

Brockington College

Blaby Road, Enderby, Leicester, LE19 4AQ

Inspection dates 15–16 January 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Good 2
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.

- The college motto '*Learning to live life to the full*' is seen in high achievement and pupils enjoying a very positive wider educational experience.
- Teaching and learning are mainly good, with some that are outstanding. Teaching has improved strongly in recent years.
- Pupils are very well known by staff, so their personal needs are well provided for.
- All groups of pupils make good progress as they move through the college in all subjects, and notably in developing good literacy skills.
- Attainment is well above average in English and mathematics.
- The arrangements to keep pupils safe are exemplary. Pupils feel very safe, report that bullying is extremely rare and that any incidents are dealt with well by adults.
- Behaviour is good. In many classes students show excellent attitudes to learning, and behaviour around the college is calm, orderly and friendly.
- The college has a warm, welcoming ethos. Governors and senior staff have high expectations and are ambitious for the college to continue to improve.
- The Principal and his senior colleagues plan carefully and successfully to improve teaching and learning.
- Systems to track pupils' progress are rigorous. Small group work is used well to support those pupils who are identified as needing additional help.
- Governors know the strengths of the college and what can improve further. They have a good range of skills and experience to support and challenge college leaders and managers.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Work is not always challenging or fast-paced enough for all pupils to make outstanding progress and sustain excellent attitudes in all subjects and with all teachers.
- Lessons are not always pitched at the right level to fully stretch pupils, particularly the most able, and those who find learning more difficult.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 42 lessons, five of these jointly with senior leaders and managers. They also made shorter visits to some classrooms to look at group-support sessions and morning tutor groups.
- The team visited many different areas of the college and the site during lessons and at break times.
- Meetings were held with four different groups of pupils, members of the governing body, senior staff, subject and pastoral leaders and a small group of parents. A telephone conversation was held with the headteacher of a partner school in the local teaching partnership.
- The inspection team examined a range of college documentation, including development plans and policies, lesson plans, records of lesson monitoring and checks on pupils' work, and the minutes of meetings, including those of the governing body. Inspectors examined a range of data, both those available to the public and those used by the college to monitor current rates of pupils' progress and attendance.
- There had been 57 responses made to the online questionnaire Parent View by the end of the inspection. These were considered, along with parental questionnaires completed at college parents' evenings. Staff questionnaire returns were also taken into consideration.

Inspection team

David Martin, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Lynn Henfield	Additional Inspector
Paul Watson	Additional Inspector
Jacqueline Pentlow	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized Church of England voluntary aided secondary school. It converted to become an academy in August 2012. When its predecessor, also known as Brockington College, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- The large majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. A smaller proportion than is found nationally speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is lower than average. This is extra government funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, children looked after by the local authority, and/or pupils with a parent in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The college only has Key Stage 3 pupils so government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in secondary schools, do not apply.
- No pupils currently study for part of their education in alternative provision off site.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that all pupils, and groups of pupils, have challenging enough work so that they are able to make outstanding progress by:
 - teachers using the available data and information to plan lessons that are pitched at the right level for pupils of all abilities, and particularly the most able and those who find learning more difficult
 - making sure that the pace of lessons ensures that all students sustain excellent attitudes to their learning, in all subjects and with all teachers

