

Etone Technology Language Vocational College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	125731
Local Authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	340830
Inspection dates	10–11 May 2010
Reporting inspector	Ken Bush

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	793
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Burton
Headteacher	Colin Turner
Date of previous school inspection	18 October 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspection team observed 37 lessons taken by 35 teachers. In addition, meetings were held with students, staff and governors. Inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a variety of documents including the school improvement plan and records of pupils' progress. They also considered the views of 97 students, 63 staff and 221 parents as shown in questionnaires.

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

- attainment and progress in the present Year 10 and Year 11
- trends in the standards of behaviour and attendance
- the impact of the school's work in improving teaching and learning since the previous inspection.

Information about the school

In this smaller-than-average sized comprehensive school, most students are from a White British background. The number of students whose first language is not English is below the national average, as is the percentage of students eligible for free school meals. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above the national average and is increasing. The most commonly identified of these needs relate to moderate learning, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Some courses for 14-16 year olds are offered in partnership with other providers, including a local further education college and employers offering work-based training. The school was first granted specialist technology status in 2002 and gained further specialisms in languages and applied learning in 2006. It is now known as a specialist vocational college. The present headteacher has been in post since September 2009.

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

The college provides its students with a good and rapidly improving standard of education. Since the previous inspection when the college's overall effectiveness was judged to be outstanding, there has been a high degree of turbulence in both leadership and governance which contributed to some decline in students' achievement. However, with the appointment of a new headteacher at the start of the current academic year, there has been significant restructuring of the senior leadership team and a renewed focus on the quality of learning and other outcomes. A clear strength of the college is the quality and accuracy of its self-evaluation procedures which actively involve a wide range of stakeholders. These procedures mean that college leaders and governors know the strengths and weaknesses of the college very well and have robust plans in place to address areas in need of improvement, which are very strongly endorsed by staff and parents/carers. These detailed and relevant improvement plans, the track record of consistently good or better achievement over time and the growing impact of specialist status indicate good capacity for sustained improvement.

Although the overall attainment of students who completed Key Stage 4 in 2009 was not as good as in previous years, attainment is, nevertheless, consistently above average. Moreover, inspection evidence indicates that the progress of current students towards their challenging targets is good. The achievement of different groups of students, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, is also good, although more-able students do not consistently achieve as well as they might in some subjects. Attendance is now above the national average reflecting both the high regard that most students have for their college and their enjoyment of learning. Students' acquisition and application of work-related skills, in particular literacy, are noteworthy and make a strong contribution to their good personal development and mature outlook. The college provides a safe and stimulating environment in which most students, including the most vulnerable, feel secure and are, therefore, able to play a full part in the many activities which are provided.

The quality of provision has some very significant strengths. The outstanding curriculum provides a wide range of innovative courses at both Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 with the needs, interests and aspirations of individual students at its core. The college has forged very effective partnerships with other providers principally, although not exclusively, through its specialisms, to ensure that students have ready access to high quality vocational learning. The quality of information and advice given to students and their parents, including regarding transition between key stages, is excellent and is a major feature of the outstanding provision for care, guidance and support.

The standard of teaching overall is good and improving; however, students, and, in

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particular, the more able, are not routinely encouraged to learn independently, which restricts their achievement. Progress also slows in those few lessons in which planning fails to take account of students' different starting points and capabilities, leading in some cases, to the setting of insufficiently challenging tasks. The deployment of teaching assistants is generally appropriate but on a number of occasions during the inspection, this was not the case. Marking is also satisfactory overall but is inconsistent across the college and consequently, students do not always get enough good quality written feedback to guide them in how to improve their work and reach higher levels of achievement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the attainment and progress of more-able students through:
 - raising the expectations of staff and students
 - increasing the number of opportunities for more able students to learn independently.
- Improve the quality of teaching to provide more consistently good and outstanding lessons through:
 - ensuring students receive sufficient stretch and challenge
 - providing more professional development for staff which focuses upon the characteristics of outstanding teaching and learning
 - ensuring that the deployment of teaching assistants is efficient and effective.
- Improve the effectiveness of assessment by ensuring that:
 - there is consistency across subjects and key stages in the quality of feedback given to students so they know more clearly how to improve their work
 - information about students' progress is used more consistently so that lessons are better planned with individuals' different needs and starting points taken into account.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**2**

In the large majority of lessons seen in the inspection, students were attentive, enthusiastic and keen to do their best. Through the outcomes of their responses in the questionnaire and through discussions with inspectors, students demonstrated a very high level of satisfaction with their education at Etone. In particular, they enjoy their learning and appreciate the quality and consistency of support they receive from staff. They also highlighted how well prepared they feel they are for the next stage of learning and for adult life.

Attainment in most subjects was close to the national average in 2009, although well above average in some areas such as English and design technology, which have in recent years consistently been strengths of the college, including for more-able students. In both mathematics and science, rates of progress are now increasing as a

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result of more effective identification of students' underperformance and the employment of well-focused intervention strategies. Achievement overall is good with no significant differences over time between the progress made by boys compared with girls. As a consequence of very good individual support, the achievement of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and other groups does not differ significantly from that of their peers.

Behaviour, both in lessons and around the college site generally, is good and improving. Students routinely show courtesy and respect for one another and are polite and cooperative to staff. Indeed, the quality of relationships is a significant contributory factor to the college's positive learning ethos. Students show good knowledge and understanding of healthy lifestyles and a keen interest in maintaining a sensible diet. Most take an active part in the wide range of physical activities available. Students make a positive and increasing contribution to the college and the local community, including through the links established by the specialisms.

