

# Castle Community College

Mill Road, Deal, CT14 9BD

## Inspection dates

27–28 March 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Inadequate</b>	<b>4</b>
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Inadequate	4
Leadership and management		Inadequate	4

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires special measures.

- Achievement is inadequate. Students underachieve in several subjects and especially so in English and mathematics.
- Insufficient attention is given to the progress and attainment of the college's most-able students. Students who are eligible for support through pupil premium funding also make inadequate progress, and do not achieve as well as other groups in the college. Boys achieve poorly.
- Students' skills in writing, communication and mathematics are not effectively developed across all subjects.
- Teaching is inadequate. In too many lessons learning is less than good. Over time, this has led to underachievement.
- Behaviour is inadequate. There is too much poor behaviour and students' attitudes to learning are not consistently positive. Members of staff do not consistently manage behaviour successfully.
- Leadership and management, including governance, are inadequate. Essential improvements have not been secured sufficiently quickly, especially in relation to improving students' achievement and the overall quality of teaching.
- The curriculum does not adequately meet the needs of all students, especially the more able, and this too contributes to underperformance.
- The sixth form requires improvement as too many students, especially in Year 12, make insufficient progress.

### The school has the following strengths:

- The college offers good quality pastoral support and care to its students. This is shown in the way it has managed the assimilation of some 400 students onto its roll following the recent closure of an adjacent school.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well, especially through charity work.
- In some areas teachers' planning for learning is thorough and work is marked to a high standard. The performance of students in resistant materials, for example, illustrates what the students can actually achieve when properly challenged.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors undertook 37 classroom observations of teaching featuring 36 different teachers.
- Meetings were held the Chair of the Governing Body, and with a representative from the local authority.
- Meetings were held with five different student groups and with many different staff including the headteacher, senior managers and heads of departments.
- Inspectors took account of 86 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, in planning the inspection. The responses to 87 staff questionnaires were also considered.
- Inspectors looked at samples of students' past and present work and scrutinised various documents including: the college's checks on how well it is doing; its planning and extensive information on students' academic progress; and records relating to behaviour, attendance, punctuality and safeguarding.
- Inspectors evaluated the impact of additional funding, such as the pupil premium.

## Inspection team

Bill Stoneham, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Lucia Devine	Additional Inspector
Noureddin Khassal	Additional Inspector
Paul Morris	Additional Inspector
Suzanne Richards	Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.*

### Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average size secondary school, with more girls than boys on roll, especially in the sixth form.
- The college converted to academy status in October 2010 as part of the government's 'fast track' policy for outstanding schools.
- At the end of the 2012/13 academic year, a neighbouring 11 to 19 years secondary school was closed by the local authority. All students on the roll of that school at the time of the closure, numbering approximately 400, were transferred to the roll of Castle Community College.
- The college operates on a split site: Mill Road, Deal; and Salisbury Road, Walmer. The distance between the two sites is about one mile.
- The large majority of students are White British. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average, as is the proportion who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional funding provided by the government to support students known to be eligible for free school meals and children who are looked after by the local authority, is marginally above average.
- The number of children who are looked after is higher than the proportion normally found in secondary schools.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is similarly above average.
- Students' additional needs are wide-ranging, with most relating to behavioural, emotional and social and moderate learning difficulties.
- The college is located in an area of selective education, where the local selective schools admit about one third of higher performing students at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Accommodation for adult education and a privately run nursery is provided by the college. The headquarters of Deal Town Rangers Football Club are located at the school. These provisions are not overseen by the college's governing body.
- A small number of Year 11 students attend Sandwich Technology College for one day each week to study a Level 2 vocational hairdressing course.
- In the 2012/13 academic year, the college failed to meet the current floor standards set by the government. These standards determine the minimum expectations for attainment and progress by the end of Key Stage 4.

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

- Significantly improve the quality of teaching across all subjects by ensuring that all teachers:
  - have higher expectations of what students can achieve
  - regularly set work that challenges and extends the students' skills, especially their skills in writing
  - apply the college's policy on marking.

- Raise the achievement of all groups, especially boys, the most-able students and those supported by additional funding, particularly in English and mathematics, by:
  - consistently providing students with work that meets their needs and challenges their knowledge and understanding
  - refusing to accept work that is poorly presented and is clearly below the students' ability levels
  - ensuring work is properly marked and that the students are given precise written feedback on what has been done well, what could be improved and how.
  
- Significantly improve behaviour, especially at the Mill Road site, in lessons and around the building to ensure that boisterous behaviour in corridors is eliminated and that classroom learning is not disturbed by the poor conduct of a significant minority of students. Ensure that all staff apply the college's policy on behaviour management.
  
- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management at all levels, including governance, by:
  - rigorously checking the progress of all student groups by ensuring that the available performance data are accurate and fit for purpose and can be readily used by teachers to help with their planning for learning
  - improving the process by which the quality of teaching and learning is monitored
  - ensuring that the curriculum provided adequately meets the needs of all students, especially the more able
  - ensuring that governors are more effective in holding senior staff to account for the college's performance.

