

# Coundon Court Technology College and Training School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103729
<b>Local Authority</b>	Coventry
<b>Inspection number</b>	336142
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 October 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Dilip Kadodwala HMI

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

The registered childcare provision, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1730
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	364
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Peter Roach
<b>Headteacher</b>	Debbie Morrison OBE
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 April 2008
<b>School address</b>	Northbrook Road Coventry CV6 2AJ
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<b>Age group</b>	11–18
<b>Inspection dates</b>	1–2 October 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	336142

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<b>Registered childcare provision</b>	Coundon Court Early Years Centre
<b>Number of children on roll in the registered childcare provision</b>	60
<b>Date of last inspection of registered childcare provision</b>	Not previously inspected

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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and five additional inspectors, including one who focused for half a day on the college's provision for safeguarding students. The inspectors visited 26 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of students, parents and representatives of key partnerships. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of school documentation, including development plans, school and national data and the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness. 198 parent questionnaires, 107 staff and 928 student questionnaires also provided additional evidence for inspectors.

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

- attainment and students' achievement, especially in English, mathematics and in the specialist subjects at Key Stage 4
- the effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement
- the quality of curricular provision and students' care, guidance and support
- the school's strategies for improving students' attendance and healthy lifestyles.

## Information about the school

This is a heavily oversubscribed comprehensive technology college. The school attracts students from a wide area surrounding, and including, the centre of Coventry. The students are mainly from White British backgrounds. Around 16% are from minority ethnic groups and those in the largest group are from an Indian heritage. The proportion of students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average, and the proportion with a statement of special educational need is below the national average. A below average proportion of students are eligible for free school meals. The school's specialist status in technology was reaccredited in September 2008. It has gained a number of awards including Artsmark Gold, Sportsmark Gold, Investors in People, and Healthy Schools status.

The governing body manages childcare provision in the Coundon Court Early Years Centre.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

### Main findings

This is a good school with outstanding features. Under the inspirational leadership of the headteacher, ably supported by senior leaders, the school has improved students' outcomes effectively, particularly over the last two years. The drive shown by senior leaders, governors and staff to embed an ambitious vision for the school reflects the school's outstanding capacity for sustained improvement.

Attainment is above average for a majority of indicators. Provisional results in 2009 show a further improvement in students' attainment, with four out of five students now gaining the equivalent of five or more good GCSE grades. Around 61% of students gained those grades including English and mathematics. Overall, this represents at least good progress from students' broadly average starting points on entry, so that achievement is solidly good and rising rapidly.

The school is inclusive. Support for students with complex learning needs is an area of particular strength. This ensures they are fully included in the school community and their individual needs are sensitively and consistently met. Consequently they make similar progress to their peers and some make outstanding progress. Successful learning reflects good quality teaching. This is largely the result of the outstanding contribution of senior and middle leaders in rigorously evaluating and improving teaching practice. They recognise a shortcoming which prevents students from making consistently excellent progress in their learning, namely that the level of challenge in tasks teachers set is not always best suited to students' individual ability levels.

A strength of the school is that staff really care for the students and provide good guidance and support. Links with partnerships are excellent and students benefit enormously. The school's specialist technology status makes a significant impact on students' outcomes and, because community cohesion is outstanding, the benefits are evident in the school, local and the wider communities.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching further, so that more is outstanding, by ensuring that the level of challenge for students is matched to their individual ability, including in the sixth form.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**2**

Achievement is good. In recent years, attainment has been significantly above average when the majority of attainment indicators by the end of Year 11 are taken into

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account. The proportion of students gaining five or more GCSE A\* to C grades including English and mathematics is above average. Provisional GCSE results for 2009 show a further improvement in students' attainment and progress, especially in English where attainment at GCSE has been average over the last three years and students' learning and progress has been no better than satisfactory.

Overall, students' progress is at least good now. The often excellent support for vulnerable students and those who have learning needs and difficulties also enable these students to make similarly good progress. Some make excellent progress from their starting points. There are no significant differences in attainment between different groups of learners, including those who are from minority ethnic backgrounds. The school, as a specialist technology college, has met its targets for design and technology, mathematics and science. It exceeded them in information and communication technology.

Students say they are proud of their school. They behave well. Their willingness to listen and their positive attitudes result in them making good progress. They form good relationships with each other and adults so that they feel safe and cared for. Almost all students say they always have someone to turn to if they have a problem, and that incidents of bullying and racial intolerance are rare and are always dealt with effectively. The school's strategies to improve attendance show success, although some parents continue to take their children on holidays during term time. In 2008/09, the attendance rate was above average; the trend in the percentage of persistent absentees is falling.

