

Carlton Bolling College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107413
Local Authority	Bradford
Inspection number	336879
Inspection dates	20–21 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Katrina Gueli HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1424
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	237
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Faisal Khan
Headteacher	Mrs Chris Robinson
Date of previous school inspection	27 March 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and five additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 38 lessons and held meetings with groups of students, governors and staff. They observed the school's work and scrutinised documents relating to students' current attainment and progress, findings of the school's own monitoring and evaluation activity and 253 questionnaires returned from parents and carers.

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

- the impact of work to tackle underperformance of identifiable groups and ensure that learning and progress for all students is improving rapidly, including for those in the sixth form
- the effectiveness of the school's work to improve attendance and reduce the number of students who are persistent absentees
- the strengths of teaching and the use of assessment that are contributing to increasing rates of progress for students
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers at all levels in improving outcomes for students.

Information about the school

Carlton Bolling College is a specialist mathematics and computing college situated on the outskirts of Bradford city centre. The school has close links with the adjacent City Learning Centre and also provides off-site learning support comprising separate provision for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 students. A new headteacher joined the school as acting headteacher in September 2009, taking up her substantive post in January 2010. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is high. Over 90% of the students are of minority ethnic heritage with approximately two thirds of students being of Pakistani heritage. A small minority of students across the range of ethnic groups within the school are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is twice the national average but the percentage of students with a statement of special educational needs is below average. The proportion of students leaving or joining the school at a time other than the start of Year 7 is higher than typically found. The school has gained a number of quality marks including Investors in People and most recently Investors in Diversity.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Carlton Bolling College is a satisfactory school where the care, guidance and support for students is good.

Leaders and managers have a detailed knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development and are successfully accelerating the pace of the school's improvement. The new headteacher has successfully galvanised the staff team to address areas of underperformance and current data confirms that students' attainment is improving.

In 2009, students' progress between Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4 was significantly above average overall but progress was below average for some identifiable groups, including White British students. The literacy skills of many students are underdeveloped and this remains a significant limiting factor for their attainment and progress overall.

Most students enjoy their learning within the school's cohesive, supportive community and at the end of Year 11 the vast majority progress into education, employment or training.

The school has been effective in reducing the number of students who are persistent absentees, although attendance overall remains low.

Students' aspirations and learning needs at Key Stage 4 are being increasingly well met following extensive curriculum development and this is contributing to improving attainment. The school has rightly identified that similar development is needed at Key Stage 3 to ensure that students at this key stage make good progress from the start of their secondary education.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory, although the effectiveness of teaching varies widely across the school. Similarly, the effectiveness with which assessment is used to support students' progress is very variable.

The impact of the specialist subjects is evident in wider curriculum opportunities for students to develop their information and communication technology (ICT) skills, greater confidence of staff in the use of ICT to enhance learning and stronger partnerships with feeder primary schools.

The school's track record of improving outcomes for students demonstrates the effectiveness of leaders in tackling weaknesses. However, some recently improved systems need to be embedded and it is too early to see a significant impact of steps taken to address all aspects of underperformance. Consequently, the school's capacity to improve further is satisfactory.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

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- To raise attainment and ensure that all students make good progress, particularly during Key Stage 3, by:
- ensuring that teachers in all subjects make a strong contribution to the development of students' literacy skills and their ability to be effective independent learners
- refining the Key Stage 3 curriculum so that it meets students' needs well
- making consistently effective use of assessment information to plan and deliver lessons that are well matched to students' learning needs
- ensuring that students know what they need to do to improve through opportunities to assess their own progress and effective feedback from teachers
- rapidly reducing the variation in the quality of teaching across the school
- improving attendance.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**3**

