

Immanuel College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	132219
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	315971
Inspection dates	8–9 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Graham Haney

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	1052
6th form	85
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs D Chambers
Headteacher	Mrs J Tiller
Date of previous school inspection	5 June 2006
School address	Leeds Road Idle Bradford West Yorkshire BD10 9AQ
Telephone number	01274 425900
Fax number	01274 659848

Age group	11-18
Inspection dates	8–9 July 2008
Inspection number	315971

© 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 four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Immanuel College is larger than average. It is located in a moderately affluent area of Bradford, although over half its students are from adjacent areas with higher than average levels of social deprivation. The proportions of students eligible for free college meals and those with a statement of special educational needs are average. A higher than average proportion of students has learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The number of students from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language are much lower than normally found. The sixth form provision is organised as part of a collaborative of six colleges.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good college that is ensuring that its students achieve well. The college has rapidly improved under the inspirational leadership of its headteacher. The effective learning culture created through its strong Christian values has been a key element to the college's improvement. Students know that they are important and that staff care about them. A calm and purposeful atmosphere pervades the college.

Students enjoy their time in college and achieve well in relation to their below average standards on entry to the college. Leaders have implemented a number of initiatives that have impacted positively on students' progress. Year 11 students are now studying a more relevant range of subjects; as a result standards have continued to rise and are now broadly average. Tracking procedures are extremely robust and indicate a significant increase in results for 2008. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities also make good progress.

The behaviour of students is good, contributing to the good quality of learning now being achieved. Students say they feel safe from threats of bullying and harassment and there is always an adult they can turn to if necessary. The college has worked assiduously to improve the attendance of students. However, the effects of small groups of mainly older students mean that whilst attendance is slowly improving, it remains below the college's targets. It is a credit to the college that they continue to work hard with this group of persistent non-attenders to develop their personal skills and almost all of them are predicted to leave with some qualifications. The college is effectively using a range of adult literacy and numeracy programmes to ensure that students develop well the skills needed for later life.

A rigorous programme of staff development has resulted in much greater consistency in teaching. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and this is contributing to the rising standards. The curriculum offered to students is satisfactory. There have been significant improvements made to it over recent years to remove weaknesses that have had a negative effect on achievement and behaviour. However, courses in Key Stage 4 have not prepared students fully for further study or linked closely enough to provision offered in the sixth form. Students are provided with good care, support and guidance. They are set very challenging targets and these are regularly monitored. Students not making enough progress are identified and tailored support programmes implemented. This is having a significant effect on raising achievement.

Leadership and management are good. The close and effective working of the senior leaders, combined with the support of middle leaders, has been the driving force behind the considerable improvement the college has achieved since the last inspection. Recent appointments have strengthened subject management in key areas. The college makes good use of its rigorous self-review findings to take the appropriate actions to improve students' experiences. These improvements have been secured within a very tight budget. The college provides good value for money and has a good capacity for further improvement, as demonstrated by the continued improving standards.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 3

In the sixth form, standards have improved significantly in the past two years, but are still below the national average. The college has identified the subjects where progress has been slow and

taken action to improve learning. In consequence, students' results in their modular examinations are rising and their overall achievement is satisfactory although not yet as strong as in the main college. More rigorous entry requirements are also helping to ensure that course completion rates in Year 12 are rising. Some students have entered onto courses without the independent learning skills they need to do well. This has been a contributory factor to them making slower progress during Year 12. Although this is now improving due to a greater emphasis on developing independence within the sixth form curriculum, it is too early to bear fruit. As students develop their skills, progress improves in Year 13. During the inspection most Year 12 students were involved in work experience programmes and Year 13 students had finished their courses, so very few sixth form students were in college. Consequently, there was insufficient evidence to make judgments in some aspects of the college's provision and outcomes. The curriculum in the sixth form is satisfactory. Whilst there is a narrow range of courses taught on the college site, this is widening as the sixth form grows in numbers. The college has increased the options available to students by being part of a collaborative of other local learning providers. This provides breadth to the provision and is aiding the further development of the curriculum. However, it does not fully meet the needs of all students presently and not all take up these external options. Leadership and management in the sixth form are satisfactory. Many of the good strategies for raising standards, although similar to those in the main college, have only recently been introduced in the sixth form and have not yet had time to demonstrate full impact on students' achievement.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve attendance so that at the very least it meets agreed targets.
- Ensure sixth form students achieve as well as those in the main college.
- Improve the curriculum in the main school and the sixth form to fully meet the needs of all students and improve their independent learning skills.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 3

The college has continued to make considerable progress in raising the standards attained by students at age 16. Improvements in teaching and a wider range of vocational courses are both contributing to the students' greater success. In 2007 the proportion of students gaining five or more A* to C grades at GCSE was in line with the national average. This was a significant improvement on the previous two years. The proportion of students gaining five or more A* to C GCSE equivalent grades including English and mathematics was below the national average. However, many students are gaining success in alternative qualifications, such as adult literacy and numeracy tests. These are helping students develop skills essential for their economic well-being. Consequently, results in 2007 were above the national average in this measure. Students' work and examination successes already attained this year indicate that there is likely to be a significant increase in the 2008 results, with very challenging targets likely to be exceeded. This is verified by the college's own extremely rigorous tracking information. Current standards are broadly average and show that students have overcome a legacy of previous underachievement and are now making good progress in Key Stage 4.