Students understand how to adopt healthy lifestyles. They enthusiastically take part in the wide range of physical activities on offer. They are increasingly choosing healthy options in the dining room, although there are some who resist the school's efforts to improve the quality of packed lunches to school. They have a good understanding about the dangers of drugs, alcohol and safe sexual practices. Students make a good contribution to the school and wider community. They willingly take part in fundraising activities for a wide range of local and national charities and, for example, students support Coventry primary schools as young sports leaders.

Students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good. They have a well developed understanding of right and wrong. They care for each other and have a good understanding of their own and other cultures. They show a genuine interest in other people's beliefs, and consider moral and ethical issues sensitively. They are well prepared for the next phase of their lives.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

### How effective is the provision?

There is much good and increasingly outstanding teaching across the school. Lessons are routinely well planned with a clear purpose that is well understood by students. There has been a strong focus on students' learning skills and their understanding of learning targets. These have been very important in driving up standards across the school. Most lessons are varied and students engage actively in their learning and assessment activities. The marking of students' work varies a little in quality within and between subjects. Some of the marking that is done electronically is exemplary and all departments are seeking to emulate this practice. Formal assessment procedures are very good. Teachers know students' level of attainment and track carefully the progress they make over time.

The curriculum is good. Recent changes to the curriculum in Years 10 and 11 have been effective in meeting the needs of most students. There is a wide range of vocational courses to augment those that are more traditional. This is particularly well supported through the school's effective partnership with other local schools and colleges. This ensures students are able to pursue their interests and helps to prepare them well for their future lives. Through close links with local business and industry, students enjoy opportunities to develop workplace skills. Master-classes at the local university enable more able students to broaden their skills and interests. There is a wide variety of educational visits and opportunities for students to develop their learning, for example through taking part in competitions and workshops. Students particularly appreciate the extra-curricular clubs which are run at lunchtime and after school.

The quality of care, guidance and support is good. The school works closely with local

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primary schools to help students joining the school in Year 7 to settle swiftly. This ensures that the needs of those students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities can be successfully met as soon as they start in secondary school. Vulnerable students and those who struggle to settle into school routines are very successfully supported within the Youth Centre. Students receive good guidance in future choices and careers. Significant change to the way students are organised into mentor groups has very recently been introduced and it is too early to judge its impact. Through observations and discussions, students contribute well to the training of student teachers. The school has good systems to promote regular attendance and there is a suitable drive to improve punctuality, in the light of timetable changes introduced since the beginning of term.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher and senior staff provide outstanding leadership. Morale is very high and belief in the school's success runs through all levels of staff. Expectations are very high and challenging targets are set and met, including for the school's specialist subjects. This is because monitoring and evaluation are rigorous, systematic and the findings are used to identify priorities for improvement which are pertinent to teaching and learning. The school actively promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination. Barriers to learning are removed very effectively and harmony among the different groups of learners is sought strenuously and achieved. Governors support and challenge the school well in tackling weaknesses and bringing about the necessary improvement. Safeguarding procedures meet current government requirements and there are very effective systems in place to ensure the safety of students. The school enjoys positive relationships with a very large majority of parents and carers, and works hard to include them in its work. There are outstanding links with a wide range of partners. In some cases, the school has taken the initiative and taken a leading role in city-wide initiatives. These links are extremely well used, particularly to enhance the care and support for the school's most vulnerable students. Students benefit significantly from these partnerships. Efforts to promote community cohesion are outstanding, resulting in significant impact not only in the school but also in the local and wider community. Students' current outcomes reflect good value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage are good because children learn and develop well and because there is a common sense of purpose between adults who work well together. Close partnership with parents from the time children start in the Early Years Centre ensures that children's individual needs are successfully met. Good induction arrangements and well established routines ensure that children settle quickly. Personal and social skills are well supported and children enjoy many opportunities to learn and play together in small groups. Children play together calmly and show consideration for each other's safety. Their independence is promoted well through the many opportunities they have to choose activities for themselves, which they do readily. Children sit together to select and eat healthy snacks. Adults plan a wide range of interesting activities inside and in the outdoor spaces to ensure that children make good progress in all six areas of learning. Through play their understanding of the wider world is successfully promoted. For example, children were enjoying role-playing working in an office. Although the playground area is limited, good use is made of the school's spacious gardens and grounds to develop physical skills. Ongoing observations and detailed records of the progress children make are shared with parents and carers. This keeps them informed about how well their children are doing. However, assessment information is not always used systematically to plan activities closely matched to individual learning needs, particularly in communication, language and literacy and in problem solving, reasoning and number activities. Children's welfare is promoted well.



