

Caludon Castle School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103731
Local Authority	Coventry
Inspection number	308404
Inspection dates	5–6 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Ted Wheatley

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	1216
6th form	234
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jack Harrison
Headteacher	Carol Reid
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2004
School address	Axholme Road Wyken Coventry CV2 5BD
Telephone number	02476 444822
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Age group	11-18
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by five Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

This is a large school which is also a specialist business and enterprise college. Pupils come from a wide range of social backgrounds and a smaller proportion than average are entitled to free school meals. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is broadly average and none is in the early stages of learning English. Attainment on entry is a little above average and the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below average. The school has recently moved into new premises after a period of considerable disruption while the old buildings were demolished and the new ones completed.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school that is justifiably popular with parents, pupils and students. Standards in the main school and sixth form are above average and a significant minority of pupils and students reach well above average standards. Standards in mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) are particularly high. Achievement is good and frequently exceptionally good, and improving because the school makes a point of providing a very high level of care, support and academic guidance for all pupils and students. As one parent said, 'Staff have taken the time and effort to get to know my child as an individual.' The success has been driven by the determination of the headteacher and with equally strong resolve from senior staff, teachers and other adults working at the school. Governors play a significant role in supporting and challenging the school to improve its performance. A recent dip in achievement, owing to the disruption caused by the new building work and some staff changes, is now over and improvements in achievement are now increasing rapidly. Very accurate self-evaluation at all levels, sharply focused plans to initiate changes, and a clear vision about improving teaching to equal the best, are all very successful. The school has dealt very effectively with the issues from the previous inspection and is exceptionally well placed to continue improving. Teaching is good and often outstanding, with work almost always closely matched to pupils' needs as well as being challenging and interesting. Pupils' attention is readily caught and they work hard and with real enthusiasm. Very occasionally, teachers do not provide work at the right level for some of the least able or challenging enough for the most able. Marking is mostly excellent with clear guidance on how to improve work, though in a few instances the guidance is brief and does little to aid pupils' progress. The curriculum is imaginatively planned, providing pupils with a very wide choice of academic and vocational subjects and opportunities for their personal, social and emotional development. It is successfully enriched by a very good range of visits, visitors and activities designed to sustain the enthusiasm of pupils of all abilities. The quality of ICT provision is extremely good and the links established through the school's status as a business and enterprise college have contributed to the excellent partnerships with businesses and the local and wider communities. The quality of care and guidance is exceptionally good. It is based on excellent relationships and extensive personal and academic knowledge about pupils and close ties with families. Small mentoring groups provide an effective setting in which to monitor pupils' progress, provide guidance and opportunities for pupils to make their views known to staff. The school is a safe and secure place for all pupils and students. Pupils take considerable pride in the range of activities they undertake, especially in the school council responsibilities many of them have and work they do for charities. They are extremely well informed about the values and beliefs of other cultures and show a high level of tolerance, consideration and understanding for others. Their attendance is good and they behave well. They are very well informed about the importance of healthy lifestyles and the great majority eat sensibly and take part in physical exercise.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 1

Advanced level pass rates have improved and are now above average and standards continue to rise. Achievement is good and often very good in relation to students' starting points. Attendance and retention rates are both good. Students take pride in their work and are effective independent learners. About three quarters of the students enter university, while the remainder go on to further education and training. Students' personal development and

well-being, including the acquisition of skills for future life, are excellent. Teaching and learning are solidly good, with some outstanding, challenging practice. The leadership and management of the sixth form are excellent and particularly effective in monitoring and tracking students' progress and providing individual support and guidance. The school has strong links with the local federation of sixth forms. It has forged effective links with neighbouring universities and further education providers that inform students when they need to make important decisions about their careers and higher education choices. Students and parents are very pleased with the education provided and believe their views on further improvements are taken into account.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that the learning needs of all pupils are met by making sure that work is always matched to pupils' needs, as it is in the great majority of lessons.
- Improve the consistency of marking so that it reflects the existing excellent practice in giving guidance and advice to pupils on how to develop and improve their work even further.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Pupils' achievement is good and in many instances outstanding, and continues to improve. Standards reached are above average and often well above average. This is particularly the case in mathematics and ICT where pupils' achievement is excellent, owing to extremely challenging teaching and very good resources, a result of the school's business and enterprise college status. Throughout the school, excellent academic support and guidance are increasingly supporting pupils in achieving well and reaching challenging targets. Current standards reached by the most able pupils are higher than the 2007 GCSE examination results. The average and the least able pupils also achieve well and sometimes extremely well. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve similarly to other pupils. Occasionally a few pupils from all ability groups do not achieve quite as well as they should because work is not sufficiently well planned to engage or challenge them. In the sixth form achievement is good and improving with many students making excellent progress and reaching high standards. Standards have risen since last year, and continue to improve.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

