

Westbourne Sports College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	124845
Local Authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	359791
Inspection dates	30 September–01 October 2010
Reporting inspector	Roger Whittaker

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1066
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	64
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Ron Impey
Headteacher	Mr Christopher Edwards
Date of previous school inspection	20 February 2008
School address	Marlow Road Ipswich IP1 5JN
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Age group	11–18
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 38 lessons, observed 38 teachers and held meetings with representatives of the governing body, staff and groups of students. They observed the school's work and looked at the school's improvement plan, department reviews and monitoring data in relation to students' progress and the quality of teaching. Inspectors also took account of 135 parental/carer questionnaires, 133 student questionnaires and 74 staff questionnaires.

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

- the evidence to show that the school has addressed the issues raised in the previous inspection report
- the consistency of leadership and management, at all levels, in addressing the need to raise standards
- the improvements in sixth form provision in order to meet the needs and aspirations of all students.

Information about the school

Westbourne Sports College is an above average-sized comprehensive school. The college is in the process of changing from 11–18 to 11–16 status. As a result, the college is in its final year with a sixth form, which contains only Year 13 students. The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds varies from year to year, with the largest numbers from Bangladeshi and dual white and black Caribbean heritage, but is generally similar to the national average. The percentage of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of educational needs, is significantly above average. The majority of these students are at the 'school action' stage. The school has recently experienced some staffing changes at senior leadership level and has introduced a larger senior leadership team, which includes some middle managers seconded from within the school.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

Westbourne Sports College is an improving school, the improvement being brought about by the restructured leadership team ensuring that well-thought-out strategies for improvement are having a positive impact on provision and, in turn, on outcomes for students. The satisfactory governance has played a major role in supporting the headteacher and senior staff in implementing the strategies. However, the governing body is not yet holding the school to account for the outcomes of its actions. The good curriculum and care, guidance and support ensure that the needs of all students are met better than has been the case for the past few years. As a result, attainment, which has remained significantly below national averages since 2007, has improved. The school has closed the gap in 2010 and results are nearer to the national average. The rates of progress seen in many lessons and through the school's recently introduced data and tracking systems suggest that current Year 11 students may close the gap still further.

The school has a satisfactory capacity not only to sustain current levels of performance but also to improve further as systems and procedures begin to be embedded into the ethos of the school. This is evident in the progress the school has made in addressing those areas causing concern at the last inspection and also in some cases exceeding the targets it has set itself, for example in physical education, in which results were above the national average. Most of the staff understand fully what the school is striving to achieve and are committed to those goals. The school is improving its self-evaluation and is now much clearer about the key priorities for improvement. The school has a good range of effective partnerships with other schools, businesses and the local community.

Despite the significant improvements that have been made, areas of inconsistency remain. The school has accurately identified the inconsistencies and has set tackling them as priorities in its improvement plan. There are variations in attainment and progress between subjects. This is because, although teaching has improved, there remain inconsistencies in the use of assessment to support learning and the extent to which learning activities are matched to students' capabilities. In some lessons, the expectations of teachers and students are not high enough. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching is not yet rigorous enough in identifying the learning taking place in order to plan appropriately focused training for staff. Strong tracking of students in danger of underachieving or with additional needs has been used well to target intervention strategies effectively. This has resulted in all students being able to learn and make progress at the same rate.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Remove the inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, so that the majority of lessons are good and better, by:
 - using assessment data to plan lessons in which outcomes are linked to individual needs
 - ensuring that all students know what they can do and how to improve
 - ensuring that teachers have high expectations of how well students can make progress.

- Improve the monitoring and evaluation of teaching so that lessons are judged on the quality of learning taking place in the lesson.

About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Students join the school with below-average attainment. By the time they leave, the majority reach standards which remain below the national average. However, in 2008 there was a decline in standards, which began the previous year, and results for students were significantly below the national averages both for five A* to C GCSE grades and five A* to C GCSE grades including English and mathematics. There was some improvement in 2009 in both English and mathematics but overall standards still remained significantly below average. Following the 2009 results, the restructured senior leadership team were quick to deal with the situation and, consequently, improve the learning and progress of students. The improvements ensured that the progress made previously in 2009 was maintained in 2010. The current Year 11 students are on track to continue this improvement and achieve the schools challenging targets for five A* to C grades including English and mathematics and, in so doing, close the gap with the national average. The school has made good progress in ensuring that the progress of individual students, including students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those from minority ethnic groups, is in line with the overall satisfactory rates of progress.

