

# Testwood Sports College

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	116499
<b>Local Authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	312343
<b>Inspection dates</b>	12–13 March 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Angela Corbett

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>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	990
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Tony Jerrett
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Ian Appleton
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 April 2005
<b>School address</b>	Testwood Lane Totton Southampton SO40 3ZW
<b>Telephone number</b>	02380 862146
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector, currently on secondment to Her Majesty's Inspectorate, and three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

This average sized secondary school achieved sports college status in 2004. Overall, the ratio of boys to girls is in line with national average but there is variation between year groups. The majority of students are White British. There are very few students who are learning English as an additional language. The percentage of students eligible for free school meals is below average. Although the percentage of students with statements of educational need is low, the overall percentage with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is in line with the national average, many of whom have behavioural difficulties or low levels of achievement at Key Stage 2. The college has achieved Healthy Schools Status and the Partnership Mark.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Testwood Sports College is an improving school that provides its students with a satisfactory standard of education. Specialist sports college status is making a major contribution to all aspects of college life, in particular, through the provision of a broad range of sporting and other opportunities available to its own students and those in its partner primary and secondary schools. Students' positive comments and high rates of participation show their enthusiasm for their college and all that it offers. One student said, 'Sports college status has given Testwood a good reputation in the local community'.

The headteacher provides good leadership. He is well supported by senior leaders and middle managers, and together they have a good understanding of the college's strengths and priorities for development provided by effective monitoring and self-evaluation. As a result, the whole college has a clear strategic direction that is successfully driving improvement. In particular, leaders at all levels have focused on raising students' standards and achievement and on improving the quality of teaching and learning. In 2007, this resulted in significant improvement in GCSE examination results compared with recent years, with the percentage of students achieving five or more A\* to C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics very close to the national average. Standards at both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 are now average and achievement is satisfactory.

Teaching and learning has improved and is now good although some inconsistencies remain both within and across subjects. The improvement in teaching and learning is yet to be fully evident in improved rates of progress and higher standards. The college is working to address inconsistencies in teaching and learning through rigorous monitoring of lessons, focused learning groups and professional development. The virtual learning environment (VLE) is being effectively used to support learning in and out of lessons, but the quality of constructive marking to support students' learning is too variable to enable all students to make consistently good progress. Much improved use of data is enabling the college to set challenging targets, track student progress and provide students with effective additional support. However, this is not always used effectively at classroom level to match work to different groups of students' needs, assess their learning and so accelerate progress.

The curriculum, significantly enhanced by sports college status, is carefully planned to meet the needs of all students. This is particularly the case at Key Stage 4 with broadened opportunities for vocational learning through courses both in college and with further education colleges and skill centre partnerships. The impressive academic and enrichment curriculum prepares students well for the world of work through events, activities, work experience, enterprise days, posts of responsibility and the development of core skills.

Students enjoy college, and their personal development is good. Students are very well informed about the college and express themselves confidently. Their attendance is now satisfactory. The college takes good care of students so they feel safe and understand how to get help, if needed. Most parents, of the few who responded to the inspection questionnaire, were supportive of the college. A minority of these did raise concerns over several issues, most notably focusing on behaviour; however, behaviour observed during inspection both in and out of lessons was satisfactory.

Other benefits of sports college status include heightened student awareness of healthy living through sport, improved resources for learning across the college and excellent involvement

with the local community. Furthermore, the range of leadership training in areas such as sport and young leader awards for students is a particular strength. This training contributes extensively to improving the self-esteem and confidence of students of all abilities. Family learning is a new feature of the college, with many parents now gaining qualifications in literacy and numeracy.

Since the previous inspection the college has effectively focused its efforts to address the issues raised, particularly in relation to teaching and learning and management capacity. These together with the more established impact of the sports college status now show that the college has good capacity for improvement.

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

- Sustain recent improvements in teaching and learning so that it is consistently good in all aspects and raises the standards and achievement of all students.
- Improve the quality and consistency of marking and embed the use of assessment data within lessons to increase the rate of progress of all students.

