

# The Peele Community College

## Inspection report

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 120645             |
| <b>Local Authority</b>         | Lincolnshire       |
| <b>Inspection number</b>       | 327332             |
| <b>Inspection dates</b>        | 14–15 January 2009 |
| <b>Reporting inspector</b>     | Nada Trikić HMI    |

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>                     | Modern (non-selective)                                      |
| <b>School category</b>                    | Community                                                   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 11–16                                                       |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed                                                       |
| <b>Number on roll</b>                     |                                                             |
| School (total)                            | 661                                                         |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body                                          |
| <b>Chair</b>                              | Mr Paul Grooms                                              |
| <b>Headteacher</b>                        | Dr Cathy Taylor                                             |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 2 March 2006                                                |
| <b>School address</b>                     | 84 Little London<br>Long Sutton<br>Lincolnshire<br>PE12 9LF |
| <b>Telephone number</b>                   | 01406 362120                                                |
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|--------------------------|--------------------|
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The Peele Community College is smaller than average, with more boys than girls. The college attracts students from a wide geographical area. Academic selection means that the overall attainment on entry to the college is generally below average with fewer students of high ability. The majority of students are from White British backgrounds, although the number of students with English as an additional language is growing. A few students are at an early stage in learning English. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is below average. The number of students with a statement of special education needs is above average, as is the number with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The college was designated as an extended school in 2005, and achieved the Healthy Schools Award in 2007. The college received confirmation of specialist status for science during the inspection.

Childcare, early education provision, and out-of-school care is provided on the site managed by a private provider.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The Peele is a satisfactory and improving college. Since the last inspection, leadership and management have improved. The headteacher provides strong leadership and clear direction with a relentless focus on achievement. She has raised expectations, improved the ethos and learning culture, and created good team spirit across teaching and support staff. Despite a challenging period of staff changes and recruitment difficulties, standards and achievement have improved. The college has strengthened its identity within the community through extended provision and projects, and good partnerships with education providers to enhance curriculum opportunities, and work related learning.

Overall achievement by the end of Year 11 is satisfactory but this disguises wide variation between subjects and groups of learners. Standards reached remain below average but are improving. This results from improvements in assessment and tracking arrangements, and greater challenge in the use of targets. In 2008, there was a 13% increase in the proportion of students gaining five or more A\* to C grades to 50%, a college record. The proportion achieving higher grades in both English and mathematics is rising at a slower rate. Girls made less progress than boys did, and many high ability students did not reach the standards expected. This is being tackled through changes in leadership and courses, adjustment to student groupings, more rigorous target setting, regular assessment and progress checks, and flexible intervention to keep students on track. Current tracking records show that Year 11 will continue the upward trend for boys and girls.

The curriculum is satisfactory and improving to meet the needs of learners. Statutory requirements for religious education are not met in Key Stage 4. Vocational courses are developing well and proving to be a successful alternative to GCSE courses, offering a new approach to learning. Overall, teaching is satisfactory. Lesson quality ranges from inadequate to outstanding. Senior leaders work hard to minimise the effect of gaps in specialist teaching and staff absence. This is an area of concern for all as it hampers continuity and consistency in learning, is a barrier to personal development and academic guidance, and slows capacity to improve. Where teaching is good, students are challenged and enjoy their learning but there are too many satisfactory lessons. In these lessons, work is not planned carefully enough to meet the different needs of learners, or to engage them in a variety of learning activities, and some students lose interest. A small minority of lessons are affected by low level disruption. Students' enjoyment of lessons is also hampered by too few opportunities to use information and communication technology (ICT).

Personal development and well-being, and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Students have a good knowledge of how to stay healthy and safe and make a good contribution to the college and local community. Students are actively involved in promoting UNICEF's 'rights respecting' agenda well through assemblies and form time. Although there are a number of local community projects, opportunities for students to understand diverse cultures not represented locally are limited.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Good systems are in place to check on the quality of work through lesson observation and book sampling. It is too soon to see the impact of these systems in reducing the variation in teaching, standards and achievement. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory although pastoral care is a strength. Leaders have created a safe and caring community. Effective systems are in place to support vulnerable students, they value

the support they receive and speak positively about improved opportunities to extend experiences through new courses and activities. Academic guidance is developing; it is too inconsistent across years, and classes. The setting of more challenging targets is helping to raise aspirations, especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

The governing body is supportive and has informal links with departments. They are benefiting from training events to enable them to gather first hand evidence to evaluate the college's work.