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- From starting points that are well above the national average, pupils make good progress as they move through the college, reaching levels of attainment that are high compared to most pupils of a similar age.
- The percentage of pupils in Year 9 reaching Level 6 of the National Curriculum or better in English and mathematics in 2013 was around 20% above the national average. At Level 7, attainment is closer to average figures. Most groups attain similarly high levels in all subjects.
- Pupils who have a first language other than English make particularly good progress. Those from minority ethnic heritages make at least as good progress as other pupils. By carefully tracking the progress of different groups, the college demonstrates its commitment to all pupils having the same opportunity for success.
- The progress of different groups is mostly good. There are some differences between the progress of boys and girls, notably in English, but these gaps are narrowing. More-able pupils made average progress from their starting points, rather than the above-average progress made by other groups in the college in 2013.
- The attainment of pupils known to be eligible for support from the pupil premium is around expected levels but, despite their good progress, these pupils are around a term behind other students in English and mathematics by the time they leave. The progress of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is at least at expected levels, and better in English than in mathematics.
- College staff are aware of the gaps in performance and have identified additional help that is making a difference, particularly in terms of developing good literacy skills. Year 7 catch-up and pupil premium funding is used well to improve pupils' reading skills. There is now also a range of demanding activities provided to stretch the more able.
- The progress seen in the majority of lessons is good. Pupils usually demonstrate positive attitudes to learning, so that they work with good concentration and effort. They are productive in practical lessons and make strong gains in their literacy, numeracy and speaking and listening skills.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching in the college is good in the majority of lessons, and is outstanding in some. As a result, pupils make good progress. This is particularly true in English, mathematics and science, but also for most other subjects.
- In many lessons, pupils arrive promptly and are enthusiastic, and teachers use brisk activities to engage their interest. Activities are planned well to help pupils to learn new skills or knowledge quickly and they make good gains in understanding.
- Questioning has been a priority for improvement in the college. In many lessons, teachers now ensure that all pupils have the opportunity to answer by not only choosing those with their hands up. Pupils are sometimes given time to discuss their ideas briefly with a partner before

answering thus building their confidence.

- In the best questioning, teachers probe pupils to check that they understand the work, and encourage pupils to build on each other's ideas. This enables them to develop a deeper understanding, for example, of the way a character is described in Gothic novels.
- Relationships between pupils and between pupils and teachers are very strong. Because teachers' expectations are generally high, pupils work confidently with partners and contribute well in groups. At the same time, they can happily concentrate quietly on individual tasks for extended periods of time.
- Some teaching seen was truly inspiring. A lower ability English group were listening intently as their teacher played the role of a story teller as they sat around a 'campfire' in the middle of the room. The high quality of their questions and ideas showed how motivated they were.
- Marking has improved and is good. Work is regularly marked to the agreed college policy. There is some helpful self- and peer-assessment and pupils said that they appreciated having positive comments and clear suggestions for improving work in most lessons.
- Teachers regularly check that pupils know the levels that they are working at and what they will need to do to achieve a higher level. Occasionally, the levels suggested are not ambitious enough, given the standard of work that some pupils have already attained. Some teachers are not using the detailed information they have about pupils to plan appropriately challenging work.
- In some lessons, all pupils are given the same tasks to complete. This means that some of the most able pupils are not challenged sufficiently well and are completing tasks that are mundane. This is sometimes the case if the classes are of mixed ability, although it is occasionally also true of classes organised by pupils' abilities.
- Where work is too easy or hard, or the pace is too slow, pupils' attention and interest waver. This results in lessons where less work is completed and pupils do not understand why they are learning particular facts or skills, or what they are expected to achieve by the end of the lesson.
- The work provided for some lower ability sets is not sufficiently interesting or challenging. Small group interventions, particularly in literacy, are very effective in developing pupils' reading skills. As a result, reading ages for some students have increased impressively.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The college's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding. The single central record is thorough and complete. Safeguarding and safer recruitment training is up-to-date with regular updates, the latest being in January 2014.
- Staff monitor pupils whose circumstances might make them vulnerable very closely. Pastoral staff respond very quickly if there are concerns, and there is excellent on-going contact with families to try to anticipate difficulties that pupils might have so that they are helped to cope in college.
- Parents responding to Parent View and the college's own consultations overwhelmingly agree that pupils are kept safe. Pupils themselves told inspectors that they feel very safe in college. Bullying or any harassment is at a very low level, and they are confident that staff will deal

quickly with any difficulties that do arise.