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 with attainment that is broadly average. The trend in standards by the end of Year 9 is slowly improving and in 2007 were average overall although below expectations, particularly for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Performance was best in English where more students achieved at the higher levels than in mathematics and science. Standards for Year 11 in 2007 improved on the previous year and the college achieved its targets. This represents satisfactory achievement overall for both boys and girls. Achievement in English at Key stage 4 exceeded expectations. These results reflect a legacy of poor teaching, particularly at Key Stage 3, and poor attendance which the college has worked hard to tackle.

Inspection evidence and the college's data for test and examination results in the current years 9 and 11 based on internal examination results and assessment, show that more challenging targets are likely to be in met in 2008. This improved progress indicates that achievement across the school is now satisfactory. For students with learning difficulties, improvements in the curriculum at both Key Stages 3 and 4 and more effective support, particularly for those with behavioural difficulties, have ensured that these students now make at least satisfactory progress.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Students clearly enjoy their time in college. Attendance levels are improving and are now in line with the national average, although there is still a small proportion of persistent absentees. Sports college status has also helped students to adopt healthy lifestyles through regular exercise. They are aware of what constitutes healthy eating, but do not always choose healthy options in the canteen. Students make an outstanding contribution to the college and local community. They learn leadership skills by supporting the New Forest Sports Partnership. Through this, they help local primary schools to improve their sports provision by coaching

younger students and helping them, in turn, to become sports leaders. They contribute willingly to local and national charities and are about to embark on a one mile run for Sports Aid. In college, prefects, school council representatives and leaders of lunchtime activities take their responsibilities very seriously. They play an important role in bringing about improvements in the college. An 'anti-bullying crew' provides excellent peer support for any students who report bullying. Students trust these peer counsellors, as well as teachers and support staff. Students benefit from good careers advice and develop relevant skills for their future economic well-being. A significant and increasing proportion of students continue into further education. These are all signs of students' good spiritual, moral and social development. Students are made very aware other cultures in a wide variety of ways, for example, through a partnership with a school in South Africa, talks and performances by overseas visitors and a multicultural dance festival. Although some students say that there are occasions when their learning is disrupted by the poor behaviour of others, behaviour is satisfactory overall. Students have responded positively to initiatives such as the college's 'back on track' behaviour support programme and as a result the number of temporary exclusions has reduced.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

In the most effective lessons there is good planning, pace and organisation and students clearly understand what they are expected to learn. A varied range of activities and teaching methods ensures that students are fully involved and encouraged to evaluate what they have learned. The most effective teachers use excellent questioning to stimulate students' thinking and are able to elicit perceptive responses without losing the learning momentum. In less effective lessons teachers' low expectations undermine students' progress because data is not used effectively to plan different learning opportunities to meet the needs and so accelerate the progress of all learners. Procedures for monitoring students' progress through half-termly key assessments are secure and contribute to raising student aspirations. The key assessments do provide students with information on how to improve, however, this is not always consistently and clearly linked with individual items of students' work through teacher's marking. In the lessons seen during inspection, students' attitudes to learning were good and behaviour was satisfactory. Relationships between the teacher and students and students themselves are also good.

The college is having a positive impact upon the quality of teaching and standards by providing good opportunities for sharing good practice and in training for teachers.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of the curriculum and related activities is good and meets statutory requirements. Thoughtful planning driven by the needs of the students, securely underpins the curriculum. For example, provision is made for the development of literacy and numeracy skills for students whose prior attainment is well below average. The college's specialist status in sport has had a positive impact on the curriculum. It has enabled the physical education (PE) department to increase the number of courses and sporting activities offered to students and to establish links with other subjects, including mathematics. All Year 10 and 11 students can access a range of academic and vocational courses with appropriate accreditation and undertake leadership