Students' attitudes to learning and their ability to apply themselves in lessons have improved. This is reflected in the satisfactory and sometimes good progress they make in many lessons. The students demonstrate a good understanding of how to be safe. Bullying incidents are rare and the students are confident that there is always a member of staff to talk to should the need arise. The students say that there are many opportunities to develop their understanding of being healthy. Many adopt active lifestyles, benefiting from the large range of physical activities organised through the college's sports specialism. A minority of parents and carers expressed

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concerns about the behaviour of students. However, the inspection found that the school had taken significant steps to improve behaviour and that it is now good. The number of exclusions has reduced and attendance is above average. The students are particularly enthusiastic about opportunities to contribute to the school and wider community. This is especially true of activities planned in primary schools through the sports and modern foreign languages leadership courses and community involvement in raising money for charity.

The students have a good awareness of the value of diverse cultures and of moral, spiritual and social issues. This awareness comes as a result of their involvement in a range of activities, including planned events in personal and social development. However, some students do not yet develop their basic skills of literacy and numeracy so that these skills contribute well to their future economic well-being. Strong systems are in place to promote attendance and these have resulted in above-average attendance figures and also to a reduction in the number of persistent absentees.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	3
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

Good relationships between students and teachers create a positive environment for learning which results in students making satisfactory and sometimes good progress in most lessons. Many teachers are knowledgeable and passionate about their subjects and transmit their enthusiasm to the students. In the best lessons, teachers

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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use a range of activities, which successfully engage students in learning and enable them to know what they can do and how to improve. For example, the students were highly motivated in a Year 7 modern foreign language lesson in which they worked on improving their pronunciation of French words through a role play using actions and gestures to support language. They used self- and peer-assessment, supported by teacher feedback, so that they knew how well they were learning. Also, in a Year 8 Geography lesson, students knew what level they would be working at because the teacher related learning outcomes to levels. Students have an understanding of their targets and a few teachers use assessment to plan lessons and to monitor students’ progress closely. Despite many strengths in the teaching observed during the inspection, there remain inconsistencies. Some teachers do not always use assessment data to plan lessons which engage students through interesting activities and to take account of students’ individual needs. Learning outcomes are not always clear and, therefore, teachers do not ensure that students know what they can do and how to improve. Teachers do not always have high expectations of students and so they are sometimes too easily pleased with progress which is not as good as it should be.

Since the last inspection, the school has continued to develop the curriculum to ensure that it meets the differing needs and aspirations of all groups of students more effectively. The students comment very positively about the range of opportunities available to them, both within the curriculum and as extra-curricular activities. There are many examples of curriculum development having a beneficial impact on improving outcomes, such as the new physical education options of GCSE, BTEC sports and certificate of achievement, which have resulted in results in this subject being above the national average.

The students are enthusiastic in their praise for the school’s good care, guidance and support. The students are well known as individuals and pastoral managers are well organised and effective in providing good support for students. Well-timed and targeted interventions address students’ learning difficulties, enabling the students to access the curriculum and learn independently. Transition from primary schools is well planned and enables students to settle quickly into their new school. Support for students who enter the school at different times from the usual is good, with individual support available especially for those whose first language is not English. Students receive good advice from school staff and outside agencies, enabling them to make the transition from school to further education, training and work.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

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How effective are leadership and management?

The enthusiasm of the headteacher, supported by an effective senior leadership team, has focused the school on raising standards by creating a culture of working together to ensure improvements in the quality of learning and progress for all students. This has been reflected by the recently introduced management structure, which delegates responsibility, but, increasingly, holds staff to account for their actions and their outcomes. This structure is in response to examination results, which have been significantly below the national average since 2008. The change has resulted in improved data systems, which are now being used to target those students at risk of underachieving. There are clearly defined roles and responsibilities throughout the school and middle managers are now more accountable for the performance of their departments. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning at all levels is not accurately identifying appropriate areas for improvement, however, because it focuses too heavily on what the teacher does and not how well the students are learning. As a result, lesson evaluations are often overly generous. Some improvement in teaching and learning has taken place, but the percentage of good and better lessons is not high enough.