An external review of governance, to include a specific focus on the college's use of the pupil premium, should be undertaken to assess how this area of leadership can be improved.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### is inadequate

- Achievement is inadequate because students are making insufficient progress in English, mathematics and many other subjects. The proportion of students gaining at least five GCSE grades at C or better, including in English and mathematics, declined alarmingly in 2013 and fell to a level well below the minimum standard expected by the government.
- There are indications from results already gained through early GCSE entry that the situation will improve slightly in 2014, but predictions for this year remain low and suggest that the legacy of poor achievement in English and mathematics has yet to be compensated for fully.
- The practice of early examination entry at GCSE is being reduced as it is not working to the obvious advantage of all students. Some of the Year 11 students who have been inherited by the college have sat some GCSE examinations early, but with mixed success.
- Although girls achieve better than boys, both groups make progress that is significantly below average. Though there is only a small proportion of more-able students in the college, they underachieve because work is rarely planned to meet their needs. The college is unable to demonstrate with any confidence that students supported through Year 7 catch-up funding and those supported by the pupil premium are making marked improvements in their levels of achievement. This means that the college is not delivering equality of opportunity.
- Students eligible for additional funding through the pupil premium achieve on average nearly a whole GCSE grade below their peers. The college's analysis of the performance of such students lacks detail and accuracy.
- In 2013, disabled students and those with special educational needs supported at school action or school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs made less progress than expected given their starting points, especially in English. Information offered by the college suggests that this situation might now be starting to improve because of better monitoring and support for these groups of students.
- Where teaching is better organised and careful planning for learning takes place, achievement improves. The achievements of students in design and technology, for example, are above average.
- The progress of the small number of students attending an off-site hairdressing course is appropriately tracked and monitored. All are expected to pass this course; their progress is at least reasonable given their starting points.
- The achievement of sixth form students requires improvement. This is especially so in Year 12 where AS level results have been particularly low. The situation is now improving because of better monitoring, but too many students are not making the level of progress anticipated given their starting points.

### The quality of teaching

### is inadequate

- Teaching is inadequate because it is too variable within and between subjects. There is too much teaching that is not yet good enough to ensure students achieve well and make rapid gains in their learning.
- High staff turnover is having a marked negative impact on learning. Many students told inspectors that their learning has been hindered by the number of different teachers they have had since the start of the academic year. They also raised issues about the number of supply staff. Sixth formers identified some improvements but highlighted the wide variations that exist. They expressed particular concerns about teaching in science.
- Almost 40% of parents and carers replying to the inspection questionnaire expressed discontent with the quality of teaching, with nearly half highlighting the lack of setting good quality homework as an issue. The routine setting of purposeful homework was not evident to the inspection team.

- There are examples of good practice in teaching, planning and marking, but this is the exception. Because of weak teaching over time, most students, including the more-able, are not making the progress they should in many subjects, but especially in English and mathematics.
- Too few teachers set high enough expectations. As a result many students meet the low aspirations that they are set.
- Across many subjects, the work set does not adequately challenge the students. Planning for learning is especially weak because what students are asked to do is frequently pitched at a middle level. The learning needs of particular groups are not planned for and so more-able students for example, over time, make far less progress than expected. Planning for learning rarely acknowledges the needs of particularly poorly performing groups such as boys.
- The progress students make is further hampered by the lack of written work. Far too frequently staff offer little challenge. Insufficient emphasis is placed on requiring students to develop their communication skills including producing good quality written work in different forms.
- Good quality examples of extended writing were rarely seen. Where they are evident, however, in some English books and in health and social care and religious education in the sixth form, the progress students are making is better and at least in line with nationally expected standards.
- Too few staff consistently apply the college's policy on marking. Much work is irregularly marked and rarely to a good and informative standard. It is rare to see staff annotating written comments on students' work explaining what has been done well, what might be improved and how. Such inconsistency contributes directly to low expectations and underachievement.
- Too many students have developed negative attitudes towards their learning. They arrive late to lessons and there is a lack of pride in what they do. Work is poorly presented and exercise books are often tatty and covered in graffiti. In some cases the pace of learning for all is clearly hindered by the poor behaviour of a minority of students, which frequently goes unchecked or unpunished by teachers.
- Where good learning does take place relationships are positive and expectations have been developed. Students arrive keen to learn and they know that poor behaviour will not be tolerated. Such practice provides the foundations on which to build better practice across the college.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are inadequate**

