

Castle Donington Community College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120254
Local Authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	339651
Inspection dates	29–30 June 2010
Reporting inspector	David Muir HMI

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	10–14
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	470
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David McKnight
Headteacher	Mr K Bayliss
Date of previous school inspection	22 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 31 lessons with 24 teachers seen. Meetings were held with two groups of pupils, the chair of the governing body and staff, including senior leaders and middle managers, and there were further conversations with representatives from some of the school's partnerships. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including the school's analysis of data, subject self-evaluation forms, reports to the governing body and a range of other policies. Two hundred and forty-seven parents' and carers' questionnaires were analysed.

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

- the accuracy of the school's procedures for monitoring pupils' progress across the school and how they are used to provide a robust measure of progress
- the consistency of management systems and practice throughout the school
- how the curriculum meets the needs of all pupils, across both key stages, so that they are ready to transfer to the next stage of their lives
- the robustness of the monitoring of teaching across the school and how this contributes to the raising of standards in both key stages.

Information about the school

Pupils enter the college at the start of Year 6 and leave for upper school at the end of Year 9. The college serves a large catchment area in northwest Leicestershire, which is largely made up of small villages. Almost all of the pupils are from White British backgrounds. Pupils mainly come from seven local feeder primary schools. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average and the proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs is in line with the national average.

The school has gained a range of awards, including the International School Award, Artsmark, Sportsmark, CareersMark, Healthy School status, Eco School Award and Investors in People.

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****2**

Main findings

Castle Donington Community College is a good school, which promotes academic and personal outcomes well. It is good in many areas of its work, including outcomes, quality of provision and several aspects of leadership and management.

The school's ethos has been developed around respect for the individual pupils and what they bring to the school. This approach is greatly valued and appreciated by the pupils, who demonstrate good personal development, including positive behaviour and above average attendance. Generally attendance is high, but there are some small groups of pupils who attend less well. Pupils are welcoming to visitors and are proud of their community.

The quality of teaching is generally good, although some examples of inadequate, satisfactory and outstanding teaching were seen during the inspection. There is inconsistency in the use of assessment across the school. This means that the activities and learning objectives that are planned for pupils do not always match the prior learning of all groups. The curriculum meets the needs of pupils well and is focused on targeting pupils for support with their learning. Extended school activities are a strength of the school. These include CEDRICs (Creative Enhancement Day, Rich in Creativity), which provide opportunities for pupils to participate in a range of events and activities to broaden their experiences. Care, guidance and support are a strength of the school, with good transition arrangements into the school at the start of Year 6 and out again at the end of Year 9.

Leaders have a generally good understanding and knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. The work of middle managers in monitoring and evaluating their departments is strong. However, senior leaders do not collate and analyse the information from departments with sufficient rigour. There is a common sense of purpose throughout the school and staff and pupils understand the direction in which the school is moving. The governing body is committed to its work and there are good systems of committees and link governors. These systems have resulted in some good reporting around issues such as safeguarding which show that the leadership of the school is being challenged robustly in some areas. Nevertheless, there are some key policies which are not reviewed regularly. This compromises the overall effectiveness of the governing body, making it satisfactory.

Due to the work of the school on consolidating previous good performance and the generally accurate picture that leaders and managers have of the strengths and weaknesses in the school, it has demonstrated that it has good capacity to improve.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the consistency of assessment to inform learning by:
 - using assessment of prior learning to plan a variety of activities to match different learning needs in the class
 - ensuring that assessment in lessons is consistently linked to learning objectives which are targeted to meet the needs of all pupils.
- Improve the monitoring of the school's work by senior leaders by:
 - scrutinising and analysing the progress made in subjects to identify whole school patterns and trends in performance
 - using the monitoring of the quality of teaching at middle management level to inform senior leadership of strengths and areas for improvements across the school.
- Develop the work of the governing body so that it regularly reviews all policies to ensure that they are fully up-to-date and compliant with current legislation.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enter the school at the start of Year 6 with standards which are around the national average. By the time they leave Key Stage 3, they have made good progress and consistently reach standards which are above average. Progress in Key Stage 3 is good while progress in Year 6 is slower. Compared to national averages, boys are reaching comparatively higher standards than girls. This is the result of specific targeting of boys, who were previously performing less well than girls. The proportion of pupils who reach the higher levels at the end of Year 9 is in line with the national average. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress due to the well targeted support and interventions provided.