accredited courses in PE. Courses offered through college and skill centre partnerships are both flexible and extensive and provide a variety of learning opportunities whatever students' background and ability. The range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities is a strength of the college. The impressive array of clubs, college visits, international links and trips, in-house events and curriculum days meets most students' needs and interests. For example, a study of 'the science of the seas' at Southampton University Oceanography Centre effectively met the needs of some gifted and talented students. Almost half of the college participates in out-of-hours sporting activities and a significant number of students contribute to the annual drama production.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Students benefit from good care, guidance and support. Health and safety routines and risk assessments are in place. Child protection procedures are clear and understood by all staff. Students with learning difficulties and disabilities are very well supported. In particular, there is very effective support for those with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Students understand the behaviour policy well and many improve their attitudes to work as a result. Excellent links with outside agencies ensure that extra advice and guidance are available when needed. The college has successfully focused on improving students' attendance this year. A comprehensive programme of incentives and rewards has resulted in significantly better attendance and a reduction in the number of persistent absentees. There is a rigorous system for tracking students' academic progress. This ensures that any underachieving students are quickly identified and a range of strategies to support them put in place. These include individual mentoring by year tutors and senior staff, 'super learning days' at the local college to boost the learning of key skills, and structured revision programmes. Good use is made of the virtual learning environment to support and/or supplement homework arrangements though there is little evidence of constructive marking, on-going assessment and supportive annotation of written work on a regular basis. Parents are kept fully informed of their children's work through regular progress checks. These initiatives are beginning to improve students' achievement, particularly at Key Stage 4.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher is the driving force behind the improvements made since the last inspection. Supported by the senior leadership team, he has effectively developed the capacity of leadership and management in the college and put in place a clear vision for improvement that is shared by all. Regular and rigorous self-evaluation involves managers at all levels, and they are held accountable for their performance. This has provided good understanding of the college's strengths and priorities for development and a much-sharpened and strategic approach to securing improvement across the college. Teaching and learning is monitored well and its overall quality has improved, though some inconsistencies remain. Teachers, supported by senior managers, have formed focused learning groups that are leading professional development. This year the college is more effectively using performance data to set challenging targets that raise both students' and teachers' aspirations. Although the impact of this has brought about some rapid improvement in students' progress, systems are not yet fully embedded into all teachers' classroom practice.

Since the last inspection, the governing body has strengthened and developed. Governors are very knowledgeable about the college through robust reporting cycles and regular visits. As a result, they provide outstanding support and challenge to managers at all levels in the drive for improvement. Links with sports groups, outside agencies, other educational institutions and the community are very strong and well managed. They significantly enhance opportunities for the benefit of all learners. In the context of satisfactory student achievement, the college provides satisfactory value for money.



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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
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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	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
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?	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	3
The behaviour of learners	3
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
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?	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
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	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	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	3
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

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

27 March 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Testwood Sports College, Southampton, SO40 3ZW

On behalf of your inspectors, I would like to let you know that we enjoyed the time we spent with you on our recent visit. We would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome and for sharing your views with us in meetings, lessons and around the college. We think that Testwood is an improving college that is providing you with a satisfactory education and many benefits from sports college status.

We hope that you will take the time to read the full report but I have highlighted the key points below.

- You understand and make the most of the benefits additional resources and additional opportunities as a result of sports college status.
- The progress you make in college is satisfactory and improving and as a result your examination results have risen.
- Teaching, though good overall, is not consistent in every lesson.
- Good systems are in place to track your progress and you are offered very good help and support when it is needed.
- Your behaviour is satisfactory both in and out of lessons.
- Your level of attendance at college has improved and is now satisfactory, although a small number of you are still absent too often.
- Your personal development is good and you show you care for others for example through your charity work and the 'ABC' group.
- You make the most of the wide range of activities, events and trips that are provided to help you develop both personally and academically.

To improve things further, we have asked the college to.

- Sustain recent improvements in teaching and learning so that it is consistently good in all aspects and raises the standards and achievement for all of you.
- Improve the consistency and quality of marking and make better use of assessment data within your lessons so that your rate of progress is increased.

You can help by attending college, focusing on your learning both in and out of lessons and continuing to make the most of the wide variety of opportunities offered.

With best wishes

Angela Corbett

Lead Inspector