Students' attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 in 2009 was significantly below average for all key measures. As a result of rigorous tracking and subsequent wide-ranging intervention to help students identified as at risk of underachievement, there is a clearly improving trend in attainment. Consequently, the gap between the performance of Carlton Bolling students and the national average is narrowing and students' progress improving. This is equally true of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, who benefit from good academic and pastoral support. Students' attitudes to learning are generally positive. The large majority of students behave well in lessons and around school and students are noting improvements following the recent introduction of a new behaviour policy. However, in a small minority of cases, most often when the quality of teaching is less than good, students are passive or respond in a way that is a barrier to good progress. Students feel safe in school and confirm that if they do raise concerns these are quickly and effectively addressed by staff. They also know how to keep themselves safe and have been proactive in developing resources for other schools to promote e-safety and raise awareness of the dangers of knives. This is a clear example of students' willingness to make a positive contribution to the community. Similarly, many take on positions of responsibility, including roles as buddies for younger students, sports leaders and through the influential school council. The majority of students show a good commitment to adopting a healthy lifestyle through participation in physical education lessons and healthy food choices. However, curriculum time for physical education is limited at Key Stage 4 and there is unequal gender take-up of the broad range of extra-curricular activities between students, with boys' participation significantly exceeding that of girls. Students are suitably prepared for the next stage in their education or progression into employment through a range of opportunities to develop work-related skills and through effective guidance.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is very variable across the school with teaching observed during the inspection ranging from inadequate to outstanding. The proportion that is good or better is not yet sufficiently high to ensure that students' very low attainment on entry is fully overcome. Overall, teaching quality is better in Key Stage 4, resulting in accelerated progress for many students during Years 10 and 11. Features of good or better teaching are: carefully planned lessons to meet the needs of all students; teachers' high expectations; a positive climate for learning underpinned by strong student–teacher relationships; the incorporation of a wide range of engaging resources, including the use of ICT that stimulates students and promotes their independence; and good use of assessment to check progress and inform students how to make the next steps in their learning. In contrast, satisfactory or weaker teaching is typified by activities that are not well matched to students' starting points or are not effective in ensuring that students are active participants in the learning; underdeveloped use of questioning to explore students' understanding and extend their thinking; teachers' insecure subject knowledge; and limited written feedback to students on how to improve further.

¹ 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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Consequently, in these lessons students make slower progress.

The curriculum in Key Stage 4 has been extensively reviewed and newly introduced pathways with clear post-16 progression routes have ensured that the curriculum meets students' needs more effectively. The broad range of vocational qualifications now on offer combined with traditional subject choices is beginning to make a contribution to improving students' attainment. However, it is still too early to see the full impact of work to improve the curriculum on students' outcomes. In Key Stage 3, greater personalisation is required to ensure that the curriculum is well matched to students' starting points. Partnerships are used effectively to enhance the curriculum. For example, activities linked to enterprise, work-related learning and sport make a notable contribution to students' personal development and well-being.

Teachers and other staff display consistently caring, supportive attitudes towards students, both in lessons and around the school. Students appreciate the good care, guidance and support that they receive. Systems to support students whose circumstances may make them vulnerable are effective and there is clear evidence of higher achievement and improved well-being where individuals have received targeted support. Resources to address students' individual needs are well coordinated in partnership with parents and carers, and outside agencies. The flexible use of facilities for learning support is helping to keep exclusion rates low and ensuring that those at risk of permanent exclusion can continue their education and gain accreditation in the core subjects. The support, to integrate students who may have difficulty accessing mainstream lessons, including those at an early stage of learning English as an additional language, is very effective and leads to good levels of engagement and enjoyment for the students involved.

The school has been robust in its efforts to tackle poor attendance and there is clear evidence of the impact of this work. However, despite the school's best endeavours, extended holidays during term time are still having a marked effect on the overall attendance of a significant minority of students.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	3
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

There is a clear vision for the school's improvement underpinned by teachers' high expectations of what students can achieve, and the commitment of all staff to embed the school's values. Students' progress towards challenging targets is tracked rigorously

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and subject leaders share the responsibility for securing improvement. Effective action to reduce variation in the performance between identifiable groups of students demonstrates the school's effectiveness in promoting equality. Governors have been proactive in evaluating their effectiveness and have taken steps to ensure that they are better placed to hold the school to account. Processes to safeguard students are well embedded and meet all statutory requirements. Good partnerships with parents and carers are instrumental in delivering good support for students' well-being and in improving their academic achievements. The school's determination to remove barriers to students' success is typified by innovative approaches to family involvement in weekend learning for targeted students. The strategic approach to the promotion of community cohesion is effective in creating a harmonious school community and developing local, regional and international partnerships to ensure students' wider cultural development.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Sixth form

