

Brune Park Community College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116472
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	312329
Inspection dates	26–27 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Martyn Rhowbotham 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	1689
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Linda Bradshaw
Principal	Dr Ian Johnson
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2004
School address	Military Road Gosport PO12 3BU
Telephone number	02392 616000
Fax number	02392 616006

Age group	11–16
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Introduction

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

Description of the school

Brune Park Community College is a large school with specialist status in Performing Arts. It is an extended school with a full service programme for its nine cluster primary schools. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is below that found nationally. There are few students from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above the national average. These needs include moderate and specific learning and behavioural issues. The school has Arts College and Arts Council status, Sport England status and the Healthy Schools award.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Brune Park Community College provides a satisfactory education for its students. Senior leaders have a realistic view of the college's performance and their priority for the college is to achieve higher standards. The governors are very committed to this aim and fulfil their role as a critical friend well by, for example, scrutinising the college's performance through a number of detailed reports. The Principal has developed effective teamwork amongst his senior team and line management structures that have increased the accountability of middle leaders and teachers. There has been an appropriate focus on improving teaching and learning through improved monitoring and focused professional development. The 'Training Partnership' has helped recruit and retain new teachers well. Curriculum development has been effective and is resulting in improved achievement for students. As a result there is satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

Standards are high in the college's specialist subjects of performing arts, dance and music and the good practice evident in these subjects is beginning to be shared across the college to raise standards in other subjects. There are strong community links and the college works closely with other schools, including primaries in all aspects of the performing arts.

Students enter the college in Year 7 with standards below those found nationally. They make satisfactory progress in Years 7 to 9 so that standards achieved at the end of Year 9 in national tests are still below average. Data and evidence from students' work shows that they make satisfactory progress in Years 10 and 11 in relation to their prior attainment although most standards remain below average. Results in subjects related to the college's specialism of performing arts are consistently good and higher than in most other subjects. The college's detailed analysis of progress and standards this year, combined with interim results from completed modules, shows standards have begun to improve. This analysis identifies that students are making satisfactory progress.

Most students enjoy college and the additional activities such as clubs, trips, visits and theatre productions are especially popular. There have been improvements in attendance although it remains slightly below average. Students benefit from a good curriculum that is reviewed regularly so as to ensure it meets students' needs. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is satisfactory. Students' awareness of healthy lifestyles is good, many choose healthy options in the canteen and many cycle to college. The canteen is popular, often overcrowded and there are too few seats and tables for the number of students who want to use it. Although most students behave well and concentrate on their work a significant minority of parents/carers have rightly voiced concerns about some poor behaviour in lessons, especially in the lower years. There were also some concerns about bullying although students said that when bullying was reported it was dealt with effectively. Students know how to stay safe. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory and the pastoral support provided by tutors and heads of year is strong. All students participate in a comprehensive programme of well-planned work experience together with careers and business enterprise opportunities.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall although variable. The school knows this and that there is not yet enough good or better teaching. However, the work of the 'Training Partnership' is raising the quality of teaching and learning across the college. Teachers generally develop good relationships with students and benefit from the college's inclusive atmosphere.

Targets are beginning to be used more effectively to challenge students. Too often, marking does not provide students with the necessary detail about how to improve.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency of teaching to the level of the best so that students make better progress, behaviour is improved in lessons and standards rise at both key stages.
- Improve attendance by ensuring recent initiatives to reduce absence become well established.
- Ensure marking gives students better information about how to improve.

A small proportion of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Students enter the college in Year 7 with standards that are below average. In recent years students have made satisfactory progress during Key stage 3 even though currently in the national tests at the end of Year 9 standards remain below average. There is inconsistency from year to year. An analysis of current work and detailed data shows that standards in Year 9, especially in English and science, are higher than those reached last year.

The proportion of students gaining GCSE passes at higher grades was significantly below average and below the targets set by the school. Boys achieved better than girls. The achievement of most students with learning difficulties and disabilities was similar to that of other students. Results in information and communication technology (ICT) and Leisure and Tourism were especially low. Results in the school's specialist subjects of dance, drama, performing arts and music were good and higher than most other subjects.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

There has been much emphasis placed on the importance of good attendance and the current college year has seen some improvement. There are some successful new initiatives aimed to bring frequent absentees into school, although overall attendance remains slightly below average. There are contributions made to multicultural understanding and spiritual awareness, for example through work on Islamic art, drama and dance. There is a 'Thought for the Week', which encourages students to reflect on issues in the wider world. As a result students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is satisfactory. Some parents and students have concerns about unsatisfactory behaviour which, when not managed effectively, disrupts learning especially in classes for younger students. There are also some concerns about bullying, although most students are confident that when reported, it is dealt with efficiently. Students, especially the older ones, enjoy opportunities to take on responsibility as in the school council, although some of the initiatives such as training for peer mentoring are relatively recent. Students have a good understanding of the benefits of healthy eating and exercise, and welcome some of the changes in canteen provision, although it remains overcrowded. The school has a good range of work-related courses to prepare students for the world of work, although achievement in core academic skills is satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. More robust monitoring and the impact of the 'Training Partnership' have led to improvements and the identification of some good features in teaching, especially in the college's specialist subjects, which are now being shared across the school. The most successful teaching and learning is when teachers have high expectations of what students can achieve in terms of progress and standards. Teachers think carefully about ways to make learning interesting and challenging and they have clear views on the intended outcomes of the lesson. As a result, students are motivated to behave and achieve well and they enjoy their learning. In some lessons, the intended learning objectives are too vague, tasks are not challenging enough and teachers do not successfully manage a small minority of students' poor attitudes to learning. Marking of students' work is too variable. Too much does not contain enough detail to help students improve.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The quality of the curriculum and related activities is good. Thoughtful planning driven by the needs of students, securely underpins the curriculum. As a result the curriculum is contributing to improving standards. For example, provision is made for the improvement of literacy and numeracy skills for students whose prior attainment is well below average. The college's specialist status in the performing arts has had a positive impact on the curriculum, bringing it to life, with increased numbers of students studying music, dance and drama courses.