Results in the 2007 national tests at the end of Key Stage 3 were below average. In particular students did not make sufficient progress in English. Consequently, the college revised its curriculum and improved the quality of teaching. As a result, indications are that students are

meeting very challenging targets, current standards are broadly average and students are achieving well.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: Insufficient Evidence

The college promotes a very strong, caring environment that ensures that students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural awareness is good. There is a strong mutual respect exemplified by the way students relate well to each other and to adults. Students are polite, well behaved around the college and in lessons. Students say they are encouraged to make healthy choices in the college canteen. The college council has been influential in ensuring a good range of healthy options are available. Due to timetable restrictions students are not participating in as much physical activity as they might. However, they do participate in a range of activities available after college. Students enjoy their time at college and are very keen to emphasise how much the college has improved over the past few years. There are many examples of students making very good contributions to the wider community, such as raising a considerable amount of money to equip a college library in Gambia. Despite a great deal of effort by the college, attendance remains below targets set. Good access to information and communication technology (ICT) and the enterprise work undertaken in Year 9 means that students are gaining good skills to ensure their future economic well-being.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: Insufficient Evidence

Inspection evidence indicates that the quality of teaching and learning has improved, especially in terms of the rising proportion of good lessons. There is consistency in teachers' planning and the way in which they manage behaviour ensures a good pace of learning in most lessons. Whilst a small number of inadequate lessons were observed, the college is well aware of where improvement is needed. The best lessons are based on positive relationships and a strong rapport between students and the teacher. This in turn leads to enthusiastic responses, substantial time on task, and good learning by the students. The well pitched variety of activities offer good opportunities for collaborative work and discussion consolidates students' grasp of new material. Less successful lessons provide limited opportunities for independent learning and the most able students are not consistently challenged. In these lessons too often students are required to sit quietly listening for a long time, and consequently lose enthusiasm and focus, resulting occasionally in some low-level disruption. However, well focused training, organised as a result of rigorous monitoring, is ensuring that teachers understand how to make lessons more challenging.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 3

A range of vocational courses are providing more accessible, practical work for students. These are having a strong impact on students' success in examinations at Key Stage 4. A variety of

different 'pathways' including some highly individual combinations have enabled some of the least engaged students to gain qualifications which significantly increase their chances of future success. However, at present the Key Stage 4 curricular programmes are not effectively linked to the opportunities to continue with further study in the sixth form. An increased emphasis on literacy and numeracy has quickly improved basic skills in Year 7 and at Key Stage 4. The college is now seeking to develop the Key Stage 3 curriculum to prepare students for the challenges in later years. There are good opportunities to develop personal skills and interests through religious education, personal, social, health and citizenship programmes, and wider charitable work. Work experience programmes and enterprise activities contribute effectively to students' economic well-being.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: Insufficient Evidence

Most students are meeting or exceeding very challenging academic targets. The various review points in the year ensure students and parents are well aware of targets and what students need to do to improve. Arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements. Plans are in place to ensure equality of sex, race and disability, although these plans could do more to reflect the specific nature of the college community. The system of support from student liaison officers, learning mentors, chaplaincy staff, and others means that students receive an excellent level of support for their needs. Persistent non-attenders are given good support through the work of learning mentors and teaching staff. This is ensuring that most of these students complete some accredited courses. Good arrangements for transition from primary school ensure Year 7 students quickly settle into their new surroundings. More rigorous criteria for entry onto sixth form courses are improving, as is the advice to Year 11 students' making choices for further study.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Grade for sixth form: 3

The headteacher has a clear vision for the future of the college that embodies a determination to ensure that every student is fully equipped for a successful future. Her aims are fully supported by other members of the senior leadership team, by middle leaders and by individual teachers who are equally keen to do their best for students. The college is generally accurate in its good self-evaluation and takes appropriate actions to ensure improvement. Effective monitoring systems are established, which have successfully ensured consistency across the college, but occasionally insufficient account is taken of students' progress in lessons when judging the outcomes of teaching and learning. The valuable system of faculty review adds to the college's detailed knowledge of itself.

The college adopts particularly challenging targets for individual students and these are successfully used to raise the expectations of both staff and students about what is achievable. The result is that standards are rising. This 'track record' of improvement indicates that the college is well placed to improve further. Governance is strong. Governors are well informed, supportive and provide a good level of challenge for the leadership team, notably on standards and achievement.

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.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall	16-19
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------	-------

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	3
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	IE 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	4	
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	IE ²
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	3
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	IE 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.

² IE - denotes that insufficient evidence was available to inspectors for a judgement to be made.

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	3
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	2	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	3
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

Inspection of Immanuel College, Bradford, BD10 9AQ

Thank you for the way you welcomed us into your college during the recent inspection. We were impressed by the way you conducted yourselves. We were grateful for your openness about the way your college has improved. Your views, and those of your parents who filled in a questionnaire, were very useful in informing our discussions and reaching our judgements.

We feel that Immanuel College has continued to make rapid improvements and now provides a good standard of education. We agree with you that your behaviour has improved and is now helping you learn better in lessons. However, too many of you do not attend regularly and this is affecting your work. In the sixth form some of you are not fully prepared for the different way of working when you start Year 12. There are many adults in the college who are working hard to provide you with support when you need it. You say that you value this support, feel safe and know who to turn to if you have a problem. You are also playing your part by thinking about the needs of others and being polite and courteous.

We found that Immanuel College could be improved in the following ways, by making sure:

- more of you regularly attend college
- those of you in the sixth form progress as well as those in the main college
- the curriculum in Years 10 and 11 as well as the sixth form fully meet your needs and improve your independent learning skills.

You can help by coming to college regularly, working hard and continuing to talk to your teachers and others about what can be done better.