

Woldgate College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118081
Local Authority	East Riding of Yorkshire
Inspection number	339135
Inspection dates	19–20 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Georgiana Sale

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	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1358
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	210
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Bob Broughton
Headteacher	Mr Jeff Bower
Date of previous school inspection	1 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 40 lessons and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils. They observed the college's work, and looked at policy and procedures documents, student files, governing body minutes, the college's records of lesson observations, data analysis and students' work. Inspectors analysed 153 parents' questionnaires. They also analysed questionnaires completed by students and staff.

- whether teaching is good enough to accelerate students' progress
- the impact of monitoring and tracking procedures on lesson planning to challenge and motivate students
- the use of assessment data to identify and halt any student underachievement.

Information about the school

Woldgate is a larger than average performing arts college serving a small market town and a wide rural area. The vast majority of students are of White British heritage and the percentage of students speaking English as an additional language is low. The number of students with a statement of special educational need is close to the national average. The percentage of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is about half the national average. The percentage of students eligible for free college meals is low.

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****2**

Main findings

Woldgate is a satisfactory college with many good and some outstanding elements. It is a very safe place for students, has a welcoming and inclusive ethos and the good care and support provided for students is appreciated by parents and students. Students told the inspection team how much they enjoy college and about the very positive relationships between staff and students. The vast majority of students say that they feel safe and know that there is always an adult who will help and quickly deal with any problem. The students behave well in and around college and their attendance is high. Students' achievement is satisfactory, both in the main college and in the sixth form. They enter with above average standards and, although progress in English is good, students make satisfactory progress overall during their time in the college to reach above average standards by the end of Year 11. The results for 2009 show a rise in standards overall. The progress made by students with special educational needs and/or learning disabilities is satisfactory. The curriculum has been adapted well to meet students' needs. A growing range of vocational courses using partner colleges is available at Key Stage 4. A high number of students from all year groups participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities.

Despite these considerable strengths, the college has been judged satisfactory overall because, although levels of attainment are above average, the progress made by the students is satisfactory at all key stages. The headteacher has refocused the college on this issue, and there are already signs of improvement. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good practice. However there is not enough good or better teaching with suitably challenging work, or sufficient aspiration in the sixth form, to ensure that students make good progress in all subjects. The quality of teachers' assessment is inconsistent and information about the students is not used well enough to plan lessons that will stimulate and challenge all ability levels. Although students are aware of their targets, they often do not know what they need to do to improve.

The headteacher and senior staff know the college's strengths and weaknesses and weaknesses are being tackled, as shown in the improving results. There are good systems for the monitoring and evaluation of student progress and this is now followed by appropriate action to stop any underachievement. However, this has not been quick enough in the past to prevent underachievement, especially in the sixth form. The vast majority of the staff are proud to be a member of the college and the improving systems for the college to monitor and evaluate its work are leading to an increased accountability and a growing sense of collective responsibility to secure improvement. College leaders work well in partnership with a wide range of other agencies to give

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support and care to students and to offer courses that are suited to their needs and interests. Recent key appointments at middle manager level, a strong headteacher giving clear direction to the college and a knowledgeable, challenging governing body provide the college with good capacity to improve further.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate the rate of progress for all learners by:
 - - using assessment information about individual students more effectively to plan lessons to suit the needs of all learners
 - - making sure that students know exactly what they need to do in order to move from one level to the next
 - - making sure the college has an accurate picture of the quality of lessons and taking quick effective action to address areas of weaker performance in teaching.
- Improve the outcomes for students in the sixth form by:
 - - sixth form leaders showing more drive to bring about a more compelling vision of high aspiration and high expectations for all sixth form students.
- 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

In lessons, students are keen to learn and when offered challenging activities they make good progress. Students generally enjoy college and behave well in lessons and around college. They listen well and willingly become involved in any activity. They show that they can work independently but are also good at working together. Where the teaching is less effective, most students still work well but at a much steadier pace.

Students enter the college with above average standards and by the time they leave in Year 11, standards continue to be above average. Students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. Students show a good knowledge and understanding of how to stay safe; they take an active part in their college community and through their year group councils have brought about changes to make the college lunches healthier. Many participate in out-of-college activities and in additional opportunities offered through specialist status to contribute to the community through dance and music activities, for example. Students show their good social and moral development in the way that they support and empathise with each other and in their self-discipline in and around college. They are given opportunities in class to reflect sensitively on scientific, moral and global issues. Themed days like the African music and dance day, as well as trips abroad, give students the opportunity to understand different cultures. Students are confident, articulate and mature. Students have high levels of attendance and are very punctual. These skills and habits, together with enterprise days, a work experience programme and the increasing vocational curriculum give them good skills and knowledge that will be useful to their future life in

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education and in the workplace.

