

The Beauchamp College

Inspection report - amended

Unique Reference Number	120265
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	313572
Inspection date	18 March 2008
Reporting inspector	Kevin Sheldrick 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	14–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	1003
6th form	1077
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Glynn Richerby
Headteacher	Richard Parker
Date of previous school inspection	17 November 2003
School address	Ridge Way Oadby Leicester LE2 5TP
Telephone number	01162 729100
Fax number	01162 715454

Age group	14-18
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Amended Report Addendum

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two Additional Inspectors. The inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: the achievement and standards of students, the quality of teaching and learning, and the effectiveness of leadership and management. Evidence was gathered from published assessment data, the school's own records, parents' questionnaires, lesson observations, and interviews with staff, pupils and governors. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but the inspectors found no evidence to suggest that most of the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

This well above average size college takes students largely from a relatively affluent area on the outskirts of Leicester. Students come from a range of backgrounds: 45% are White British, a third Indian Asian, about 10% Asian British and the rest come from a range of ethnic backgrounds. About 40% have a first language other than English, although only a few students are at the early stages of learning English. The college has about a third of the national average proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, the proportion of students with a statement of special educational need is about average. The college gained technology specialist status in 1996 and gained a second specialism in vocational education in 2006.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

The leadership of the college is exceptional in that it has united all, around a shared vision that effectively promotes student and staff involvement in all aspects of the life of the college. High standards, maintained over a long period, have resulted in the vast majority of parents being supportive. Students enter the college with standards well above average and they leave with standards that are also well above average. Students make good progress. The college does particularly well in ensuring that well above average numbers of students attain five A* to C GCSE qualifications including English and mathematics. This well deserved reputation for academic success does not mean that lower attaining students are not also a priority. Effective support ensures students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress, and this contributes to well above average numbers of students gaining qualifications. The college is taking effective steps to ensure students who need additional help to learn English make the same good progress as other students. Achievement and standards are consistent across all subjects. The curriculum is outstanding because it has evolved to become very broad, well balanced and is tailored to meet the needs of students. The college has used its long-standing technology status and its more recent vocational specialism very well to support these developments. There is extensive and appropriately targeted use of information, communication technology. Large majority of students are using a web-based learning environment so they can learn at any time. Effective interventions are plugging gaps in students' literacy. There are exceptional arrangements to encourage students to aim higher through links with top public schools and a number of universities. The college is also actively promoting more provision for the whole ability range through expanded vocational provision. Students also benefit greatly through access to a wide range of extra-curricular activities and extended hours provision that includes a 'state of the art' fitness centre.

Teaching and learning are good in the main college. The college takes great care to involve students and this is reflected strongly in its self-review. This states that students consider teaching to be good. This is consistent with observations made by inspectors and largely explains the good progress students make. Relationships between staff and students are very good. Students appreciate the help they receive and that teachers take feedback from students seriously. Inspectors agree with the college's view that, although assessment is used well by departments, there are still aspects to be developed. A minority of teaching is less effective because assessment information is not used sufficiently to match work to the full ability range in classes.

The college's self evaluation generally identifies the right priorities although it relies too much on data that does not accurately identify the attainment of students when they enter the college. That said, targets are generally used well and the college does exceptionally well in involving all members of the college community in monitoring. There is a great deal of professional development, which encourages reflection on practice, much of which is leading to improvement. Leadership and management are good throughout the college and, as a result, outcomes are consistent across departments. The college has been particularly effective in developing middle leaders. For instance, a subject co-ordinator was able to talk convincingly about how good teaching leads to above average levels of achievement. Governance is enhanced by the presence of student governors, who once again ensures the student voice is to the fore. The use of associate staff is exceptional with all regarded as equal members of the college community. The budget is very astutely managed so that the quality of accommodation has

improved and there are ample additional staff to support learners when difficulties are experienced.

