenge of new leadership responsibilities and collectively they are becoming a potent team driving the whole school improvement agenda. They have a good capacity to make improvements and are able to make accurate judgements about the school's provision. They have already identified the most important next steps for the school's improvement. Middle level leaders are developing their departmental self-evaluation strategies well. The regular reviews of each faculty, led by the senior team, are increasingly focusing individual subject teams on how they can improve. Governance is good. Governors are supportive of the school. They ask difficult questions, and hold the school to account for the standards students achieve.

Partnerships with a range of outside agencies are outstanding. Parents too, are very supportive and like the 'praise postcards' sent home and the efficient system of being able to email any member of staff with a question or a concern. They all know they will get an answer. One parent described Coundon Court as 'a place where the children grow and become individuals'.

## **Effectiveness of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 2**

The effectiveness of the sixth form is good. It is well led by senior staff who are not complacent, and keen to improve the already good provision. On average, around 60% of students stay on from Year 11 and approximately 25 students of varying ability join the sixth form from other local schools each year. The attainment of students on entry to the sixth form is therefore broadly average. By the time students leave they have reached above average standards, which represents good progress and good achievement. The impressive new sixth form building provides appropriate teaching and recreational spaces. Students' attendance is good and they contribute well to the school and local community by supporting younger students with reading and also mentoring them. Involvement in sports leadership and community work in local schools, hospitals and care homes for example, are regular features. Students have very good relationships with their tutors where individualised support for their learning is excellent. Students meet with their tutors very regularly to discuss their progress and next steps in their education. 65% of students decide to take up university places.

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

- Ensure that all lessons have clear and measurable learning objectives that are understood by the students and consolidated throughout the lesson.
- Improve the dining accommodation and encourage students who have packed lunches to make healthy choices about what they eat.

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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	2
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?	2	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
The attendance of learners	2	
The behaviour of learners	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

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?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	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	1	
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

- 1 May 2008 Dear Students Inspection of Coundon Court School and Community College, Coventry CV6 2AJ Thank you all very much for the warm welcome you gave my colleague and I when we visited your school. I thought you would like to know the outcome of the inspection and the points for improvement we have suggested to your headteacher.
- You attend a good school that is improving quickly.
- The teaching is good overall and teachers work hard for you and want you to succeed.
- Your new headteacher is a charismatic figure who is leading the school well.
- You, your teachers and your parents all know how well you are getting on at school and what you need to do to improve your work.
- A lot of you are developing active lifestyles through your involvement in sport; you should all get involved.
- You have a lot of opportunities to join in extra-curricular activities.
- You are all well looked after; the teachers and other adults really care about you and want you to be fulfilled in life.
- You have lots of opportunities to get involved in helping others in the school and the local community.
- There is a wide range of courses for you to choose in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form.
- You are well behaved and polite young people.
- You are very fortunate to come to a school in such beautiful surroundings.
- The technology specialism gives you access to some good ICT facilities.
- You attain good standards in your work throughout the school. In order to become an even better school, we have suggested that your headteacher and senior staff do the following things.
- Make sure that teachers tell you what you are going to learn at the start of each lesson and check that you have learned it at the end.
- Improve the dining facilities for you and help those of you who bring packed lunches to make healthy choices about what you eat. Yours sincerely Clive Kempton Her Majesty's Inspector