



George Pindar Community Sports College

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 121674
Local Authority North Yorkshire
Inspection number 292199
Inspection dates 7–8 December 2006
Reporting inspector Honoree Gordon HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Moor Lane
School category	Community		Eastfield, Scarborough
Age range of pupils	11–16		North Yorkshire YO11 3LW
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01723 582194
Number on roll (school)	852	Fax number	01723 583110
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs E Vickers
		Headteacher	Mr Hugh Bellamy
Date of previous school inspection	30 April 2001		

Age group 11–16	Inspection dates 7–8 December 2006	Inspection number 292199
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

George Pindar is a specialist community sports college (designated in 2005), situated in an industrial area and housing estate on the outskirts of Scarborough. The college draws on an area of significant economic deprivation. The attainment of pupils when they enter the school is below the national average and a greater proportion of students have learning difficulties and/or disabilities than is usually found. The college holds Sportsmark Gold award for its provision for sport.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school which is rapidly improving. The parents, students, staff and inspectors all agree on this and discussions with representatives from the local community show that the college's reputation has grown significantly in recent years. Students say that they are happy and stress that the atmosphere in the college has improved considerably. All parties attribute this to the outstanding leadership of the headteacher. 'He dug us out of a hole', as one student leader aptly commented, revealing just how far the college has come. This has been achieved through working more closely with families and the local community and through giving the students themselves a real voice in how their college is run. The headteacher has tackled the problems of indiscipline and disaffection with vigour and has appointed several new, enthusiastic staff to posts of responsibility to lead the college forward.

The standards students achieve, though below average, are adequate and have improved, but the full impact of the changes in staffing and curriculum have yet to be seen in public examination results, such as GCSEs. Many students come from very low starting points academically. Most students make satisfactory progress, but some of the girls do not make enough progress. Standards in the lessons inspectors observed were broadly satisfactory. Students gain useful skills for the workplace, further education or training, but too few leave the college with the required levels in mathematics and English. Standards in science remain below average, though show some improvement.

The college has considerable strengths, particularly in the provision for the students' personal development, which is given a high priority. Much of what the college does is innovative and highly successful in developing good attitudes to learning and in enabling pupils to make a much more positive contribution to their community than in the past. The curriculum is now more interesting and relevant to students' needs and this means that students enjoy college far more than they used to and are more willing to attend regularly. Students particularly appreciate the sports facilities and opportunities which arise from being a specialist sports college. This has increased their self-confidence, sense of responsibility and, for many, has provided excellent opportunities for the development of leadership skills. The quality of teaching has improved: students say that their lessons are well taught and often fun and the inspectors agree. Some lessons observed were outstanding. The college's monitoring records show how far it has travelled to get to this point and reflect good quality leadership and management.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Ensure that all groups of girls make at least satisfactory progress.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Students' achievement is satisfactory. Although standards of attainment are below average this represents satisfactory achievement for students based on their starting points. Standards in art are high. Test results in core subjects at the end of year 9 are showing an upward trend in recent years, though pupils do not do as well as those in schools in similar circumstances.

GCSE results in 2005 show that most students, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, gained the results that might be expected, given their attainment levels on entry to the college. The 2006 results indicate an increase in the proportion of students gaining five or more grades A* to C and improved achievement by middle and higher ability students. However, in both 2005 and 2006, lower ability students did not do as well as they should and one in ten students left school without any GCSE passes. The achievement of lower-ability boys improved between 2005 and 2006 but lower ability girls still under-achieve. The school has improved its curriculum to provide courses that better match the needs and interests of these students. The current Year 11 is the first group to have benefited from these changes and the college's assessment records indicate that these students are now on track for much improved results, with almost all students expected to gain GCSE qualifications or their equivalent.

Standards in lessons observed were broadly satisfactory. Students of all ages generally make good progress in lessons and in written work, mainly as a result of the good quality teaching they receive. Because of the emphasis on encouraging students' opinions and the teachers' good use of questioning in lessons, students' skills in speaking develop well. However, students have gaps in their understanding because of weaknesses in their learning in earlier years. Standards are rising overall and are better than recent examination results suggest. Progress in science in Years 10 and 11 is too slow, but lesson observations suggest an improving picture.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The provision for students' personal development and well-being is good. The development of leadership skills is outstanding. Through learning coaches and student leaders older pupils have the skills to have a real voice in the college in all aspects, including the appointment of staff. Student leaders follow a very good programme of formal training and they support younger pupils well in settling in. The college makes excellent provision for encouraging students to adopt healthy lifestyles through the wide range of sports activities, the provision of healthy meals and through developing good awareness of what makes for a healthy lifestyle. Attendance is average: it has improved because students enjoy school more and see it as more relevant to their needs.

Students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural education is good, with strengths in social education. Behaviour is good. Students develop very positive attitudes to learning and

a strong sense of responsibility for their own behaviour and actions and for the impact of these on other people. It is clear from discussion with members of the local community and from parental questionnaire responses that the reputation of the college is much improved, with a marked decrease in anti-social behaviour in the community. The college works hard in conjunction with other agencies to try to combat such behaviour. Pupils' involvement in local projects and the close and increasing involvement of staff in social activities in and around the college have fostered very positive relationships between the college and its community. There is a high uptake of extra-curricular sport through the college, whose facilities are used extensively for the promotion of sport in Scarborough. For example, a centre of excellence for football meets here.

