

Broad oak Mathematics And Computing College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	109315
Local Authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	309958
Inspection dates	4–5 June 2008
Reporting inspector	Jonathan Palk HMI

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	871
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Brock
Headteacher	Linda Heaven-Woolley
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2003
School address	Windwhistle Road Weston-super-Mare BS23 4NP
Telephone number	01934 422000
Fax number	01934 413903

Age group	11-16
Inspection dates	4–5 June 2008
Inspection number	309958

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

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

Description of the school

Broadoak College is a medium-sized secondary school. It serves a mixed community that includes an area of significant social and economic deprivation. The proportions of students who are eligible for free school meals, who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and who join or leave the school during the academic year are above average. A few students are from Poland, Greece and Lithuania but the great majority of students are from a White British background. The school has been designated a specialist school in mathematics and Computing since September 2005.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Broadoak is a transformed place since its last inspection and is now a good school. It now has the confidence of its parents and community. Examination results, judged poor at the last inspection, are now average. The progress students make is good overall with some groups making outstanding progress as they pass through the school. Morale is high and students, teachers, parents and carers work very well together to achieve the ambitious targets the college has set for the future. What was evident during the inspection was the thoroughness and attention to detail that senior leaders pay to every aspect of the college's growth. Impressive, too, is the way the college has reached out to work with its partners in the community to ensure that the high aspirations for each youngster can be supported outside as well as inside the 'school gates'. The school, which four years ago was of significant concern to the local authority, is becoming increasingly effective and now offers its students a good standard of education. Key to this transformation has been the outstanding leadership and management of the headteacher and her senior leadership team. Equally important has been the tough decisions taken by the school's governors, led by their highly effective chair, and the improvements arising as a result of acquiring specialist status. The financial investment in the college has been good value for money.

The college recognises it is still on its journey to excellence. Its leaders have a realistic understanding of what they have achieved across all fronts and their plans for further development of teaching and learning and making the curriculum more personal to individual students are exciting, and will rapidly take them further along the road. They recognise that some learners could achieve more, particularly in English, but the evidence shows that there is now a coherent and consistent approach to improving literacy through the teaching of all subjects. Equally, they recognise that teaching and learning, now good, is not always the best it should be for all students. Whilst many lessons are of good or even outstanding quality, learning is occasionally slowed when teachers do not always plan well enough to meet the wide range of needs in their classes. The high quality care, support and guidance are helping secure huge improvements in the personal development of students, which is good. Behaviour is good and their behaviour around college is impressive. A very positive atmosphere permeates the school, although a few students still engage in low-level disruption when teaching is less inspiring. As many students reported, they 'now feel very safe and secure'. Students grow in confidence, courtesy, respect for others, and in their appreciation of how they can contribute in the community and the wider world. They develop successfully the skills necessary for their future well-being and take advantage of the wide range of curriculum and other opportunities matching their capabilities and interests. The vast majority of students show commitment to their college but do not have enough opportunity to influence the future development of the college. The strength of the school's specialist status in computing is playing a major part in improving standards and attendance rates. The result is that an increasing proportion of students now progress to further education, to follow both academic and vocational programmes. The transformation of Broadoak is continuing and, judged on its progress so far, has excellent capacity to do even better.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that more lessons are of the quality of the best, so that every lesson builds well on students' existing skills and knowledge.

- Provide more opportunity for students to take the initiative and contribute to the development of the college.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Students of all abilities are achieving well by the end of Year 11. Standards on entry have been below average but are rising and are now average. However, all year groups contain a significant minority of students who enter with low standards. Literacy levels are the weakest, and this is also the case for the significant minority of students who join the college at other times. By the end of Year 9, standards are average. Key Stage 3 national tests and examination results rose rapidly after the last inspection, levelled off and are on course to rise again this year. There is a significant upward trend in the results for boys and students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This is a consequence of their improved attitudes to learning. The college has rightly identified a minority of students whose progress is slow in Key Stage 3 because of gaps in their literacy skills. These students are now making good progress as a result of more coherence in the teaching of literacy skills across a range of subjects. The greatest improvements have come in Years 10 and 11. It has been strongest in mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT), where the progress of all students has been good year on year. College data show continuing good progress of students, across English, mathematics and science. The proportion of students on target to attain five or more higher grades is good, given students' below average prior attainment.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Students clearly enjoy coming to college and the above average attendance levels reflect this. The college has put improving behaviour as a priority for raising standards. This has been effective and, although there is some inconsistency across the college in how teachers manage behaviour, standards of behaviour have improved significantly. The students feel safe because procedures and the level of adult supervision are effective. Those at risk of exclusion are supported well. Exclusions are very infrequent and have fallen dramatically. Students and their parents are pleased with the speedy response to any incidents of bullying, which are now very rare. The students have positive attitudes and support the wide range of extra-curricular activities well. The students adopt healthy lifestyles as a result of the health education programme, which includes healthy eating options, and taking part in physical activity both in lessons and after college.