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

- Continue to refine the use of assessment and tracking information across all year groups to plan work better to match students' needs and interests, and to reduce the variation in standards between subjects, and groups of learners.
- Improve the consistency and quality of teaching and learning to engage students more actively, including through better use of new technologies to promote independent learning.
- Extend opportunities for students to increase their understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity within Britain, and their global awareness.
- Take steps to meet the statutory requirement for religious education.

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' attainment on entry varies from year to year from below the national average to broadly average. Since the time of the last inspection, standards and achievement have been uneven. They have remained well below average at the end of Key Stage 3. In 2007, standards increased in English and science but declined in mathematics. Boys' standards were exceptionally low in English and mathematics. Overall progress was boosted by good results in science by the vast majority of students. College results for 2008 show good improvement in mathematics, average standards in science, and a dip in English. Progress is satisfactory overall.

The college emphasis on Key Stage 4 is resulting in an improving picture overall. Leaders recognise the need to retain a sharp focus on key skills to increase opportunities and choices for learners. Systems to track student progress have recently strengthened. Consequently, leaders are better able to identify older students at risk of falling behind, to focus on the progress of groups of learners in order to reduce gaps in attainment and to determine appropriate intervention strategies to keep students on track, in core subjects. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. Progress is not assessed regularly enough for those students withdrawn for additional support.

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

### **Grade: 3**

Students have responded well to initiatives designed to promote healthy lifestyles, with the result that they understand the need to make healthy food choices. They are well advised and provided for with sports and healthy foods. Their behaviour has improved over the last year as a result of clearer expectations supported by a popular rewards system. There is good behaviour in lessons where teaching is of a better standard, because students enjoy these lessons. At

other times, there is restlessness, with low level disruption. Behaviour in the public areas of the college is good because it is well supervised. Attitudes are satisfactory, with some keenness and eagerness for learning but at other times, passivity and a lack of concentration. Students' social development is good and the new house system has helped foster a sense of belonging and community spirit. Their understanding and tolerance of the diversity of cultures in modern day Britain is underdeveloped.

Attendance has improved and is satisfactory. Community involvement is good; students take advantage of many activities provided, for example, by the Youth Club on site, or by raising funds for charity. The school council makes a good contribution to college life, although there is scope for greater autonomy through taking ownership for the organisation and running of meetings. Students are prepared satisfactorily for life after college. Whilst their knowledge and daily use of ICT is limited, opportunities for work experience, and practical and vocational skills are beneficial.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Leaders have an accurate view of teaching quality through regular monitoring. They are aware of wide variance in practice in different subjects and between individual teachers, instructors, cover supervisors and supply staff. Relationships are generally good, and most students cooperate well with staff. Occasionally staff accept students' unnecessary chatter for too long, which interferes with learning. Lesson planning does not consistently take account of students learning needs, which slows progress. Too few teachers use ICT, discussion and questioning well enough to develop students' understanding and literacy skills, or to promote independent learning.

In the best lessons, good use is made of data projectors, pace is brisk and work is planned to challenge all students. Learning is assessed regularly and plans adjusted to help students to meet realistic targets. In some lessons teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to students learning. They are not always directed well enough to support learning and assessment effectively.

A marking stamp is used to provide all students with guidance on levels reached, effort and targets. Students' work is regularly marked, but not enough use is made of in-depth comments to guide students on how to improve their work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The college is developing a good range of relevant academic and vocational courses from Years 9 to 11 to provide relevance, and to meet the needs of students. Adjustments continue to be made to the curriculum as a response to the analysis of performance; specifically in tackling key skills, girls' achievement, and the needs of disaffected students. For example, a greater focus is placed on English and mathematics, including the provision of early entry for GCSE, to boost literacy and numeracy skills. Good examples of the college's creative approach are seen in the development of courses in hair and beauty, and horse care.

The college has been successful in introducing the 'Social, Emotional Aspects of Learning' programme which contributes well to citizenship education, and form time activities in Key

Stage 3. Recent staff changes mean that statutory requirements for religious education are not met.