- Students' behaviour is inadequate and is hindering efforts to raise standards and improve learning. This has clearly been typical over a period of time.
- In too many observations undertaken learning was disrupted by poor behaviour. In these cases a significant minority of students showed little interest in what was being taught, lacked motivation, engaged in off-task talk and failed to complete work. Some even quite openly used their mobile phones in lessons and openly defied their teachers.
- Many students expressed the view that improvements in behaviour have occurred but that learning is frequently hampered because of inappropriate behaviour. Students offered the view that behaviour was better at the Salisbury Road site, a view echoed by inspectors. Senior college staff believe the reverse to be true.
- Some poor behaviour in corridors was witnessed at the Mill Road site. This went unchecked because either there was a lack of staff presence in the corridors, or because staff who were in the vicinity chose to ignore what was happening.
- Parents and carers are concerned about behaviour and how it is managed. Almost 40% of parents and carers replying to the inspection questionnaire raised concerns about behaviour. This outcome is reflected in the views of the staff. Almost half of the staff in their questionnaire not only criticised behaviour, they criticised how well it is managed.
- College records indicate that fixed-term exclusions have risen, although this increase should be set in the context of a college where numbers have risen significantly in a short time.
- Much work has been done to improve attendance. Rates of attendance in the college and in the sixth form have improved and are close to the national average.

- The previous inspection report praised the quality of the college's care, guidance and support. This remains a strength. All students who left the college at end of the last academic year progressed to placements in employment, training or education.
- Staff have worked successfully to ensure that those students who previously attended Walmer Science College have been assimilated into the college. Some sixth form students told inspectors that they thought such a significant change would be 'a complete disaster'. In the event they say that the transition has gone well and that the college has developed a community spirit with few believing that any serious 'us and them' divisions exist.
- The college's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students told inspectors that they feel safe and the majority of parents and carers agree.
- The college takes appropriate actions to ensure that students learn about different types of bullying and know how to stay safe. Particular emphasis has been placed on raising student awareness about cyber bullying.
- College records indicate that bullying incidents of any form are rare. Students of all ages reported that if anything untoward does occur they know who to turn to and have confidence that issues will be dealt with in a professional way.

### **The leadership and management are inadequate**

- Leadership and management are inadequate because college leaders have been unable to secure the necessary improvements in teaching and learning to raise students' achievements overall and especially in English and mathematics.
- The quality of teaching is not tracked with sufficient accuracy and the glaring inconsistencies that exist are not challenged. The leadership of teaching and learning is in need of improvement, with a significant number of staff reporting that the provisions made for their professional development lack rigour and purpose.
- College leaders do not have an accurate picture of academic standards and the progress being made by different students because the tracking data made available are incomplete and lack detail. This hampers efforts made to analyse the performance of different groups and to ensure that additional funding made available through the pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up is utilised effectively. No detailed quantitative analysis of the impact of additional funding was presented during the inspection.
- The lack of detailed and reliable data hinders teachers' planning for different student groups. Too frequently staff are not sufficiently informed about the needs and potential of the students in their classes. Thus the performance of various groups, such as boys and the more-able, is impaired and improvements over time become more difficult to achieve and sustain.
- The effectiveness of middle leaders is inconsistent and, in some cases, inadequate. Their understanding of data about achievement and its potential uses is not secure and neither is their ability to improve teaching.
- Some groups of students are not doing as well as expected because the curriculum, especially in Years 10 and 11, does not meet their needs fully. There is insufficient provision for more-able students for example.
- Weaknesses in the college's leadership team are being addressed and further significant changes are in place for next term. The changes that have been made thus far are still fresh and are not yet fully embedded, although there are encouraging indications that the changes made in the sixth form, for example, are beginning to have an impact and student performance is improving.
- Senior leaders are honest and realistic about the college's strengths and weaknesses. Aspects of self-evaluation are accurate and candid but effective remedies have been put in place far too slowly and, at this stage, have not had sufficient impact to secure sustainable improvement.
- Close to 50% of parents and carers responding to the inspection questionnaire cast doubts on the quality of leadership and management. A significant minority are unhappy about how their concerns are addressed and only 60% of respondents would recommend the school.
- The college is now working closely with the local authority which has a clear understanding of

the challenges being faced. They are trying to broker additional support.

- Good provision is made for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Charitable work is strong and where teaching is stronger, staff ensure that spirituality is promoted, moral issues discussed and social responsibility developed.
- Inspectors strongly recommend that the college should not seek to appoint newly qualified teachers.
- Arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors have a far too positive view of the college, including the quality of teaching and learning and the academic progress made by students. This limits their capacity to challenge leaders to secure improvements. They have not taken sufficient account of achievement data and this restricts their ability to analyse the performance of different student groups. They know how additional Year 7 catch-up funding and pupil premium are spent, but have not checked on the impact of such initiatives in terms of raising standards and boosting the performance of students with literacy difficulties or with special educational needs. Governors have had to manage a period of transition in which many staff have left and many appointments of new staff have been made. They have been involved in decisions about pay progression and some requests have been refused. Governors ensure that all requirements relating to safeguarding are met.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136300
<b>Local authority</b>	Kent
<b>Inspection number</b>	441106

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Academy
<b>School category</b>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,179
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	220
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sylvia Jones
<b>Headteacher</b>	Philip Bunn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13–14 June 2011
<b>Telephone number</b>	01304 373363
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