Overall achievement of students in the sixth form is satisfactory. Although not all students studying for A levels make as much progress as they should, their pass rate, overall, is in line with the national average. Progress on level 1 and level 2 courses is good, as is the performance of students on level 3 vocational courses. The sixth form has a positive ethos in which students thoroughly enjoy their studies. Relationships between staff and students are good, as is students' personal development. Sixth form students willingly take on additional responsibilities, including acting as peer mentors in

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the lower school, providing help in some lessons and undertaking work in local primary schools. These roles successfully allow them to develop their self-confidence and wider personal qualities. Students' learning needs are appropriately met through the curriculum with a range of traditional A-level courses, a good number of level 3 vocational courses and a wide range of level 2 options available. Level 2 qualifications are particularly effective in supporting students' progression towards level 3 and ultimately into higher education. Teaching is at least satisfactory and often good. In the best lessons students are actively engaged and teachers use assessment well to help students improve. Pastoral care is strong and students value the support they receive from both form tutors and teachers. Attendance is satisfactory and improving, with absences from lessons closely monitored by a student support officer. Students receive good support and guidance to help them progress onto university, with two thirds taking that route last year. Systems to track students' academic progress are in place, although there is some inconsistency in how the systems are administered. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The sixth form team has a clear vision for post-16 provision and about the developments needed to realise this vision. For example, they are fully aware that teaching quality must improve and academic monitoring needs to be more robust in order to increase students' achievement.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

Views of parents and carers

The very large majority of parents and carers are positive about their children's experience at the school. Most are confident that their children are kept safe and feel well informed about their children's progress. Parents and carers confirm that their children's needs are well met and that they are well prepared for the next step in their education or progression into employment or training. A very small minority of parents and carers expressed the view that that the school does not take full account of their suggestions. The school agrees with this and is already putting in place further mechanisms to provide more wide-ranging opportunities to seek parents' and carers' suggestions.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Carlton Bolling 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 253 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1424 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	81	32	152	60	14	6	3	1
The school keeps my child safe	83	33	148	58	17	7	4	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	82	32	144	57	23	9	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	81	32	145	57	22	9	3	1
The teaching is good at this school	77	30	149	59	20	8	1	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	55	22	156	62	32	13	3	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	50	20	161	64	32	13	2	1
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)	77	30	151	60	21	8	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	53	21	165	65	27	11	6	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	100	40	121	48	22	9	7	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	44	17	156	62	37	15	6	2
The school is led and managed effectively	70	28	156	62	18	7	4	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	104	41	123	49	19	8	5	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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

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 is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



22 May 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Carlton Bolling College, Bradford, BD3 0DU

You may remember that I recently visited your school with a team of inspectors. We would like to thank you for the time you spent sharing your views about the school and for talking about your work in lessons.

We found that your school is satisfactory, overall, and provides you with good-quality care, guidance and support. We were impressed with the range of ways that you contribute to the school and wider community and that the majority of you demonstrate very positive attitudes towards learning in lessons and towards each other. The school checks carefully to see how well you are doing and is effective in providing you with extra teaching and support to help you to make better progress towards your targets. We found that much of the teaching is good but that the quality varies widely across the school. To improve your attainment we have asked the school to ensure that this variation is addressed and for all teachers to help you develop your literacy skills. We also feel that you need more opportunities in lessons to develop your independent learning skills. We also found that the use of assessment to support your learning and progress could be more effective. For those of you in Key Stage 4, the curriculum is well matched to your abilities and aspirations. However, in Key Stage 3, we have suggested that the school should look at how the curriculum can be developed further to support your progress more effectively. All the staff are strongly committed to helping you succeed and they need you to show a similar degree of commitment if they are to be effective in raising your attainment. For example, while the majority of you have good attendance, for some, your absence rates are too high and this is having a negative impact on your achievements.

We wish you the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Katrina Gueli

Her Majesty's Inspector

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