

# Whitby Community College

Prospect Hill, Whitby, North Yorkshire, YO21 1LA

**Inspection dates** 23–24 October 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Standards are rising and students are now making good progress across the range of subjects.
- In 2013, the proportion of students achieving five GCSE passes at grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics, was above average.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and set tasks which motivate students as well as preparing them for examinations. There are examples of outstanding teaching in art and drama.
- Behaviour and safety are good because students demonstrate high levels of respect for their teachers and each other. Off-site provision offers students excellent levels of care and support.
- The headteacher and his leadership team are ambitious for students and have ensured that students' achievement and teaching continue to improve, particularly in mathematics.
- The governing body is well informed about the school's work and provides a rigorous level of challenge.
- The sixth form is good. Students achieve well because there is a good range of courses which meet their different needs and abilities.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Students do not receive the support they need to develop their reading, writing and number skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- There are not enough opportunities in lessons for students to show initiative and work things out by themselves.
- Marking does not always clearly identify the next steps students need to take to improve their work.
- Students eligible for the pupil premium do not yet achieve as well as their peers.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 38 lessons, three of which were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and middle leaders, groups of students, a member of the governing body, a representative from the county council and an external consultant who supports the college's work.
- Inspectors considered the views of the 92 parents who responded to Parent View, the online questionnaire. They analysed the results of the staff questionnaire to which 49 replies were received. Inspectors also considered four communications from parents which were received during the inspection.
- Inspectors analysed the 2013 examination results and the published results for previous years. They looked at the college's data on students' progress, lesson plans, minutes of meetings and records relating to behaviour, safety and attendance. They also reviewed the college's checks on how well it is doing and college improvement plans.

## Inspection team

Lisa Fraser, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Adrian Biddulph

Additional Inspector

Robert Jones

Additional Inspector

Judith Gooding

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The college is smaller than average.
- The majority of students are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for those students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those students that are looked after by the local authority and those from armed services personnel families, is below average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of educational needs is below average.
- The headteacher is a local leader in education who supports improvement in other schools.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- Fifteen students attend off-site alternative provision for part of their learning at Whitby Outreach Centre.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is never less than good and more often outstanding by:
  - improving the quality of marking and feedback so that students are clear about the next steps they need to take to improve their work
  - developing more opportunities in lessons for students to show their initiative and develop the skills they will need for later life
  - ensuring students, particularly boys, receive the support they need to develop their reading, writing and number skills in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
  - developing strategies to target the achievement of students eligible for the pupil premium so that they attain as well as their peers.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Students enter the college with average skills in reading, writing and mathematics. They now make good progress to attain above average results at the end of Year 11. This reflects good achievement from their starting points.
- In 2013, the proportion of students achieving five or more GCSE passes at grades A\* to C, including English and mathematics, increased to above average as a result of leaders' focus on improving the quality of teaching. College data indicates this improving trend will continue.
- A good proportion of more-able students gained top grades and higher than average numbers attained the English Baccalaureate.
- Achievement in English and mathematics improved and the proportion of students making the progress expected is now higher than average in both subjects. In English, students make good progress and teaching prepares students particularly well for examinations and controlled assessments.
- In mathematics, students are no longer entered early for their GCSE examination. Senior leaders have also taken decisive action to improve the quality of teaching. As a result, the proportion of students making accelerated progress has increased and now matches national figures.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make good progress because leaders are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity.
- Students typically achieve well in science. In art, students make good progress as a result of teaching which is often excellent. Overall, boys do not achieve quite as well as girls.
- Students eligible for the pupil premium currently make slower progress than their peers in English and mathematics but over time the gaps are closing. Additional funding has been spent on a variety of initiatives, including mentoring and counselling sessions, homework support and one-to-one booster classes in English. Nevertheless, these students are currently approximately a grade behind their peers in English and mathematics.
- Small numbers of students benefit from attending the college's off-site provision which offers excellent levels of care and support. Parents and teachers have high praise for the programmes on offer because they ensure that students' needs are met and they are not disadvantaged in their learning. Strong systems are in place to check students' progress, attendance and welfare and many quickly make the transition back into college.
- In the sixth form students make good progress on a wide range of A-level, BTEC and other qualifications on both one and two year courses.
- At A-level students achieve particularly well in chemistry, physics and electronics. Achievement on level 3 BTEC qualifications is strong.
- Senior leaders are working hard to ensure that students receive good quality careers information and guidance. Several students go on to top universities, including Oxford and Cambridge.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is improving and is good because it enables students to make good progress and achieve well across a range of subjects.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge and their planning demonstrates they are using data to make sure teaching is matched to most students' needs. Students are effectively engaged in their learning because relationships are very positive. Teachers use questioning techniques effectively to check students' understanding, adjust the task if necessary and encourage their participation.
- In the best lessons, particularly in creative subjects, teachers plan activities which deepen students' knowledge and there are plenty of opportunities for students to work collaboratively to review their own and others' progress. For example, students in a Year 10 art lesson made

outstanding progress in using their study of an artist's work to develop their own printing designs. Achievement in a Year 11 drama lesson was outstanding because students were able to prepare effectively for their examination by working collaboratively to explore their understanding of writing in dialect.