Care, support and guidance are good because students have access to a very wide range of support, including student mentors. The college meets all current safeguarding and child protection requirements. Students' progress towards targets is monitored and interventions are made if needed. The new learning centre provides more individual support where this is needed, and is a contributory factor to the almost complete absence of exclusions.

Personal development and well-being are good with some outstanding features. In addition to students' considerable involvement in running the college, they undertake large amounts of voluntary work. As a result, students make an outstandingly positive contribution to the community. Regular celebration of different faiths and strong international links ensure students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is impressive. The college's self-evaluation and comments made by students confirm that there are a small number of occasions when negative attitudes interfere with learning, although behaviour is good around college and in lessons overall. Students eat healthily and take exercise seriously, with a large number accessing the fitness centre. Students report that they enjoy college and this contributes to their good attendance. The college has a good track record of improvement and the right priorities are identified, pointing to a good capacity to improve.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 1

This is a very large, highly popular, open access, sixth form with about a third of students entering from other schools. Standards are above average and the vast majority of students achieve very well. Despite the college's best efforts, a small minority opt for academic courses that are not always well matched to students' needs, and do not allow them to progress as well as they could. Students' personal development is outstanding in the sixth form. The key reasons for this are the emphasis given to students' active involvement in running the college and the effective promotion of independent learning. Students are thoughtful and are concerned about others, for instance, with the support of staff they are devising strategies to involve less motivated students. Teaching is outstanding in the sixth form because teachers actively involve students in their own learning. Inspectors saw many examples of students taking the lead in sixth form lessons. Teaching groups often contain a wide ability range but this works well because teachers make clear what is needed to achieve different grades. Students are highly motivated and take a lot of responsibility for achieving their challenging targets by working independently.

The curriculum is outstanding because a very wide range of opportunities is available to meet the needs of the full ability range, and there are some almost unique aspects. The college is able to offer a very wide range of A and AS level courses and a growing number of vocational options. The vast majority of students are involved in voluntary activity in the college and the community. The college actively promotes excellence through the support it provides to students with the potential to go to highly reputable universities. Students are actively involved in lesson observations and research projects, some with an international dimension. Care, support and guidance are good. Students receive excellent support when applying to university. The college leadership is working very hard to ensure all students receive consistent levels of support, including improved access to careers advice. The leadership and management of the sixth form are very effective, and the capacity for further improvement is outstanding.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve the consistency of teaching so that all lessons are as good as the best.
- When evaluating the work of the college use data that more accurately measures the attainment of students entering the college.

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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	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	2	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	1	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	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	2	
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	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?	1	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	2

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?	2	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	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

19 March 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Beauchamp College, Oadby, Leicestershire, LE2 5TP

Thank you for your considerable help in this inspection. Your input was essential in enabling us to reach our judgements. I would particularly like to thank those students we interviewed for their very perceptive comments. We think your ability to reflect on your education is a tribute to the college's success in developing your critical thinking. We did not include some of what you said to us in the report because it is clear that the college already has plans in place to address some of the issues you raised. The college really does listen to your views well.

A major and almost unique strength is the extent to which you are involved in helping to run the college. This makes for very committed staff and students and contributes a lot to your personal development. We agreed with your view that teaching is good in Years 10 and 11. We thought it was even better in the sixth form. The curriculum you experience is particularly impressive. There are not many schools or colleges where students undertake research into effective learning or have so many opportunities to make voluntary contributions. Everyone knows about the college's deserved reputation for high standards, but we were delighted by the tremendous amount the college does to ensure all students achieve well.

We are suggesting that the college could improve further by ensuring all lessons are as good as the best and by basing its self-evaluation on data that more accurately measures the attainment of the students entering the college. The college is improving its guidance so that you will be even more aware of the courses that will allow you to achieve most in the sixth form. You can help by thinking carefully about recommendations the college makes and discussing this with your parent or carer.

I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Sheldrick HMI Lead inspector

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I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Sheldrick HMI
Lead inspector