Pupils have good attitudes to learning and are keen to do well. They make good progress in lessons when there is a range of activities, including opportunities for practical work. They particularly enjoy learning when they are active, as evidenced in several lessons based on practical activities. In some cases, pupils do not make good progress in lessons, as planning does not take in to account assessment of previous learning. As a result, the support and challenge is not well planned or focused on maximising learning.

Pupils say that they feel safe in the school and their parents generally agree. They report that if bullying happens, it is dealt with promptly and effectively by staff. They say that they are listened to and that their views are valued. Behaviour was positive throughout the inspection, with no disruption to learning seen. School records support this and the number of exclusions is very low. Pupils understand about healthy lifestyles. They demonstrate this through the food they eat and their participation in physical activities across the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities. The impact of the healthy activities on pupils' well-being is not evaluated consistently so the school is not

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clear about where the provision is most effective. Pupils participate in a wide range of activities in the local community and raise significant amounts of money for their chosen charities. The school council has a voice in the development of the school and pupils appreciate this. There are several examples of areas in the school which have been developed by the pupils. These include the mural showing aspects of school life and the area for pupils who prefer quiet at lunch and break times. Despite this, the school council is not fully representative of all groups of pupils and it needs to develop to make it more inclusive. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. Careers education is good as evidenced through the award of the Careers Mark award.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are good. Pupils enjoy learning about other faiths and communities. They have a good sense of right and wrong and show respect to those around them. They are keen to take up a range of cultural opportunities including African dancing, Asian Dialogues and a range of visits to places of cultural importance such as the Holocaust Centre.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	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
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	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

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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The majority of teaching is good, securing the good progress of pupils. In the better lessons there are good relationships which contribute well to the positive learning environment. Teachers know their subjects well and this enables them to engage and motivate pupils. The use of other adults in the class is inconsistent but they are generally used effectively to support learning. In the better lessons, assessment of prior learning is used well to plan lessons to meet the needs of all pupils. Overall, the use of assessment is satisfactory, although good examples were seen in music and design and technology with outstanding practice being seen in physical education. Here, pupils use ongoing assessment of their peers' work to enable them to give advice and support them to make excellent progress. However, this is not consistent and, in a minority of lessons, assessment is not used to support learning. Feedback to pupils is regular but the quality and depth varies from class to class and is not always detailed enough to show pupils what they need to do to improve their work.

The curriculum is good and well matched to meet the needs of all pupils, supporting their good progress. Groups are targeted to allow pupils who are underachieving to receive additional support and intervention appropriate to their needs. The school works well with its feeder schools and upper schools, to ensure that the curriculum has coherence between the schools. This is supported by the joint working between staff in the family of schools. Alternative providers are also used to broaden the range of courses available. One example of this is the partnership with Loughborough College to provide a range of vocational taster courses for pupils. There is an impressive range of extra-curricular activities, such as sports' coaching, residential and day trips, opportunities to perform in school productions and music tuition, which contribute well to pupils' well-being and learning.

Transition is strong, building on the positive partnerships between the schools in the local family. This helps pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities or who may be vulnerable, to settle in well when they arrive in Year 6. The quality of information, advice and guidance is strong across the school and provides a good range and variety to enable pupils to make sound choices about their future pathways.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
	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?

Most aspects of leadership and management are good, with several being satisfactory.