All Year 10 students access a range of academic GCSE and vocational courses with appropriate accreditation. Courses offered through links with local colleges provide a variety of successful learning opportunities whatever students' background and ability. As a result a significant proportion of students continue into further education.

There is a good variety of extra-curricular activities that enrich the students' educational experiences. These include sports teams, homework clubs, college visits, trips, in house events, the Duke of Edinburgh's Awards Scheme and curriculum theme days. For example, students participate in the Gosport Youth Dance event and other dance workshops leading to many students gaining the Junior Dance Leaders Awards. Many students are involved in preparations for theatrical productions such as the recent 'Richard III' and 'Much Ado About Nothing' and performances. The needs of gifted and talented students are met through additional courses such as AS levels and residential university links. All students participate in a comprehensive programme of work experience together with planned careers and business enterprise opportunities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Students benefit from well-established care, guidance and support systems. There are good procedures for the transition of students from primary schools. Guidance on options for Year 9 and careers advice are also good. Health and safety practices and risk assessments are in place. Child protection procedures are clear and understood by staff. Students with learning

difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well and intervention strategies enable lower attaining students to make satisfactory progress.

The system for tracking students' progress towards their academic targets in the core subjects helps underachieving students to be identified and supported through extra classes, mentoring and homework clubs. However, target setting in lessons although satisfactory is too variable and the scrutiny by teachers of pupil diaries is inconsistent. From discussion with students and from scrutiny of work, the extent to which students are well informed about their progress through helpful marking and on-going assessment is too limited.

There is strong pastoral support. Students feel safe and can turn to an adult in school if they have a problem. Parents are kept informed of their child's work through regular progress checks, reports and parents evenings. Overall, these structures are beginning to improve students' achievement, but have not made a significant impact on overall examination results to date.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

The Principal and the recently strengthened leadership team have a shared ethos of improving achievement by promoting an improved quality of learning throughout the school. Recent initiatives and a greater emphasis on monitoring all aspects of school life have strong potential.

Middle managers are supported well and line management is effective. Managers are now more accountable and aware of the need to set targets and monitor performance. For example observation of lessons is now having more impact because it is being linked with support and professional development. The college's sound self-evaluation enables it to identify changes that need to be made but is not yet sufficiently focused on identifying evidence of the impact of improvements it makes.

The college has a clear emphasis on meeting the needs of all of its students, through its specialist status and successful focus on curriculum development. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities and those with gifts and talents are supported appropriately but some students are still not fulfilling their full potential in examinations. Assessment data is now being used more effectively in some areas but this is inconsistent. Its value in ensuring that all students achieve their full potential has not yet been fully utilized.

Teamwork is a characteristic of the college. Its innovative and successful 'Training Partnership' with a number of universities is effective in supporting new teachers and teachers in training. It has been valuable in helping to recruit and retain teachers and so help resolve past staffing difficulties.

Financial and other resources are managed and deployed appropriately and use of the site by the community is increasing. The issue of the budget deficit has been addressed particularly well. Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development; they are very committed, well informed and provide good support for the leadership team and challenge performance when required.

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
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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?	3
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?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	3
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	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3
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?	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.

Annex A**Leadership and management**

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

24 April 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Brune Park Community College, Gosport, PO12 3BU

As you know, we recently inspected your school. You probably saw us around the school and we may have visited one of your lessons. Some of you came to meetings with us, where you were very good at telling us about your work and your progress. You also told us what you like about school and what you thought could be improved. You were polite and helpful during the inspection and were particularly good at giving us directions when we got lost! You all made an important contribution to the inspection and we would like to thank you very much for that.

The main strengths of the school are:

- The good range of courses you can take.
- The additional activities such as performing arts, dance, trips and clubs.
- The way it supports you.
- The good relationships you have with teachers and each other.

To improve further, the school needs to make sure:

- You do as well as you can in every subject.
- All lessons are as good as the best ones.
- That your work is marked more thoroughly so that you know how to make it better.

The headteacher and his staff have some really good plans to achieve these things. You can help a great deal by attending all of the time and behaving well.

Thank you again for all your help in the inspection and we wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Martyn Rhowbotham

Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools