

Cranbourne Business and Enterprise College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	116432
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	326393
Inspection dates	6–7 November 2008
Reporting inspector	Mary Massey HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of college	Comprehensive
College category	Community
Age range of students	11–16
Gender of students	Mixed
Number on roll	
College (total)	834
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	Mrs Wendy Reakes
Headteacher	Mrs Betty Elkins
Date of previous college inspection	5–6 October 2005
College address	Wessex Close Basingstoke RG21 3NP
Telephone number	01256 868600
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and two additional inspectors. The inspectors visited sixteen lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, students and a representative from the local authority. They observed the college's work, and looked at documents including 154 parental and 65 staff questionnaires.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the college's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- improvements in students' attainment and progress since the appointment of the new headteacher in April 2006 and the capacity of the leadership and management of the college to sustain these improvements
- the impact of the new tracking system on achievement and the quality of teaching and learning
- the extent to which new systems in the college are embedded into day-to-day practice
- the impact of strategies introduced to increase the engagement of parents in their children's learning.

Information about the college

A new headteacher was appointed to the college in April 2006. Internal reorganisation and a falling roll have led to significant staffing changes since the last inspection. Difficulties have been experienced in recruiting mathematics teachers. The proportions of students receiving free school meals, those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LDD) and the number of students in the early stages of learning English have risen substantially in the last year. The proportion of students leaving and entering the college at times other than the beginning of the college year is also increasing.

The College was awarded specialist business and enterprise status in 2004. It also has the Healthy Colleges and Investors in Careers awards. It is part of the Basingstoke consortium, which allows extension of the curriculum for students in Years 10 and 11.

Recent construction of a boundary fence has improved the security of the college site.

Further information about the college

	College's figures	College's figures compared with other colleges
School size	834	Average
Free school meals	6.3%	Below average
Proportions of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities	15.9%	Average
Proportion of students from minority ethnic groups	11.1%	Below average
Proportion of students who speak English as an additional language	5.5%	Below average
Proportion of students with a statement of special educational needs	1%	Below average

Inspection judgements

Grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Overall effectiveness

3

Capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Cranbourne Business and Enterprise College is a rapidly improving school which provides a satisfactory education for its students. The new headteacher and restructured leadership team have made significant improvements to provision over the last two years. These developments are now having a substantial impact on achievement, which has risen so the vast majority of students, including vulnerable groups, are making satisfactory progress and achieving examination results in line with the national average. The leadership team is implementing ambitious plans with robust and sustainable systems for monitoring their impact. Further acceleration of current improvements in every aspect of the college's work is already evident. Capacity for sustained improvement is therefore good.

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.

What does the college need to do to improve further?

- Share the good practice already in the college in order to accelerate students' progress and raise standards further by:
 - improving the quality of teaching so that it is consistently good or better, and more teachers deliver outstanding lessons
 - ensuring all students are engaged in, and excited by, their learning in all lessons
 - ensuring that teachers match work closely to individual students' learning needs and use available resources to their maximum effect.

- Improve communication with parents by:
 - asking for and taking more account of their views
 - ensuring that communications both within and outside the college are efficient
 - ensuring that, wherever possible, the college's successes and achievements are understood throughout the local community.

How well does the college meet the needs of individuals and different groups of students?

3

Students' achievement is satisfactory. Although attainment was low in 2007, substantial improvements in Key stages 3 and 4 are evident in 2008. This represents satisfactory progress from students' starting points, and no major groups of students are underachieving. In 2008, more able students made particularly good progress in mathematics and science and did even better in English at Key Stage 3. The proportion of students achieving five or more A* to G grades at GCSE improved significantly, and the proportion achieving five or more grades A* to C both with and without English and mathematics, is now in line with national averages. All other achievement data also show improvement. Current data for students in Year 11 indicate that this fast rate of improvement is set to continue into 2009. Weaknesses in mathematics teaching as a result of recruitment difficulties do not appear to have had a detrimental effect on students' achievement in 2008.