The school knows the importance of engaging with parents and carers, in order that they can support their children’s learning. The school’s promotion of equal opportunities is good; for example, the school has targeted groups of students who were not achieving as well as others and has made sure that all groups of students now make progress at the same rate. The development of community cohesion is at an early stage. The school has strong links with communities both locally and world-wide, enabling most students to experience communities which are different from their own. However, this practice is not yet managed and reviewed systematically. Safeguarding procedures are good. They involve clear record keeping, which is constantly reviewed and closely monitored. The school’s specialist status is well managed and is having a significant impact on the school through curriculum developments and community and partnership work. The governing body knows the school well and provides good support, but it does not challenge the school sufficiently regarding the quality of teaching and the progress being made by all groups of students.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	3
The effectiveness of the school’s engagement with parents and carers	2

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The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
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	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	3

Sixth form

Students, in 2009, completed the sixth form with results which were broadly in line with the national average. Results in 2009 for Year 12 students taking the AS-level in English indicated that students were achieving below the national average and resulted in a few students achieving 'U' grades. However, the sixth form, which now only has Year 13 students, has mirrored the main school in improving provision in order to raise standards. Consequently, results improved in 2010, but with variations between subjects. Current Year 13 students are making good progress when studying vocational courses, but less so when studying 'A2' courses. The students demonstrate good teamwork skills, as when supporting younger students to feel safe in the school.

The quality of teaching observed supported the school's view that teaching has improved and that a larger percentage of lessons are now good. There were examples of good teaching where students were engaged by interesting activities and were developing independent learning skills to help them take increased responsibility for their learning. Where teaching was not as effective, students were not encouraged to think for themselves and teachers did not use assessment data to identify the progress being made by different groups. The students felt that the curriculum provided adequate breadth and balance. Many students have enriched their curricula by taking advantage of the opportunity to do the sports leaders course and to go on work experience. Care, guidance and support is a strength of the sixth form and helps students to prepare well for the next stage of their education and life. Satisfactory leadership of the sixth form is providing a focus on improving students' outcomes, with the development of clear plans which are at a very early stage of tackling remaining areas for improvement in teaching and assessment.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	3
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

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Views of parents and carers

A minority of parents and carers responded to the questionnaire. The majority were positive about the education their children received at Westbourne Sports College. Their views are generally in line with the judgements made by the inspectors, particularly in relation to how well the school keeps the students safe and how much their children enjoy school. A minority said that the school does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour. The school has had this as a priority for improvement and the inspectors found that it has resulted in behaviour now being good.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Westbourne Sports 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 135 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1066 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	29	21	98	73	5	4	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	22	16	101	75	6	4	1	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	35	26	80	59	12	9	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	34	25	84	62	8	6	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	23	17	91	67	6	4	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	11	93	69	17	13	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	13	10	92	68	18	13	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)	21	16	94	70	5	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	20	15	96	71	10	7	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	14	75	56	24	18	8	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	14	10	95	70	11	8	2	1
The school is led and managed effectively	24	18	93	69	8	6	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	43	32	76	56	9	7	0	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 all 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	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

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 are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring term 2009/10 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 pupils' 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.



4 October 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Westbourne Sports College, Marlow Road, Ipswich, IP1 5JN

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspection team when we visited your school recently. We enjoyed being in your lessons and were impressed with the maturity with which you answered our questions. We have decided that your school is satisfactory and improving in most areas.

These are the main findings of the inspection.

- You make satisfactory progress now, so that, while the standards you reach by the end of Year 11 are still below the national average, you are much closer to what is expected nationally.
- You attend school regularly and contribute well in school and to the wider community.
- You are now taught well in many lessons and are given opportunities to be involved in interesting activities, but the teaching is satisfactory overall.
- You are looked after well and supported through the school and the staff take good care to ensure this.
- Your headteacher and senior staff are enthusiastic and committed to improving the work of the school further so that you are progressing and achieving as well as you can.

We have asked the school to make the following improvements.

- Remove the remaining inconsistencies in the quality of teaching by ensuring activities in lessons enable you to achieve as well as you can.
- Improve the monitoring and evaluation of lesson observations so that the school knows how good learning is in all lessons.

You can help the school by making sure that you know your target grades and what you need to achieve them. We wish you well for your future at Westbourne Sports College.

Yours sincerely

Roger Whittaker
Lead inspector (on behalf of the inspection team)

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