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*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Sixth form

The overall effectiveness of the sixth form is good, with recent improvements in outcomes for the students arising out of good leadership and management. Results in examinations at the end of Year 12 and Year 13 have improved over the past three years and are now broadly average in academic courses. This represents good progress as students were admitted to the courses with grades lower than average. Recognising that outcomes for vocational courses have been good, senior leaders have designed a good curriculum that provides a wide range of academic and vocational courses meeting the full range of students' learning needs. This is well supplemented by effective partnerships with other schools and colleges so that students can follow on appropriately from their qualifications at Key Stage 4. The resulting good progress seen during the inspection is also brought about by good teaching that is interesting and closely linked to examination criteria, and encourages students to think. Students, given ambitious targets, voice their appreciation of the advice they receive about how to improve their work, both orally and in writing. Although teachers have good knowledge of students' abilities, they do not always use this to plan lessons to meet individual learning needs. This is particularly so of the most able students. In a Year 13 art class, however, the teacher used excellent knowledge of individual strengths to broaden students' perspectives so that they made outstanding progress.

The good senior leadership of the sixth form has also sharpened the care and support for students. Under new mentoring systems that keep them closely in touch with the lower school they benefit from daily contact with a mentor, while good advice about future pathways has resulted in positive destinations for all in the past year. They respond well to the school's high expectations of their attendance, punctuality and work rate. At the same time they make a strong contribution to the school and to the local community, for example by helping in local primary schools, in local organisations and in school departments. The sixth form committee, elected by students, manages its own events each year. Such experiences add breadth to the good academic experience and prepare students well for life beyond school.

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*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

## Views of parents and carers

198 parental questionnaires were received by the inspection team. The response of parents and carers is that the school is doing a very good job. Parents are happy to send their children to Coundon Court and are particularly happy with the quality of teaching, leadership and the care the children receive in school. A parent's comment made in the questionnaire reflects the opinion of very many others: 'Coundon Court is a very helpful, organised, parent-friendly school which puts parents, teachers and children uppermost and the education at an extremely high level.' Of the very small number of negative responses, parents raised the following issues. Firstly, a very small proportion of parents thought that the school does not support students well enough to have a healthy lifestyle. The finding of the inspection team is that students are well prepared in this area. Secondly, there were concerns about the way the school helps parents and carers to support children's learning and, thirdly, about the extent to which parents' suggestions and concerns are taken into account. Inspectors considered these and concluded that, on balance, the school is good at consulting with parents and carers. For example, parents commented favourably about the community forum which is one of many effective means of listening to parents' suggestions. The inspection team also took into consideration the school's well-considered plan to extend the use of technology to enable parents to support their children's learning. This also has the potential to improve communication between home and school.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Coundon Court School and Community College to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 198 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1730 students registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	48	24	137	69	11	6	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	41	21	146	74	5	3	2	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	51	26	122	62	11	6	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	48	24	136	69	3	2	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	49	25	137	69	3	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	41	21	115	58	30	15	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	17	125	63	28	14	7	4
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	44	22	126	64	6	3	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	47	24	134	68	5	3	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	45	23	119	60	17	9	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	16	124	63	19	10	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	49	25	131	66	8	4	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	59	46	59	46	2	2	2	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school 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 school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



6 October 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of Coundon Court School and Community College, Coventry, CV6 2AJ

Thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave to the inspection team when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you, looking at your work and watching you learn. I thought you would like to know about the outcomes of the inspection.

Yours is a good school with outstanding features. The headteacher and other senior leaders are impressive in ensuring that all staff share the common purpose of raising standards and improving your learning further. Their drive for improvement is seen in the success in raising your GCSE attainment to above average, particularly in English, where performance has not been as good as in other subjects in the past. Overall, your progress in learning is now at least good and this represents good achievement from your starting points on entry to Coundon. It also reflects the good quality of teaching, as well as some of the outstanding teaching you receive. Your attendance has improved to above average and senior leaders try hard to persuade your parents and carers not to take holidays during term time. You enjoy your education and there are good opportunities for you to join in clubs and activities during lunchtimes and after school. The questionnaires you returned, as well as our discussions with you, show that the vast majority of you feel safe and that there is always someone you can turn to for help. Particularly impressive is the support given for those of you who need it the most. We judged the overall effectiveness of the sixth form as good, with recent improvements in standards and progress for the students because of good leadership and the good quality of teaching.

For the school to improve further, we have asked the senior leaders to increase the amount of outstanding teaching further by ensuring that the level of challenge you receive is matched more closely to your individual needs and ability, including for those of you in the sixth form. You can help by rising to the challenges the teachers set.

We are confident that your school will continue to improve and wish you every success in the future.

Yours faithfully

Dilip Kadodwala

Her Majesty's Inspector

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