Students are polite, articulate and socialise together well during breaks. Many approached inspectors, introduced themselves and wanted to share their positive views about their school. One Year 7 student said, 'It's so much fun here!' and another, 'I'm proud to wear my uniform'. Students were quick to praise the work of the college but commented about negative perceptions of the school in the local community – 'They judge the school by the building, not by what happens inside it'. Redecoration has improved the appearance of parts of the college, but much of the accommodation remains in a very poor state of repair. This is having an impact on students' morale and achievement. Students also believe that the work of the Rights, Respect and Responsibilities group and the Anti-Bullying Crew have reduced bullying, and improved the attitudes, behaviour and quality of relationships within the college. They are keen to help one another, with a third of Year 10 and 11 students volunteering to serve as mediators. Good opportunities are provided for students to reflect in lessons and empathise with others. For example, after a visit to the Remembrance poppy factory, older students led an assembly to explain to others the origin and significance of that symbol.

The student council ensures that students participate in decision-making and allows them to initiate college activities, such as fund raising for charity. Students respond well to opportunities to help in local primary schools, for example, as sports leaders. However, students' understanding of communities beyond the college, particularly at national and international levels, is less secure.

These are the grades for students' outcomes

How well do students achieve and enjoy their learning?	3
The quality of students' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their progress	3

Students' attainment ¹	3
To what extent do students feel safe?	2
How well do students behave?	3
To what extent do students adopt healthy lifestyles?	2
To what extent do students contribute to the college and wider community?	3
How well do students develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2
Students' attendance and punctuality	3
What is the extent of students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development?	2

The quality of the college's work

The culture of improvement set by the headteacher and senior leadership team has generated an enthusiasm amongst staff to share good practice. The recent improvement in students' achievement is a result of better teaching and a more individualised and appropriate curriculum for many students in Years 10 and 11. The school believes that 50% of lessons are good or better and inspectors agreed with this judgement. In these lessons, teaching is well-planned, interesting, engages students actively and allows them to take responsibility for their learning. Students enjoy themselves, behave well and make good progress. However, not enough lessons are good or outstanding and so, overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. A fully developed and systematic process for keeping track of students' attainment is now in place. However, not all teachers are using this data effectively to provide useful feedback to individual students. The most successful teachers provide subject-specific targets for students and encourage them to be involved in assessing their own learning. This ensures that students know what they need to do in order to improve, but this good practice is not yet sufficiently widespread across the college. Some teachers do not take responsibility for ensuring that the work they provide is well-matched to students' individual needs, nor do they use the skills of teaching assistants effectively. Some more able students are not given work that is sufficiently challenging, and although achievement of students with LDD is satisfactory, they do not always make as much progress as they could during lessons.

Improvements in the curriculum since the last inspection mean that there is a wider range of courses available to meet individual students' needs, with good opportunities for vocational and work-related learning through partnerships within the Basingstoke consortium. Specialist business and enterprise status enhances the curriculum throughout the college, giving students of every year group the opportunity to develop entrepreneurial skills and team work, through links with local businesses. Information and communication technology (ICT) provision has improved and is used effectively to enhance learning. Students enjoy and appreciate the broad range of extra-curricular opportunities including music, sport, dance and drama, as well as study sessions in several subjects such as art, languages and literacy.

¹ Grades for attainment are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; 4 is low

Arrangements for health and safety issues and child protection are secure. Robust and successful monitoring systems have improved attendance and punctuality. Mentors, from both within the school and the local business community, are provided for some students to offer encouragement and support when there are personal, motivation or work difficulties, and this has already had a positive impact on these students' achievement. A new system has been introduced to track the progress of specific students, for example, those who are in the early stages of learning English or who have behaviour or learning difficulties, but the data collected is not sufficiently well analysed to monitor the impact of teaching on these students. Individual education plans for LDD students are now written in easily understood language and have clear strategies for teachers to use in lessons. A small number of students, although they know the routines, still present challenging behaviour at times. Although there are robust and effective systems in place for the management of behaviour, procedures for tracking patterns of behaviour and identifying trends at the whole-college level are not sufficiently thorough.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

High quality teaching and purposeful learning	3
Effective assessment and academic guidance	3
An appropriate curriculum which meets students' needs, including, where relevant, provision through partnership with other organisations	2
Support, guidance and care	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher has a clear vision and high ambitions for the college. Her energetic leadership, and determination to meet challenging targets, have generated enthusiasm amongst staff to improve the quality of their teaching in order to improve students' learning and achievement. Staff trust her and the senior leadership team to identify the right priorities for development. Middle managers skills are developing rapidly as they work to implement improvements. The changes she has put in place to the structure of the leadership team and to systems for monitoring and evaluation throughout the college, including tracking students' progress, are robust and sustainable. Focused efforts to support specific underachieving groups of students have had an impact and, as a result, all are making at least satisfactory progress. The headteacher is using a wide range of strategies to resolve the difficulties of recruiting effective teachers of mathematics. Measurable improvements in every area of the college's work have been made in the last year. For example:

- students' attainment and progress
- their behaviour and attendance
- the number of exclusions
- the quality of teaching and learning
- the range of opportunities within the curriculum
- support systems for all students but particularly those who are vulnerable
- attendance at parents' evenings

- ICT facilities
- removal of a substantial financial deficit.

Many of the governing body are new. They are enthusiastic about developing their role further. Their next challenge is to become well-known to staff and involved with the college outside meetings.

These are the grades for leadership and management

Monitoring, evaluating and planning for improvement to outcomes for students	2
Promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination	2
Ensuring that safeguarding procedures are effective	2
Ensuring that the governing body provides effective challenge and support so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities are met	3
Promoting the college's relationship with parents and carers, including their involvement in decision-making about matters relating to learning and well-being	3
Developing partnerships with other providers, organisations and services	2
Ensuring the college contributes to community cohesion	2
Deploying resources to achieve value for money	3

Views of parents and carers

The very large majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire were positive in their support for the college. Several commented on the high quality of leadership and the impact of the improvements that the new headteacher has introduced on both their children's learning and the atmosphere in the college. Most parents feel that their children enjoy school, the college keeps their children safe and they are happy with their child's progress. A few parents, particularly of students in Year 11, are concerned about how effectively the college deals with incidents of unacceptable behaviour. The college's response to parents' suggestions and concerns was also highlighted. A few other parents commented that sometimes communications between staff within the college and also between the college and home were inefficient. Some parents were concerned about the quality of mathematics teaching.

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding college provides exceptionally well for all its students' needs. In 2006-7, 14% of colleges were judged to be outstanding.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a college. A college that is good is serving its students well. In 2006-7, 46% of colleges were judged good.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory college is providing for its students suitably. In 2006-7, 34% of colleges were judged satisfactory.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate college needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its students. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves. In 2006-7, 6% of colleges were judged inadequate.

Common terminology used by inspectors

- Attainment:** the standard of the students' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
- Progress:** the rate at which students are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the students' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
- Achievement:** an overall measure of the students' success in their academic learning. The term combines attainment and progress. Students might make good progress, for example, but if their attainment remains low, inspectors may judge that their achievement is only satisfactory.
- Capacity to improve:** the proven ability of the college to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the college has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
- Leadership and management:** the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the college.



21 November 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of Cranbourne Business and Enterprise College, Basingstoke,
RG21 3NP

You will remember when we came to visit your college recently. We found you very positive and full of ideas to improve your school further. I would like to thank you for being so willing to share your views with us, and in return let you know about our findings.

Your school is providing you with a satisfactory education, and it is improving rapidly. The headteacher and her staff have made many very effective changes in the last two years and the impact of their hard work was very clear in the examination results in 2008, which were the best for many years. The evidence we saw showed us that this is likely to continue in the future. Your attendance and behaviour are improving. The curriculum is more varied and facilities, especially in ICT, have improved. The Rights, Respect and Responsibilities programme and the Anti-Bullying Crew have reduced the number of bullying incidents, and students told us that they believe that these initiatives have made a difference to the atmosphere in the college. Much of the teaching in the college is good, although we agree with you and the college, that there are still some problems in mathematics, and so overall we judged it as satisfactory.

We have asked the college to make a number of improvements.

- Use the best teachers' skills to help others to improve their teaching so you achieve even better, by making sure there are more good, outstanding and exciting lessons, where you are all actively involved. Teachers need to make sure that the work they give you is matched closely to your individual needs.
- Improve communication with parents by asking for and taking more account of their views and making sure that communications both within and outside the college are efficient. The college needs to make sure that all your successes and achievements are understood throughout the local community.

I hope that many of you will read the full report on www.ofsted.gov.uk. You need to support your headteacher and her staff, who are full of plans to improve your college even more.

Wishing you all the best for the future

Mary Massey
Her Majesty's Inspector

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