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The senior leadership team provides clear direction and vision which is shared across the school and has led to the school having a strong sense of pride, identity and purpose. All members of the school staff are encouraged to contribute to plans for the school's development through the departments' self-evaluation procedures. These allow provision to be monitored at a subject level and for middle leaders to take action if any underperformance is identified in teaching. The systems for tracking pupils' progress are strong at middle management level. This allows pupils who are working below target to be identified and interventions to be put in place to support them to get back on track. Appropriate targets are set in subject areas to ensure that pupils continue to make good progress overall. Currently, this information is not used effectively at senior leadership level to establish whole school patterns or trends.

Equality of opportunity is satisfactory as the progress of groups of pupils is monitored and shows that they all progress well. The governing body needs to ensure that it regularly reviews policies related to equality of opportunity and that it meets statutory requirements fully. The Race Equality Policy is up-to-date and racist incidents are reported annually to the local authority as required. The school's work on community cohesion is satisfactory as the school has a good knowledge of its context. However, the impact of the work in this area on the school and wider community is not systematically reviewed. Safeguarding procedures and policies are satisfactory and show that all adults working with pupils are recruited and thoroughly vetted in line with legislation.

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	2
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Views of parents and carers

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Just over half of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire, which is a better return than often encountered, and the large majority of responses were positive. The responses and comments generally reflected the inspectors' findings. However, a few parents expressed concerns that their children were not making enough progress and that they were not well enough informed about the progress of their children.

The inspectors looked closely at these areas and were satisfied that progress was at least good and that there are robust systems in place, through direct phone calls, the development of the virtual learning environment and other personal contact with parents, to keep them informed. Some concerns were also raised by a small minority of parents and carers around the speed with which the school responds to concerns raised by parents. Another area of concern was the relatively low agreement, at 82%, of the statement; 'The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns'.

The school has been made aware of these concerns and will work to ensure that all parents have their concerns considered. A view from a parent, which summarises the majority of opinions in the questionnaire, said: 'The teachers and staff give lots of support to the education to ensure the pupils get the best education they need'.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Castle Donington 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 247 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 470 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	107	43	136	55	4	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	139	56	104	42	3	1	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	100	40	130	53	15	6	1	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	111	45	125	51	9	4	1	0
The teaching is good at this school	113	46	124	50	5	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	70	28	146	59	25	10	1	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	89	36	147	60	10	4	0	0
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)	107	43	126	51	3	1	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	99	40	133	54	9	4	2	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	115	47	116	47	6	2	4	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	72	29	133	54	19	8	4	2
The school is led and managed effectively	122	49	114	46	5	2	3	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	133	54	104	42	5	2	1	0

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

	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
Type of school	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.



1 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Castle Donington Community College, Derby, DE74 2LN

I am writing to you on behalf of the inspectors who visited your school recently to thank you for the warm welcome which you extended to us. Our meetings with you and our conversations with you around the school and in lessons impressed us. They showed that you have very positive attitudes to your school and learning. We looked at a lot of evidence and spoke to members of staff, the leadership, and governors, and we asked your parents and carers for their views. We also observed 31 lessons. We judged your school to be a good school.

The staff and governors work hard to make your time in Castle Donington successful and happy. You enjoy school and make good progress. By the time you are ready to move on to upper school, you are working at above national average levels. You also develop well in all areas of your personal development and we were impressed by your good behaviour throughout our visit. A large majority of your parents and carers are happy with how well the school educates and looks after you.

I have asked the school to improve in three areas to help make your experience there more successful than it is now:

- senior leaders should monitor your progress and the work of all subjects more closely
- there should be more consistency in all lessons about how teachers assess your work and use this to make lessons better suited to your abilities
- the governing body should make sure that everything required by law is in place, so that the school is sure that all are getting equal chances during their time in the school.

All of you can help with these by continuing to work your hardest and letting teachers know how well you think you are doing and what could help you improve your work.

Finally, we would all like to send you best wishes for your future.

Yours sincerely

David Muir

Her Majesty's Inspector

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