The atmosphere in the college is calm, with high expectations of courtesy and appropriate dress. This contributes strongly to students' good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Students take advantage of the varied opportunities to contribute to activities in the community, as seen through their involvement as fund-raisers and helpers in a local hospice. Whilst the students feel that they are listened to, they are not given enough opportunity to use their own initiative to further their personal development.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The guidance provided by the college's senior leaders and managers has helped improve the overall quality of teaching and learning so that they are now good. Some of the teaching is outstanding. Typically, these lessons are pacy, revisit learning objectives, assess learning at a number of points in the lesson, and use a range of learning styles. The senior leadership team has rightly focused on embedding the mechanics of good organisation and planning, and improving the opportunities for students to develop literacy skills. Marking has also improved but still varies considerably across subjects. Students know what level or grade they are aiming for and what they need to work on to achieve it. Most teachers use a variety of resources and methods to make the subject relevant and interesting. A key strategy to improving standards has been the way specific support has been given to small groups of students and the determination of all staff to help them succeed. Similarly, able students often have materials to push their thinking one-step further. Some of the teaching is not sharp enough in making use of assessment information to match tasks to students' abilities. In a few cases, this causes poor behaviour that, in turn, disrupts the learning of others.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has improved and is now good. Provision for ICT has improved hugely after acquiring mathematics and computing status and an on-line curriculum is now in place. This has added immensely to students' options at GCSE and improved their motivation for learning across all subjects. Those who want to continue with more GCSE subjects can choose to study extra courses in after-school lessons. A very small number of students follow an alternative, less academic, curriculum in Key Stage 4 that has proved highly effective. Further adaptations to the curriculum are about to be made that will enable students in Year 9 to concentrate on their preferred subjects. An effective learning support centre meets the needs of students with learning difficulties well. Personal, social, health and citizenship education, which is taught in every year, is given high priority. The themes are engaging students and have contributed to improved social and cultural awareness. A rich and varied programme of extra-curricular activities, particularly physical education, enriches the curriculum for students of all ages, interests and abilities. A good number of trips, visits and speakers are often used to bring the curriculum to life.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Students receive excellent care, guidance and support to help them achieve well. Academic guidance is grounded in detailed and accurate analysis of students' progress. The college management team works as a cohesive and resilient influence to ensure a wide-ranging support network across the college and is helping to secure further year-on-year improvements, as indicated by the evidence pointing to raised achievement and standards in 2008. Students, who may be vulnerable or at risk, are very well supported in lessons, and through the college's excellent links with external agencies. This has raised students' aspirations and self-esteem. Teachers and support staff give outstanding support to students with emotional or behavioral difficulties. A few students still find it difficult to manage their own behaviour, particularly

when lessons are taught by teachers they are unfamiliar with. Students have precisely-focused targets which are reviewed regularly and this contributes to the good progress they make, both academically and in their personal development. Child protection requirements and safeguarding procedures are securely in place.

Strong pastoral support, which results in students feeling safe, provides a caring environment in which students of all ages flourish. Highly effective transition arrangements have been introduced to aid students coming into and leaving the college. Through these procedures, guidance and care arrangements for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are prepared early and students gain a good start in secondary education. Careers education is strong, with an excellent service provided by Connexions, which helps ensure the smooth transition for students into post-16 education or training.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Excellent leadership and management at all levels have enabled the school to make significant improvements to the quality of provision and outcomes for students since the last inspection. The headteacher leads with authority, a strong commitment to the inclusion of all and a relentless drive for improvement. Collegiate values are strong. The headteacher has made judicious appointments amongst the team of middle managers and given them full scope to lead; ensuring direct mentoring from senior leaders is in place to help them develop in their roles. Heads of faculty and leaders of learning work closely together and play a key role in monitoring standards. The regular cycle of subject reviews is comprehensive and ensures that, where performance levels dip below the high expectations set, extra support, intervention and monitoring is put in place to secure rapid improvement. Middle leaders know their subjects well and readily identify the marked improvements to achievement and standards that have been secured over time.