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	2
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	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
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	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	1
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching is better for older students than for younger ones, and although good progress was seen in some lessons, in the majority of lessons progress was satisfactory. In all the lessons seen during the inspection there were good relationships between teachers and students. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use information and communication technology well to make lessons more interesting and to motivate their classes. In the best lessons, teachers made sure the students understood what they were expected to learn and checked how well they were doing during the lesson. Teachers used what they knew about the students to set them challenging targets and activities and gave them detailed feedback so that they knew how to progress. The college's performing arts specialism has contributed to the creative ways the curriculum is delivered in many subject areas. For example, an animateur worked with a group of history students to act out a scene from Victorian Britain. In the satisfactory lessons, teachers do not make use of assessment information to deliver

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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lessons that effectively build on what the students already know. These lessons do not contain sufficient levels of challenge.

The inclusive nature of the college is demonstrated by the way the curriculum is constantly reviewed to make sure it fits the needs and interests of the students. There is a good range of both academic and vocational courses for all abilities and students are also able to take further qualifications like GCSE Latin and AS-level courses. The college has made good use of links with other colleges in the area to widen the range of courses offered. The curriculum is enhanced by a broad range of after-college activities that contribute positively to students' good personal development.

Students make a smooth transfer to the college in Year 7 due to the good transition arrangements that are in place. The pastoral team is strong and the staff care about and know their students very well. Heads of year are now monitoring the progress of students, enabling individual packages of support to be put together to help more students make good progress.

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	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher, senior staff and governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the college and together with increasingly robust middle leaders are committed to moving the college forward. The impact of the leadership can be seen in the maturity and confidence of the students, their excellent levels of attendance, their above average levels of attainment and in the good care provided for them. The school's procedures for tackling any form of discrimination and effective promotion of equality is seen in the quality of its care and the actions it is taking to make sure some groups of students do not underperform. However, improvement plans have not been sufficiently closely aligned with an accurate picture of the quality of teaching. Likewise, strategies to increase levels of progress have not always been evaluated sufficiently so that the progress of students in many areas remains satisfactory.

The college promotes community cohesion well. The headteacher has been successful in developing a cohesive college community and working in partnerships to make better provision for the students. The college has good relationships with parents. Student planners, questionnaires and, increasingly, the college's website, make sure that there is a good dialogue between parents and college. The college has a good understanding of the community it serves. It has successfully reinforced attitudes and skills in its students

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that will enable them play an active role in any future community of which they are member. As a result, students enjoy experiencing new cultures and different ways of life.

Safeguarding procedures are very secure. Child protection procedures meet statutory requirements and the college works extremely well with a wide range of professionals and college partners to safeguard and support students on and off the college site. The college provides satisfactory value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
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	2
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	1
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

The overall effectiveness of the sixth form is satisfactory. Achievement in the sixth form is satisfactory and improving; attainment is broadly average. The care and support of the students is strong in the sixth form but the leadership has lacked focus on the academic progress of students and addressing areas of weaker teaching so that good progress is made.

The quality of teaching was better than seen in the rest of the college, contributing to the rise in standards. Students have sound literacy and numeracy skills and are helped to develop independent learning skills which will support them in their life beyond college. Sixth formers good social skills and their high attendance rates mean that they are good role models for the younger students and enable them to take leadership roles within the college community, for example as prefects and members of the college council.

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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 happy with their children's experiences in the college. They feel strongly that their children enjoy college and feel safe, make progress and are well prepared for the future. They have confidence in the teachers and in the leadership of the college. They do report some incidents of bullying but the vast majority felt these incidents are dealt with effectively and that their views and concerns are taken into account. Inspection findings confirm parents' views.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Woldgate 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 153 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1358 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	60	39	87	57	4	3	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	58	38	91	59	2	1	2	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	62	41	75	49	8	5	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	53	35	89	58	4	3	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	48	31	92	60	5	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	39	25	87	57	16	10	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	32	21	105	69	9	6	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)	53	35	81	53	7	5	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	46	30	90	59	11	7	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	46	30	89	58	9	6	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	21	90	59	18	12	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	55	36	78	51	10	7	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	77	50	66	43	5	3	2	1

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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">■ 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.



19 October 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of Woldgate College, York, YO42 2LL

I would like to thank all of you who spoke to us during the inspection and completed the questionnaires. Inspectors really appreciate the help you gave us and were impressed by how mature you were. I am writing to you now to tell you about our inspection findings. Woldgate is a satisfactory college overall. This is because you make satisfactory progress, although you get results that are above average. However, the college has many good and some outstanding features which should be celebrated.

The college takes good care of you. You told us you feel very safe and there is always someone to turn to when you need help. We were impressed by your excellent attendance and punctuality. You work well together and show respect for each other and that makes the college a happy and safe place to be. Sixth form students set a good example for younger ones. Most of you work hard in lessons and it is also good to see that you involve yourselves in a wide range of activities that help the college and the community.

The headteacher and all the staff work really hard to make the college a better place to be and know where further improvements can be made. To help with this we have asked them to make sure that:

- teachers plan their lessons so that more of you are really challenged and make better progress
- you know exactly what you need to do in order to move from one level to the next
- the sixth form set high targets for themselves and get the very best results they can.

Thank you again for helping us with the inspection of your college. We enjoyed spending the two days with you and wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Georgiana Sale

Lead inspector

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