Pupils enjoy school, their attendance is good and they take advantage of all the development opportunities the school offers. Their behaviour is good, bullying is rare and pupils feel very safe in school, confident in the processes the school has to ensure their safety and security. Pupils are well informed about the importance of healthy lifestyles. They eat healthily and many take part in some kind of physical activity. They have confidence in their own abilities. Attitudes to taking on responsibility and becoming involved in community activities are exceptional. Apart from participation in a very active school council, they show a very real concern for the welfare of other pupils. They take part in fund raising for charities, actively seek information about other cultures and beliefs and are prepared to share their own beliefs. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Pupils and students are extremely well prepared for life. Their development of literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are

good and they are very well informed about business, enterprise, career and higher education choices.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 2

Teaching is frequently excellent, with most teachers taking full account of the different ways pupils learn and then planning lessons accordingly. Lessons are challenging and fast paced. Teachers use their good subject knowledge and searching questioning to successfully encourage pupils to think for themselves. Teachers mostly plan effectively so that the least able are well supported and the most able are effectively challenged. Where teaching is occasionally less effective, teachers do not provide sufficient support for slower learners or extend and challenge the most able, resulting in pupils not progressing as quickly as they might. Activities are varied and a sense of fun is evident in many lessons. Pupils are enthusiastic and take pride in their work. Relationships are excellent and this gives pupils the confidence to take responsibility for their own learning without being fully dependent on teachers. Marking is generally good although on a few occasions it does not give enough advice to pupils on how they can improve their work or reach their targets.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

The curriculum is a real strength because the school changes it in response to pupils' and students' needs. Compressing English and mathematics into two years at Key Stage 3 allows for personalised learning in Key Stage 4, preparing pupils well for work or post-16 studies. This allows time for a second language, Certificate of Personal Effectiveness and a short course GCSE physical education at Key Stage 3. At Key Stage 4 pupils have access to a flexible, wide choice of work place based, vocational and academic courses. The school monitors pupils' progress carefully on their chosen educational pathways. The range of out of school activities is wide and varied. The great majority of pupils take part in one or more activities. For example, the involvement in competitions, sporting activities including swimming, rugby and female football, are high, though fewer pupils take advantage of musical activities. There are many subject study workshops to support pupils completing coursework. The sixth form has a very wide vocational and academic curriculum, enhanced by access to other sixth form providers across the city. There is a wide range of activities to enrich students' experience. For example, support for an overseas school, career planning, issues of justice and study techniques contribute to a wellrounded education for students. Specialist college status in business and enterprise has an outstanding impact in enriching the experience of pupils. The use of ICT resources has enhanced the curriculum. Enterprise challenges and longer term projects have enabled links with other schools, the community and local businesses and have encouraged pupils to take responsibility, accept challenges and work well with other people.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

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Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Grade for sixth form: 1

The headteacher's clear vision for how the school should improve is reflected in the work and efforts of all staff. The professional and personal support for staff is outstanding. The result is the exceptionally accurate and thorough self-evaluation at whole school and subject level, detailed action planning to improve provision, especially teaching, and very high levels of staff commitment. Expectations and challenges for staff at all levels are powerful factors in helping the school accelerate its improvements. Where there has been some underachievement owing to staffing difficulties, carefully selected new appointments have led to significant improvements. Preparing pupils for when they leave school at the age of 16 or continue with their education, and the focus on high achievement by this point, drives the school development. Governors are challenging and they hold the school to account at all levels. They also support developments energetically with high expectations that they will lead to higher standards and better achievement. Governors, along with staff, worked closely and successfully with building developers to ensure that new buildings meet the needs of pupils and students. The specialist college status has been very successful in helping the school to forge excellent links with other schools, businesses and the local and wider communities. Pupils and students have benefited from the extra experiences they have gained from this.

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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?	1	1
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	1	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	2
The standards ¹ 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?	1	1
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	2	
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	1	

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?	1	1

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.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1	1
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	1	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	
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

7 March 2008

Dear Pupils and Students

Caludon Castle School and Business and Enterprise College, Coventry, CV2 5BD

Thank you for making our time in your school so enjoyable. Those of you we spoke to gave us a very clear idea of how good your school is. That helped us considerably in putting together our judgements about the school.

These are the main things we found out about your school.

- Your school is outstanding. The standards you reach are above average and often higher than that. Your achievement is good and sometimes excellent.
- The headteacher and other staff know exactly what needs to be done to make your school even better, and they work hard to make sure that happens.
- Teaching is good and often excellent. Lessons are challenging, move at a fast pace and are nearly always organised to meet all of your learning needs.
- The range of subjects you can take is excellent and carefully planned to make sure you follow the right courses for either your future careers or continuing education.
- You behave extremely well and are enthusiastic about school. The way you take on responsibilities, take part in activities in school and the community and consider the feelings of others is excellent.
- The school takes excellent care of you. The new school building is a very safe learning environment. You know about the importance of healthy lifestyles and you are very well prepared for your future lives.
- Provision in the sixth form is excellent and students make good, sometimes excellent progress, and reach above average standards.

To improve things further, we have asked the school to do the following.

- Make sure that work is always carefully matched to your learning needs, like it is in the great majority of lessons.
- Ensure that all marking always tells you how to improve your work.

You can contribute to improvement by asking for help if your work is either too hard or too easy or finding out how you can do even better in your work if you are not really sure.

With best wishes

Ted Wheatley Lead inspector

Annex B

7 March 2008



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Ted Wheatley
Lead inspector