Provision for the extended day and a wide range of community based activities helps to extend and enhance the curriculum. Leaders recognise the potential of this initiative to strengthen community cohesion, and for better links with parents/carers. The college provides a good range of sporting, study and enrichment activities that are well supported by students despite the challenge of transport in such a wide rural catchment area.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Students are looked after well because of good pastoral care from a number of dedicated teams. Staff provide high quality support, guidance and advice which has seen many students with significant problems able to return successfully to their learning after troubled times. For example, there have been notable achievements in getting students with severe attendance problems back to college. All procedures to keep students safe and secure are in place. There has been a concerted effort to improve behaviour; students and parents recognise this. There is still work to be done in providing a uniform level of consistency in the way good behaviour is encouraged and poor behaviour handled.

The academic guidance students receive, helping them to reach higher standards, is satisfactory overall. Most students have a general idea of how well they are doing. Current guidance systems have not been in place long enough to make a sustained and consistent impact on standards. Academic guidance is good for Year 11 students. Guidance for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is satisfactory. Individual learning targets are too general, and combined with only half yearly assessments, have resulted in systems which are not regular or refined enough to chart progress and adapt work accordingly. Students for whom English is an additional language receive satisfactory support enabling them to progress at the same rate as other students. Regular and rigorous monitoring of their progress is at an early stage.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher has been instrumental in promoting a culture of improvement and driving change to tackle underachievement. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, and lines of accountability established to strengthen the effectiveness of the senior leadership team. The leadership team have an open and accurate view of strengths and areas for improvement. Leaders recognise the need to broaden horizons through contributions to community cohesion, and to raise the aspirations of learners. The acquisition of specialist status for science is an indicator of the college's progress. Confidence is growing in the use of assessment information by subject leaders, with effective pairing arrangements to support new leaders. Senior leaders recognise the importance of retaining a high level of rigour and challenge to embed crucial quality assurance activities in order to secure more consistent learning opportunities and experiences for learners. Despite thorough evaluation and planning, capacity to improve is satisfactory due to the variation in standards, achievement and teaching across the college.

The college has been creative in extending the roles of support staff to strengthen support systems, and to lead the newly introduced house system. The decision to appoint instructors and cover supervisors is helping to provide greater stability in shortage areas.

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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 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|

**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                                                                                                   | 3   |

**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/or disabilities make progress                           | 3 |

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<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.

## Personal development and well-being

|                                                                                                               |   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| <b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>                          | 3 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development                                     | 3 |
| The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles                                                         | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices                                                             | 3 |
| The extent to which learners enjoy their education                                                            | 3 |
| The attendance of learners                                                                                    | 3 |
| The behaviour of learners                                                                                     | 3 |
| 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 | 3 |

## The quality of provision

|                                                                                                    |   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| <b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>       | 3 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners? | 3 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?                                             | 3 |

## Leadership and management

|                                                                                                                                              |     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| <b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>                                       | 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                                                              | 3   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation                                                                                            | 2   |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated                                                                   | 3   |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?                                                                                   | 3   |
| 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                                                  | 3   |
| 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**

16 January 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of The Peele Community College, Long Sutton, PE12 9LF

Thank you for being so welcoming when we came to inspect your college. You told us that the college helped you to keep fit and healthy. You felt that the school council provided a good way to share ideas and to influence change within the college. Most of you were very pleased with the new house system and the 'friendly' competition that had built up between the houses. Support staff and tutors know you well and you told us that you appreciate the help and support you receive. Most of you behave well and want to learn, and we agree with you that not all students have responsible attitudes, and cooperate in class. The college is providing you with a satisfactory and improving education. The headteacher and staff are working very hard to support your progress. You told us that things had improved in recent years, and now the college offers a wider range of courses, and we agreed. You may have heard that, at the end of the visit, we decided that your college needed to improve certain things to be even more successful.

By the end of Year 11 students make satisfactory progress overall but this can vary between subjects, whether you are a boy or girl, or depending on your ability. College leaders believe that you can all make even more progress. We have asked them to assess your work carefully, and to take steps if you are falling behind. The quality of lessons varies a great deal and although there are some good lessons, too many are not planned to challenge and interest you, or to meet your learning needs. You told us that you learn best when lessons are lively and teachers check that you understand the work. You would like more opportunities to use ICT to help with your learning. We have asked all the college leaders to focus on increasing the proportion of good lessons so that you can progress at a faster rate, and to make greater use of ICT. We have also asked the college to extend your experience and knowledge of other cultures in Britain so that you can understand and appreciate the importance of diversity and equality. We have recommended that governors take action to ensure that religious education is taught throughout the college.

You can play your part in the next stage of the college's development. Everyone will need to work on making 'The Peele' a successful specialist science college.

Our very best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Nada Trikić

Her Majesty's Inspector