

Wentworth Tutorial College

Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	302/6109
Unique Reference Number	131288
Inspection number	322046
Inspection dates	5–6 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Judith Charlesworth

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended.

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

Wentworth Tutorial College provides General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE), General Certificate of Education at Advanced Subsidiary Level (AS Level) and Advanced Level (A2 level) courses. There are currently 90 boys and girls on roll, of whom five are of compulsory school age. Most of the remainder are aged 16-19, although the college accepts occasional students who are older than this. All students of compulsory school age attend full-time, and those over this age attend as needed for the courses they follow. For the majority, this is full-time. The college was founded in 1989 and moved to its current premises in 1993. It occupies three adjoining converted private houses, situated on the busy, arterial North Circular Road in Hendon, North West London. Students come from a wide range of ethnic, social and cultural backgrounds. The college was last inspected in March 2005.

Wentworth Tutorial College aims to 'develop students' potential and self-confidence' and prepare them for higher education. It does this by providing 'an environment which is quite different from the traditional school'. Students are given 'opportunities to learn, free from strict rules and regulations' and follow programmes that are 'tailored to meet their individual needs'.

Evaluation of the school

The college provides good quality education and has made satisfactory improvements since the last inspection. The curriculum and teaching are good, and students make good progress. The college makes satisfactory provision for the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, although aspects of this area, such as provision for students' future economic well-being, are good. However, the college has not developed a number of policies and practices relating to the health, safety and welfare of the students and this aspect of its work is inadequate. A number of regulations are not met.

Quality of education

The quality of education is good. As a result, students make good progress and achieve well in their examinations, thereby fulfilling the college's key aim. The inspection questionnaires show that parents and students are pleased with the school's results. Results in both GCSE and AS/A level results are good in all subjects

including English and mathematics. For example, the 2008 A level results show an overall pass rate of 96% and GCSE results for art and design, business studies, physics and religious education all had 100% A* - B grades. This is a good achievement for many of the students who often come to Wentworth College with a history of underachievement in their previous schools.

The curriculum is good. It is examination-based and supported by suitable documentation and resources. The curriculum is flexible and allows each individual to take the subjects that meet their personal requirements. Students are also taught study skills which help them organise their work. These make a good contribution to their achievement.

The curriculum meets all but two regulations. Students below the age of 16 do not have the opportunity for physical or sporting activity, as required. This was a weakness noted in the last inspection, since when links with a local sports centre were established and then discontinued. Careers education focuses on academic choice for further and higher education, but gives insufficient attention to the few students who may not continue in education when they leave the college.

The personal development of students under 16 years is now supported effectively through a distinct personal, social and health education (PSHE) course which includes elements of citizenship education. This is a good improvement. London's cultural facilities, such as museums and theatres, are used well to supplement and enhance the curriculum. Annual educational visits are made to places such as India, Cuba and China and make an excellent contribution to students' personal and academic development.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good, and a significant amount of teaching is outstanding. The college normally has very few students with learning difficulties or disabilities, but teaching deals very effectively with all individuals' learning needs. Several students with specific difficulties, such as dyslexia, use laptop computers as a matter of course. The college provides specialist support for any students at an early stage of learning English. Tutors know their students very well and this enables them to meet the needs of each individual so that all make good progress. The subject knowledge of most staff is outstanding. In the most effective lessons, the use of excellent questioning determines what students know and understand, identifies and fills gaps, and extends students' understanding so that they learn rapidly. Not all teachers write lesson plans, but they are generally very clear about what they want pupils to learn. However, a characteristic of less effective lessons is a lack of preparation and clarity about what students should learn.

The pace of lessons is usually fast and demanding. Activities tend to be theoretically-based, often due to lack of space for practical or group activities. At times, lessons are teacher-directed for long periods of time. In these instances, students can appear 'flat' although they are always compliant and well-behaved. There are

adequate resources of reasonable quality. The school is investing in computer-linked whiteboards, but these are not always used to full advantage.

There is little guidance for staff on the college's expectations for assessment, and consequently it is variable. Informal assessment for learning in most lessons is outstanding, but marking does not always provide sufficient guidance. More formal assessment of learning generally takes place in each subject at the end of each half term, and this process is used to inform staff and students on what students need to do to pass their examinations with good grades.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Students' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall with some good elements. Many students enter the college with low feelings of self-worth. The relaxed atmosphere, good relationships, and good quality educational provision help them to achieve academic success. Their self-esteem and self-confidence develop very effectively as a result. The students' behaviour and attitudes to work are good, and often outstanding. They enjoy college, and the good presentation of their work and progress illustrate their commitment to doing well. Students are self-motivated, for example, usually taking notes and making appropriate contributions without being asked. Most are well prepared for the next stage of their education and future working life.

Attendance is satisfactory. Although the college follows up each individual's absence immediately, it does not analyse overall attendance in order to improve either individuals' or attendance as a whole. There are occasions, too, when the students miss the start of lessons, which has an adverse effect on their learning. The curriculum and general ethos of the school support students' moral and cultural development effectively. The curriculum ensures that students have a good understanding of public institutions and services in England which is an improvement since the last inspection.

Students and staff are drawn from the local multi-cultural population. Everyone is equally respected and diversity is valued. Friendships are strong across different ethnic groups. This promotes tolerance and harmony between different cultural traditions effectively. However, although satisfactory, the students' contribution to the local and wider community is limited. This is because the college does not specifically address this aspect of the students' development.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

The provision for safeguarding the health, safety and welfare of the students is inadequate. A number of regulations are not met and there has been insufficient improvement in this standard since the last inspection. College staff certainly show concern and consideration for students' welfare. This is demonstrated in positive relationships, a good working atmosphere and students' achievement. Students feel

safe and say that bullying and discrimination are not issues at the college. However, the college does not do enough to actively promote students' healthy life-styles, for example by the provision of opportunities for sport or physical activity, or by actively discouraging smoking and encouraging healthy eating. This is noted on two thirds of the students' inspection questionnaire returns.