- Pupils are very aware of different forms of bullying, for example through recent work on e-safety. They behave very sensibly around the site and look out for each other. For example, some pupils have asked staff to mark large pillars with bright painting as they feel that they are a potential hazard.
- Exclusions from the college are low and have fallen further recently. Attendance is better than that found in most schools, and fewer pupils are persistently absent than in most similar schools.
- The behaviour of pupils is good. Conduct around the site is sensible. Pupils are friendly, polite and considerate. They welcome visitors warmly and are confident. Many instances of caring, thoughtful behaviour were observed during the inspection, and parents told us that this is typical.
- The behaviour seen in lessons was mostly good, and sometimes exemplary. In a very small minority of lessons, where teaching required improvement, pupils' attitudes were not as good. Pupils told inspectors that poor behaviour, although not frequent, did occasionally disrupt their learning. Parental and staff responses also indicated that this is the case.

The leadership and management are good

- Brockington has a distinctive, positive ethos that is obvious to visitors who spend a short time in the college. This is confirmed by parental and staff responses and in discussions with pupils. It is based on tolerance and respect, high aspirations and a belief that all pupils can succeed.
- The Principal is respected by staff, parents and pupils for having very high expectations for the college. He is very outward-looking, playing a full part in local partnerships and in forging good relationships with the local family of primary and upper schools.
- The social, moral, cultural and spiritual development of pupils is outstanding. Every opportunity is taken in lessons and wider social and college community activities to raise awareness of social and moral issues. Spirituality is seen in assemblies and is evident in displays and pupils' involvement in additional activities.
- The curriculum strongly supports the personal and social development of pupils. It is varied and interesting, and the identified priority of improving literacy levels has had a marked impact on improving English results, particularly for boys, but also across all subject areas.
- Strong personal development can be seen, as just one of many examples, in the links that the college has with schools in Kenya. Not only does the college raise money, but visits are made where work is done to provide classrooms and equipment in Kenyan schools.
- The culture of high achievement is driven by a strong governing body and a determined and skilled senior team. Subject leaders' involvement in improving teaching and learning and in being responsible for pupil achievement is greatly improved since the college opened.
- There is regular monitoring of lessons and the wider activities in the college, leading to very accurate self-evaluation and shared understanding of where the college has built on existing strengths and where it might improve further.

- The development of teaching is skilfully led and partnership working with other local schools has led to significant improvements in the quality of teaching. In particular, questioning, marking and planning have improved strongly due to training and regular checking by leaders and managers.
- Systems for checking on pupils' progress, teaching quality, and attendance are very thorough. Regular checks are made as to how parents view the college and action is taken when issues are brought to the attention of the college, such as some recent minor concerns about homework.
- Parents are actively involved in the development of the college through influential parents' forum meetings. The college website provides good information and news that is much appreciated by parents.
- The college has strong relationships with partner schools and transition was said by pupils and parents to be very smooth from primary schools. Older pupils feel that they get good information about the preparation for moving to upper schools, usually directly from representatives of all the local schools.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors have a clear vision and ambition for the college based on achieving results in the top 10% of similar schools and providing the widest possible educational experience for pupils within a broadly Christian ethos.
- Governors bring a wealth of experience and expertise to their roles. Their committee structures are planned around key areas of college improvement priorities. They are involved in all appropriate stages of college improvement planning and self-evaluation.
- There is a strong understanding of college data and performance. Governors know the strengths of the college and are determined to improve the college further, particularly the quality of teaching and the progress made by all pupils.
- Governors visit the college regularly and record and share their findings. The minutes of meetings show that they regularly question the information that is presented to them and challenge college leaders and managers.
- Systems to manage the performance of staff meet all current requirements. Staff have clear targets to meet for teaching and pupils' progress, and do not progress through the pay structure if these are not met.
- Governors also identify and reward good teachers, and celebrate the many successes of staff and pupils. They are supportive and regularly involved in college activities.
- Finances are managed very well. In the last couple of years since the college opened as an academy they have balanced what was a deficit budget and now have a small planned surplus to ease the planned move to an 11-16 academy.
- Governors have been involved in decisions on how to spend additional resources like the pupil premium, and receive regular reports on the difference this money has made, for example in improving reading ages for targeted pupils.

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

Unique reference number	138521
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	425065

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–14
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	854
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gary Spencer
Principal	Christopher Southall
Date of previous school inspection	Not applicable
Telephone number	0116 286 3722
Fax number	0116 284 9365
Email address	admin@brockington.leics.sch.uk

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