- Teaching assistants provide good support for the progress of disabled students and those with special educational needs in lessons.
- In less effective lessons, marking and feedback vary in quality and do not always give students enough information or guidance to identify the next steps in their learning and help them improve.
- Senior leaders are aware that teaching can improve still further by developing students' literacy skills across the range of subjects. Younger students say they would like more opportunity to show their initiative in lessons and develop the numeracy skills they will need for life after college.

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

- Students have positive attitudes to learning and are polite, well-mannered and considerate. Around the college at lunch and break times students demonstrate high levels of respect for the college environment and relate well to each other and to staff.
- College records indicate that attendance is above average for this age group. Assemblies regularly celebrate students' achievements and the new house system is both developing students' sense of team spirit and beginning to encourage parents to get more involved in college events.
- Students say they feel safe at school and the vast majority of parents agree. Incidents of bullying are rare and when they do happen, students have confidence that a member of staff will be able to help.
- Opportunities for students to get involved in college life are numerous. Leaders take account of students' views through the active student leadership team. Student leaders spoke enthusiastically to inspectors about the changes they have instigated, particularly in developing information technology to aid their learning. Sixth form students are good role models by mentoring their younger peers.
- Students have a good understanding of the harmful effects of harassment, including that based on racism and homophobia. However, their understanding of how to keep themselves safe on-line is less developed.
- Behaviour and safety are not outstanding because, in a small number of lessons where teaching is less effective, students can be passive and are not given enough opportunity to learn independently and think things out for themselves.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- Leadership and management are good because senior leaders have brought about marked improvement in raising overall standards and taken decisive action to improve the quality of teaching in mathematics, in particular. In the sixth form, students have achieved well over time.
- The school's monitoring and evaluation indicates that senior leaders know the college well and have identified appropriate priorities which will drive the college forward. Improvement plans are succinctly expressed to enable governors to effectively monitor their impact.
- Systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching rightly take achievement data, lesson observation, teachers' self-evaluation and student feedback into account. Teachers' performance is linked to the national 'Teachers Standards' in the new college performance management policy which is used to inform decisions around pay.
- Coaching and mentoring programmes run by experienced colleagues help teachers to develop their skills. Members of the student leadership team often participate in teacher training events

as part of the college-wide focus on learning.

- Leaders make expert use of data to rigorously assess the progress of groups of students in Year 11; their use of data to monitor and track students' achievement in the sixth form is developing.
- The range of subjects is broad with a good balance of academic and vocational subjects which meets students' needs. Careers information and guidance events, including presentations from the armed forces and taster days at universities, begin in Year 10 to ensure that all students are well prepared for the next stage in their learning.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength, as shown in the calm and friendly atmosphere where everyone gets along well. There is a wide range of after-school sporting and artistic activities and clubs.
- The raising of the participation age presents new challenges to the college and the headteacher is working with the community to develop a strategic vision for all young people in Whitby.
- The county council provides appropriate 'light-touch' support for this good and improving school.
- Inspectors explored issues around students' safety with senior leaders. At the time of the inspection no evidence was found to indicate that students are not safe and therefore safeguarding requirements are met. Staff are fully trained and knowledgeable about risk assessment and child-protection issues. The school takes all reasonable steps to ensure the behaviour and safety of students when attending off-site provision.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - A new Chair and vice chair have recently been appointed to the governing body. Governors are well-briefed by senior leaders on students' achievement, the quality of teaching, performance management and what the school is doing to reward good teaching and tackle underperformance. Link governors challenge leaders robustly on specific areas of the college's work. Governors have monitored the achievement of each student eligible for the pupil premium closely in order to reduce the gap in attainment between these students and their peers still further. Governors support the college by attending appropriate training.

## 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>	121667
<b>Local authority</b>	North Yorkshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	429517

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	14–18
<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>	829
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	323
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Richard Simpson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Keith Prytherch
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	8 December 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01947 602406
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