

Stoke Park School and Community Technology College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103728
Local Authority	Coventry
Inspection number	308402
Inspection dates	21 April 2008
Reporting inspector	Peter Jones

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	1063
Sixth form	182
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr E McCluskey
Headteacher	Mr G Shears
Date of previous school inspection	13–17 September 2004
School address	Dane Road Coventry West Midlands CV2 4JW
Telephone number	02476 450214
Fax number	02476 636129

Age group	11–18
Inspection date(s)	21 April 2008
Inspection number	308402

© Crown copyright 2008

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Stoke Park School and Community Technology College is a mixed comprehensive school with 1063 students aged 11–19 years, including 167 in the Sixth Form. It serves an inner-city catchment area. The ability profile of pupils on entry is below the national average, and the proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is much higher than average. The school is oversubscribed, with significant numbers of students who travel from outside the catchment area. A third of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. The school has been a Technology College since 1997.

Inspectors evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: whether students achieve all they can, with a particular focus on achievement in mathematics; to investigate the school's judgements on the quality of teaching; and whether there is a consistent approach to management and further improvement across the school. Evidence was gathered from discussions with the headteacher, senior and middle managers, and governor representatives. In addition, there was observation of parts of several lessons, scrutiny of school information and its self-evaluation, parent questionnaires and discussions with students. Other aspects of the school were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in the self-evaluation, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school with a positive ethos and an inclusive approach to the provision of education. Students' achievement is good, and the standards reached are satisfactory. Last year there was a dip in standards in mathematics, but this is starting to be put right. The school provides very consistent and effective management of student behaviour, and there have been no permanent exclusions in eight years. Students themselves play a vital role by being generally self-disciplined and well behaved. Parents are happy with the education provided for their children, and they rightly feel that the school is well managed and safe. The headteacher, in post for two weeks at the time of the inspection, is establishing a clear view of the school's strengths and areas for development. The senior leadership team is strong and well established, and helps secure good management for the school. Subject managers provide good support for their students, but their approaches to monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in the different subjects, particularly mathematics, is not as consistent as it should be. The governing body gives good support based on long experience and expert knowledge of the needs of students. The school's self-evaluation is largely accurate, although it underestimates the outstanding quality of care, support and guidance it provides. The school has good capacity to improve.

Standards are satisfactory and this represents good achievement because many of the students, and in particular girls, enter the school with lower than average attainment, but make good progress during their time at Stoke Park. The school is aware that severe staffing difficulties led to a dip in standards in mathematics at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 last year, but is able to demonstrate that standards have risen again during this academic year.

The personal development of students is good, and is a priority of the school. The school has had real success in developing students' willingness to adopt healthy lifestyles as, for example, when many students take part in a 'Dump the Junk' project to encourage healthy eating. The school's personal, social and health education programme is well designed to help students understand the health risks of smoking, drinking and drugs. Students also have a good choice of different activities during compulsory physical education (PE) lessons. The behaviour of students in class and on playgrounds is good, and movement around the school is well ordered and generally calm. There is a strong sense of enjoyment and belonging, and students show pride in the achievements of the school, and the support it provides for them. As a result of this support and much improved monitoring systems, students' attendance is satisfactory as most attend regularly and the number who are persistently absent is reducing. The students' view of the school is characterised by the remark of one of them: 'If you put in the effort, the school will give you three times as much back'.

Elected year and whole-school students councils have some influence in managing the school, and recently took part in interviews for the appointment of a new headteacher. Levels of participation in after-school activities are high, and many students benefit from extra subject support classes provided after school. Contact between different year groups in the school is underdeveloped, so that formal opportunities to enable older students to offer support to younger students are

limited. The school has highly effective links with the local community through the provision on site of adult education classes and through participation in local consortium and link schemes with others schools and colleges.

The school accurately judges its teaching to be good. Teaching shows sound subject knowledge and expert use of resources, including information and communication technology (ICT), and confident approaches to class management, monitoring and assessment, which ensures students make good progress. The school correctly identifies where teaching is less than good, such as where the buzz of excitement associated with good teaching and learning is missing, and puts in place appropriate support to improve provision.