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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Teachers routinely display good subject knowledge which provides a solid platform for good levels of achievement. In most lessons, teachers employ a variety of strategies to enthuse and motivate students, including lively pace and liberal use of praise. While most lessons are well planned with good progression between different activities, there are a few where students' different capabilities, interests and prior learning are not taken into account sufficiently well. Whilst the majority of students are aware of their targets, they are not always clear about precisely what is needed to improve their work. However, a notable feature of the college's approach to assessment is that students are actively encouraged to provide feedback on their own work and that of their peers, which they find valuable.

The outstanding curriculum provides well-organised opportunities for effective learning through a broad range of experiences in both key stages. A very large majority of students enjoy their education because they are well-served by the curriculum which encourages both their academic and personal development. In Key Stage 3, students can take two modern foreign languages and up to three arts subjects and plans are in place to develop a competency-based curriculum in humanities. Through the applied learning specialism, a number of vocational courses and work-based learning opportunities, including diplomas, have been successfully introduced in Key Stage 4 in partnership with a local college and with national companies, such as LandRover Jaguar. These very successfully meet the needs of all students, and not just those who do not choose to follow a traditional academic route. A rich and varied programme of extra-curricular activities, including courses such as GCSE psychology run as 'twilight' sessions, enriches the curriculum for students of all ages, interests and abilities.

The college's outstanding pastoral care for students through its effective tutorial and mentoring system is a feature of provision highly valued by the vast majority of students and staff. The quality of information, advice and guidance is excellent, enabling students to make well-informed choices at transition points such as the end of key stages. Support for vulnerable students and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities is exemplary, enabling them to make good progress and take part fully in the life of the college. Liaison with external agencies is exceptionally well managed and helps to secure high levels of engagement from children and families requiring support. Strategies to promote good attendance have had a demonstrable impact in reducing absence, especially in the present academic year.

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	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

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How effective are leadership and management?

Under the dynamic and purposeful leadership of the headteacher, senior leaders and managers are successfully focused on developing a cohesive, learning community at Etone. Accurate identification of the college's strengths and areas for development has led to an excellent strategic plan, establishing clear, ambitious, yet achievable development goals, including to establish sixth form provision at Etone from 2011. The college's good approach to setting challenging, but realistic, targets is beginning to impact upon raising students' aspirations and maintaining good achievement. The college's specialisms are making an effective contribution to college improvement and community development, not least by forging strong and effective partnerships with other providers and educational organisations. The role of middle leaders in quality assurance and the promotion of best practice with regard to what constitutes outstanding teaching and learning, is improving but is not yet firmly embedded.

Governors discharge their responsibilities appropriately and ensure that college leaders are well supported. They are now beginning to develop a stronger role in strategic planning and holding college leaders to account. Partnerships with parents/carers are very strong and the college is finding increasing success in developing strategies to engage those who are 'harder to reach', such as a thorough use of text messaging. Equality of opportunity is vigorously and successfully promoted and there is ample inspection evidence to demonstrate that the college is welcoming and inclusive and free from discrimination. Procedures for ensuring the effectiveness of safeguarding are well established and clearly understood by students, staff and governors with clear arrangements in place for monitoring policies and practices. The college's contribution to community cohesion is good and leaders and managers have a clear understanding of what is needed to develop it further.

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	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2

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<p>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</p>	<p>2</p>

Views of parents and carers

A high proportion of parents/carers responded to the questionnaire. A few felt that the college does not deal effectively with unsatisfactory behaviour, but inspection evidence found that behaviour in the college is good and that procedures for dealing with unacceptable behaviour are appropriate. A very large majority of parents/carers are very supportive of the work of the college and appreciate the efforts made by the staff and governors to bring about improvements. Many commented favourably on the college's ethos of high expectations and the impact that the new headteacher has made in bringing stability to the college, after a difficult period. There was significant praise, too, for the college as a caring and nurturing community in which all children are well known personally to the majority of staff. One parent commented: 'I feel my son has had the best support any school could provide. The school has really helped to make him a fully rounded person.' Another remarked about their son: 'We have been delighted with the progress he has made at Etone. The school really encourages pupils to do their best (whatever their best is!) and celebrates their achievements.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Etone Technology Language Vocational 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 221 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 793 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	91	41	120	54	8	4	1	0
The school keeps my child safe	89	40	120	54	12	5	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	120	54	89	40	11	5	1	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	103	47	103	47	14	6	1	0
The teaching is good at this school	98	44	114	52	7	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	91	41	101	46	23	10	3	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	69	31	133	60	15	7	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)	85	38	116	52	10	5	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	92	42	116	52	8	4	3	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	77	35	110	50	29	13	1	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	72	33	113	51	22	10	3	1
The school is led and managed effectively	90	41	113	51	12	5	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	108	49	97	44	12	5	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

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.



12 May 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Etone Technology Language Vocational College, Nuneaton, CV11 6AA

Thank you for the very warm welcome you gave to the inspection team when we visited your college recently. We enjoyed being in your lessons and meeting you and were impressed with the pride most of you have in your college.

These are the main findings of the inspection.

Etone is a good and improving college.

Most of you are reaching above-average levels of attainment and making good progress.

Teaching is good, but assessment satisfactory.

Your curriculum is outstanding, as is the quality of care, guidance and support you receive.

Your personal development is good overall.

Your college is well led and managed, with very good plans for how it can get even better.

The college's specialist status is making a useful contribution to your education.

The headteacher agrees with the inspection team that you could achieve even better and we have asked that:

- staff help the more-able students to do a little better and gain more A* and A grades at GCSE
- teachers make sure your lessons are well suited to everyone's abilities and interests and, in some cases, become a little more challenging
- the quality of assessment improves in all subjects so that you are clearer about what you need to do to improve your work.

Best wishes with your studies.

Yours sincerely

Ken Bush

Lead Inspector

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