The school makes satisfactory inroads into preparing its students for future employment or training. Students develop good skills in team work and inter-personal relations, the curriculum is increasingly relevant and there are good links with business.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

In judging that teaching and learning are satisfactory, the college has underestimated the rapid rate of improvement in students' learning as a result of the decisive actions it has taken to support and improve teaching. These improvements centre round 'building learning power' based on the '4 Rs': resilience, resourcefulness, reflectiveness and reciprocity. Students say that they value the way teachers respect them by allowing them to play an active part in their learning. Talking with partners is very important to them and teachers allow time for students to sort out their thoughts before opening up to the whole class. Teachers check students' understanding through probing questions that make them think more deeply. However, not all students are thoroughly involved and responsible for their learning and the college is well aware that there is still some work to do to ensure that teaching and learning are always good across the different subjects. Inspectors judged that pupils were making good progress in lessons, though this is not yet reflected in their overall achievement in published examination results.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is innovative and lively in meeting the needs of students throughout the school. The 'Opening Minds' programme in Years 7 and 8 promotes independent learning and makes up for deficiencies in basic skills through linking literacy to other subjects. The pace of learning is kept up by starting the Key Stage 4 curriculum early, in Year 9. Recent additions to the choices on offer, such as hair and beauty and vocational qualifications in physical education (PE), stimulate students' interest well. There is a good range of sporting activities and many students get involved. PE is cited

as a popular subject by all year groups. Provision for students' personal and social education is satisfactory and provides useful information for coping with life outside school, but it lacks the added stimulus brought by outside speakers.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The college takes very good care of all its students. In particular it provides very effective support for vulnerable students. There is a comprehensive network of arrangements for promoting students' safety, health and well-being. Students speak highly of the support they receive and say that there is always someone to turn to if they have a problem. The role of the students in this as leaders and coaches, in their chosen uniform of 'positive hoodies', is very imaginative. It is highly effective in promoting positive attitudes to learning and in creating a safe and welcoming atmosphere in the college. The systems for child protection, health and safety and for the checking of staff all meet current requirements. Arrangements for monitoring and supporting students' progress are good. Students know their targets and their current grades and are involved in planning for improvement. Because of this, as one student said, 'We help the teachers to help us.' PE has led the way in developing assessment systems to aid students' learning. In some subjects, for example in art, English, modern foreign languages and PE, students are very well informed about how they can get to the next level or grade, but the quality of the advice that students get is not as precise in all their other subjects and the college rightly identifies this as an area for development.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management have been strengthened and are good, including the support from the governing body and from the local authority. There are strong systems in place to ensure that the quality of education continues to improve. The college provides good value for money. The leadership and management of the headteacher are outstanding and have had a significant impact on all aspects of the life of the college. The key to this has been promoting the personal development of students to improve their behaviour, emotional intelligence and sense of responsibility. Sports College status has had a good impact on raising standards and has made an excellent contribution to students' personal development. For example, all the current Year 9 take a qualification in PE which includes a Sports Leader Award. Students are rightly proud of their role in developing sporting activities in local primary schools. There are very strong links with the local community, for example through the local leisure centre, which the college runs effectively, and through a growing programme of social activities.

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Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

I am writing to thank you for your contribution to the recent inspection of your college and to share our findings with you. It is unusual to find a school or college where students have as great a voice as you do in so many aspects of college life. Equally, it was interesting to have one of your student learning coaches shadow the visiting inspector monitoring the quality of the inspection!

We were very impressed by your confidence and friendliness and by the atmosphere in school generally. We feel much of this is related to the opportunities which have come your way through being a specialist sports college, especially in the development of leadership skills and in team-working. You told us, as did your parents and others, that you felt the college was much improved and attributed this clearly to the outstanding leadership of your headteacher. The inspectors agree with you on this and we, too, see an improving picture, especially in lessons. The headteacher and his staff are working together well with your parents and the community to ensure you make the most of the opportunities for learning. However, it takes time for new systems and improvement to show in examination results.

Here are our findings.

- The quality of education overall is satisfactory.
- Most of you make satisfactory progress.
- Your standards are adequate, though below national average.
- Your personal development is good.
- There are excellent opportunities for you to develop leadership skills.
- You have good opportunities to develop your speaking skills in lessons.
- The curriculum is imaginative and has evolved well to meet your needs.
- The school cares, guides and supports you well.
- Your behaviour is good: you generally show very positive attitudes to learning.
- You are developing more responsibility for your own actions.
- Your attendance is average and better than it used to be.
- By and large you enjoy school and feel safe there: there is a good atmosphere.
- Student leaders/coaches provide good support and also help new students settle in.
- Teaching is good. Inspectors saw some outstanding lessons.
- The school is well led and managed.

In order to improve further, we have asked your headteacher to attend to the following:

- too few students reach the required standards in mathematics and English at age 16 and science results are not good enough
- some lower ability girls are not making as much progress as they should.

We wish you all the best for the future.