As lessons are taught effectively, students are enthusiastic learners, and achieve well. Their classwork and homework are well supported by a school-wide virtual learning environment (VLE) allowing students to save their coursework and submit homework in electronic form, for example. The school ensures access to computers for all students, lending laptops to those in Key Stage 4 who do not have computers at home. Specialist college status has helped the school to develop a distinctive curriculum through a focus on technology, including ICT and engineering. The school has developed a flexible approach to the curriculum which ensures that students take courses in subjects and at levels well matched to their needs.

The care, support and guidance of students are outstanding. There are robust systems of pastoral care, with a well integrated and consistent approach taken by heads of year, learning support teachers and assistants, and outside agencies where needed. Guidance for pupils moving from their primary schools to Stoke Park is very good, and support for vulnerable children and their families is well established. Staff know their students as individuals, and provide patient and careful support to meet their needs. As a result, students feel safe and secure at the school, and speak very warmly about the support and care they receive. They say there is very little bullying, and that the school deals with it quickly and effectively if it occurs. The school has suitable child protection and safeguarding policies and measures in place.

Leadership and management are good, and are reflected in the school's very clear focus on inclusion, care and personal development of students. The senior team provides good leadership and continues to promote the clear and well-established vision for the school. The current roles and responsibilities of senior leaders are under review to ensure that the best use is made of available skills and expertise. Middle managers show conscientious approaches to their work, and are held accountable for their areas of responsibility. Nevertheless, methods of monitoring and evaluation of faculty and department progress vary, making it more difficult for senior staff to systematically identify areas for improvement across the school. The new headteacher has made a well-judged start on reviewing management roles and responsibilities.

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 2

This is a good, well managed sixth form. Students value the high quality of guidance and care they receive. They make good progress, and achieve satisfactory standards. The sixth form is inclusive, and caters for the full range of student abilities from the most able to those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Technology college status has encouraged the development of a good post-16 curriculum, with strong links with local universities. The school is continuing to develop vocational courses to meet students' needs. Teaching is good, and regular monitoring of performance helps students to improve and successfully complete their courses. A new and well-equipped sixth form block encourages students to feel positive about their post-16 learning, and provides them with very good facilities.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure consistency of monitoring by middle managers to promote higher quality teaching and provision, particularly in mathematics.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.	School Overall	16–19
---	-----------------------	--------------

Overall effectiveness

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

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	IE²
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The attendance of learners	3	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2	IE²
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	IE²

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.

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has insufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

² IE – denotes that insufficient evidence was available to inspectors for a judgement to be made.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	



22 April 2008

Dear Students

**Inspection of Stoke Park School and Community Technology College,
Coventry CV2 4JW**

Thank you for welcoming us to Stoke Park and for sharing your views of the school with us. We found that you are attending a good school which has many strengths and which looks after you very well. Students of all abilities, including those who find it more difficult to learn quickly, are well catered for. We found that you enjoy your education, and that you value the very high quality of individual care and support that the staff give you. One of you remarked to the inspectors: 'If you put in the effort, the school will give you three times as much back'. We found that this view is held by most of you, and we agree with it.

We found that behaviour in the school is good, and you play a vital role in the success of the school by acting responsibly and showing good attitudes to learning. The progress you make in most subjects is good, although many of you know that your progress in mathematics was limited last year.

We found that the great majority of your parents are happy with the education the school provides for you, and they are right to feel that the school is well managed and safe. You make a good contribution to the life of the school through the year and school councils, and have a good understanding of healthy life-styles and staying safe.

We have asked the school to continue to improve the quality of teaching in mathematics. We have also asked that checks on the quality of teaching and learning in all subjects are approached in a uniform way so that the school can be confident you are making the best possible progress.

Thank you once again for your help, and I wish you every success in the future.

Yours sincerely

Peter Jones
Lead inspector