The welfare, health and safety of the students are not secured by suitable, systematic policies and procedures. There is insufficient clarity about who is responsible for various aspects of management, for example staff recruitment, health and safety, and fire prevention. Consequently, routine practices to monitor and assure the effective implementation of policies are not carried out. Significant issues, such as the provision of training for child protection, first aid and fire prevention have consequently been missed. Several required policies have not been written, such as those to safeguard students and provide guidance for behaviour management and sanctions. Others, for example, the bullying and health and safety policies have been written, but without regard to recommended guidance. There is no three year plan to show how the college will increase access for students with disabilities. Although fire safety was judged satisfactory in an external audit in June 2006, this has not since been re-visited. Too few risk assessments are made of the premises, curriculum activities and visits, and those that are made are often too limited to safeguard students adequately.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

All adults are appropriately checked with the Criminal Records Bureau for their suitability to work with young people. The school maintains a single central register of staff checks as required, although there are a small number of omissions which are currently being addressed. A suitable system for checking and recording adults' required credentials has not been established, which is a shortcoming. Two regulations for this area are not met.

School's premises and accommodation

The college's premises have been adapted and extended as it has grown. The furniture and decoration are satisfactory, and the accommodation is generally safe and adequate for its purpose. The rooms are variable in size. The majority are small which limits the scope of some practical subjects and teaching styles. However, the college is sensitive to this and adapts group sizes and the timetable accordingly. Consequently, students learn well in most lessons. Facilities for art and design are good, and one large classroom in which history and politics are usually taught provides a particularly enriching environment. The students have a common room in which a small, staffed kitchen and shop are situated. A garden extends across the back of the properties which is freely accessible to the students. The school has now made appropriate arrangements for any student who falls ill, which is an improvement since the last inspection.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

The college has a prospectus and website which provide most of the information required. Both are due to be updated this year to better reflect the college's current provision. A loose-leaf insert in the prospectus ensures that all regulations for the provision of information to parents and interested parties are met. Reports on students' progress are brief, but form the basis of discussion for the twice-yearly parents' meetings. Staff also meet parents on other occasions, as requested. Inspection questionnaires show that parents are overwhelmingly happy with the information they receive about the students' progress, and feel comfortable about approaching the college at any time.

Procedures for handling complaints

The policy and procedures for handling complaints meet all regulations.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended ("the Regulations"), with the exception of those listed below (*delete if not applicable*)

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the curriculum (standard 1) and must:

- provide pupils of compulsory school age experience in the physical area of learning (paragraph 1(2)(a)(ii))
- Provide appropriate careers guidance for pupils of compulsory school age (paragraph 1(2)(g)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety (standard 3) and must:

- prepare and implement a written policy to prevent bullying which has regard to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) guidance *Bullying: don't suffer in silence* (DCSF 0064/2000) (paragraph 3(2)(a))
- prepare and implement written policies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at the school in compliance with DCSF guidance *Safeguarding children and safer recruitment in education* (2007) (paragraph 3(2)(b))

- prepare and implement a written policy relating to the health and safety of children on activities outside the school which has regard to DCSF guidance *Health and safety of children on educational visits* (reference HSPV2) (paragraph 3(2)(c))
- prepare and implement a written policy to promote good behaviour amongst pupils which sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupils misbehaving (paragraph 3(2)(d))
- have regard to the DCSF guidance *Health and safety: responsibilities and powers* (DCSF 0803/2001) (paragraph 3(4))
- maintain a satisfactory level of fire safety, identified by its risk assessment under the Fire Precautions (Workplace) Regulations 1997, the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 and by any report from the Fire Authority (paragraph 3(5)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of suitability of proprietor and staff (standard 4) and must:

- prior to the confirmation of the appointment of all staff, make appropriate checks to confirm their identity, medical fitness, right to work in the United Kingdom, previous employment history, character references and, where appropriate, qualifications and professional references, and take this information into account in determining whether their appointment will be confirmed (paragraph 4(2)(a))
- keep a register which shows, in relation to each member of staff in post on or after 1 August 2007, the checks made (and certificates obtained where relevant) of: his/her identity; qualifications (where required); whether an enhanced CRB was obtained, or where appropriate, that he/she is not working in contravention of section 142 of the Education Act 2002 (List 99); the right to work in the UK and, where relevant for those who have lived outside the UK, suitability to work in a school. The register must include the date on which each such check was completed or the certificate obtained (paragraph 4C(2 and 3)).

In order to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2002 as amended (DDA) the school should devise a three-year accessibility plan.

Inspection Judgement Recording Form

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils		✓		
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development			✓	
The behaviour of pupils		✓		

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils				✓
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School details

Name of school	Wentworth Tutorial College		
DCSF number	3026109		
Unique reference number	131288		
Type of school	Tutorial		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1989		
Age range of pupils	15-19		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 55	Girls: 15	Total: 70
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 12	Girls: 8	Total: 20
Annual fees (day pupils)	£ 2450 - £ 11400		
Address of school	6-10 Brentmead Place London NW11 9LH		
Telephone number	020 8458 8524/5		
Fax number	020 8209 1288		
Email address	enquiries@wentworthcollege.co.uk		
Headteacher	Mr Alan Davies		
Proprietor	Mr Alan Davies		
Reporting inspector	Judith Charlesworth		
Dates of inspection	5–6 November 2008		