The school undertakes the monitoring and analysis of students' achievements assiduously. This close analysis leads to well judged school improvement work. Strategies to promote equal opportunities are rigorously implemented and monitored. Opportunities for staff to develop professionally are very good. Senior leaders, together with middle managers, actively coach, mentor and model effective classroom strategies with colleagues. This has led to the improvements seen in the quality and consistency of teaching since the last inspection and has helped to lessen the adverse impact of staffing changes in recent years. Challenging targets are set for students and staff are held closely to account for students' progress towards them. Knowledgeable and dedicated governors also play a significant role in challenging and supporting school leaders to drive improvement.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
---	----------------

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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	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
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
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	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
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
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	1
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

6 June 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Broadoak Mathematics and Computing College, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 4NP

On behalf of the inspection team, I would like to thank you for your positive contribution during the recent inspection. Your excellent manners towards visitors, the high quality work on display in the public areas of your school and your readiness for lessons conveyed well the high expectations the staff have for you. The inspection team concluded that Broadoak is a good school. The vast majority of you make good progress and your successes in examinations or on work-based courses bear testament to this. You are well prepared for moving on into Year 12.

Leaders and managers are exemplary in their support for your learning and personal development. They have some excellent systems for making sure that only the best will do and these have proved highly effective in transforming the school in the last four years. Your attitudes, behaviour and attendance are now good and you have really worked hard at this. The strong partnerships the college has established with other public services and your parents and carers have made a significant contribution to this improvement. Teaching is good and some of your teachers, as you recognise, too, are excellent. We have asked that leaders and managers continue to make sure all lessons are of good quality by ensuring that the work you are asked to do is well matched to your needs.

You have a good curriculum and one that is always adjusting to meet your future needs. From the many discussions we had with you, it is clear that you are keen to take on more responsibility. We concluded that you now need further opportunities to help in the development of the college, take on more responsibilities and show initiative. We have asked the college to make this possible. You can help with this by continuing to observe your 'community code' and, in particular, showing respect to those teachers who teach you when regular teachers are absent.

Continue to be 'good citizens' and best of luck in your future.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Palk Her Majesty's Inspector

6 June 2008



Dear Students

Inspection of Broadoak Mathematics and Computing College, Weston-super-Mare, BS23 4NP

On behalf of the inspection team, I would like to thank you for your positive contribution during the recent inspection. Your excellent manners towards visitors, the high quality work on display in the public areas of your school and your readiness for lessons conveyed well the high expectations the staff have for you. The inspection team concluded that Broadoak is a good school. The vast majority of you make good progress and your successes in examinations or on work-based courses bear testament to this. You are well prepared for moving on into Year 12.

Leaders and managers are exemplary in their support for your learning and personal development. They have some excellent systems for making sure that only the best will do and these have proved highly effective in transforming the school in the last four years. Your attitudes, behaviour and attendance are now good and you have really worked hard at this. The strong partnerships the college has established with other public services and your parents and carers have made a significant contribution to this improvement. Teaching is good and some of your teachers, as you recognise, too, are excellent. We have asked that leaders and managers continue to make sure all lessons are of good quality by ensuring that the work you are asked to do is well matched to your needs.

You have a good curriculum and one that is always adjusting to meet your future needs. From the many discussions we had with you, it is clear that you are keen to take on more responsibility. We concluded that you now need further opportunities to help in the development of the college, take on more responsibilities and show initiative. We have asked the college to make this possible. You can help with this by continuing to observe your 'community code' and, in particular, showing respect to those teachers who teach you when regular teachers are absent.

Continue to be 'good citizens' and best of luck in your future.

Yours sincerely

Jonathan Palk
Her Majesty's Inspector