

# Chessington Community College

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102599
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kingston upon Thames
<b>Inspection number</b>	355218
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 February 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Robin Gaff

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	780
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	130
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Brenda Brevitt
<b>Headteacher</b>	Robert Niedermaier-Reed
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 January 2008
<b>School address</b>	Garrison Lane Chessington KT9 2JS
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 35 lessons, observing 34 teachers. Inspectors held meetings with staff, students, members of the governing body, and parents and carers. They observed the school's work and looked at planning and evaluation documents. They scrutinised the school's own analysis of students' attainment and progress. A total of 123 questionnaires completed by parents and carers were received and analysed, as well as questionnaires completed by students and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The extent to which the college is succeeding in reversing the decline in students' progress and accelerating the rise in attainment.
- The impact of measures it has taken to address aspects of weaker teaching and to improve the use of assessment.
- The contribution made by developments in the curriculum, and the school's specialism, to improving students' achievement and enhancing their personal development.
- The impact of leaders and managers at all levels in ensuring that improvement in students' achievement is sufficiently rapid.

## Information about the school

Chessington Community College is smaller than the average secondary school. It is a non-selective school in an area which operates a policy of selection by ability. The proportion of students who join the college at other than the normal times for transfer is higher than that found nationally. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is above average. The main group represented in the school is White British. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is larger than that found nationally. The proportion of students, who, when they join the college, have special educational needs and/or disabilities, is above average. These cover a wide range of additional needs. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is above average. The college operates some joint sixth form classes, attended by a small proportion of its students, in partnership with two other local schools. It gained specialist status as a sports college in September 2004. The current principal took up the post in September 2009, at the same time as the new college premises were inaugurated.

**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**

**2**

## Main findings

Chessington Community College is a satisfactory and rapidly improving school. College leaders' ambition to drive up attainment and accelerate the rate at which students make progress has been given added impetus by the provision of an attractive and well-designed environment for learning. Staff and students, as well as parents and carers, comment on the much-improved facilities and the sense of pride which students have in their new building. This has enabled teachers to use up-to-date resources, including information and communication technology (ICT), to good effect in enhancing students' learning and progress.

The new principal has led many initiatives which have brought about considerable improvement since the last inspection. Although students' attainment remains low, it is now much closer to national averages because students of all age groups make good progress, resulting in satisfactory achievement. This includes those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The recent decline in the progress students made from when they joined the college until they reached the end of Key Stage 4 has been reversed. Teaching has improved so that it is now consistently good. However, although the proportion of outstanding teaching is increasing, there also remain some pockets of weaker practice. Leaders are well aware of this, and have already acted decisively to improve the quality of teaching. The sixth form, which the previous inspection judged satisfactory, is now providing a good standard of education for its students.

The college has developed its curriculum so that it now provides a good match to the needs of students with different abilities and interests. Leaders recognise the need to extend the teaching methods, which have been implemented successfully in Years 7 and 8, so that they are used more widely across the college. Systems for assessing and monitoring students' progress have been refined, and leaders can intervene promptly to provide additional support to students who are at risk of underachieving. Students who are learning English as an additional language, as well as those who join the college at other than the normal times for transfer, receive well-targeted support. Several parents and carers noted the extent to which their children had developed in self-confidence since joining the college. One parent commented that, owing to the school's ethos, her daughter had 'developed emotionally and academically and made new friends'.

The college has established a clear policy with regard to rewards and sanctions. As a result, behaviour has improved, which has helped to establish the college's growing reputation in the local community. Although bullying has not been completely eradicated, students say that it is dealt with quickly, fairly and firmly. Students are polite and helpful to visitors, and make a good contribution to both the school and the wider community. They benefit considerably from the school's specialist status as a sports college, and they take part in a good range of cultural activities. Students from a variety of backgrounds and

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traditions relate well to one another, and the school is a harmonious community. Students develop a good understanding of different cultures, although their opportunities for direct contact with communities elsewhere in the United Kingdom and the wider world are more limited.

Members of the governing body show a good awareness of the college's priorities for further development. They are prepared to challenge as well as to support college leaders. Leaders have set challenging but realistic targets for further improvement, particularly with regard to raising attainment still further. They have accurately evaluated both the strengths and the weaknesses in current performance, and have put in place ambitious plans for future development. Together with the advances that have already been made, this indicates the college's good capacity for sustained improvement.

Up to 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.

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

- Raise students' attainment so that, by 2013, it is consistently in line with or above national averages, by
  - eliminating weaker teaching and increasing the proportion that is excellent
  - ensuring that students have sufficient opportunities in lessons for independent learning
  - ensuring that all teachers check students' understanding frequently and thoroughly in lessons.
- Extend the teaching approaches adopted in Years 7 and 8 so that they are used more widely across the college.
- Give students more opportunities for first-hand contact with members of other communities elsewhere in the United Kingdom and the wider world.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

When they join the school, students' attainment, particularly in English and mathematics, is well below that found nationally. In recent years, levels of attainment represented by students' results in GCSE examinations have risen slowly but steadily. Passes achieved and module results already gained by current Year 11 students, as well as the college's own reliable assessment data, indicate that attainment is now rapidly approaching national averages. In the great majority of lessons, students show very positive attitudes to learning. For example, in an outstanding Year 7 lesson, students of very varying ability worked extremely well, with minimal adult supervision, while the teacher focused successfully on alternating groups. Students were able to explain clearly and confidently what they were doing. Some of their written work, for example sophisticated and highly expressive poems in the style of William Wordsworth, was of a standard well above age-related expectations. However, in a small minority of lessons observed, learning was slower and a few students became distracted because teachers did not check their understanding regularly or thoroughly enough, and did not adapt activities in response to the progress students were making.

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Students say they enjoy their college experience. One Year 8 girl commented, 'Every day, I look forward to coming to college!' Students feel safe, and they behave sensibly in practical lessons, for example when using soldering equipment. They report that bullying is rare, and older students confirm that it occurs much less frequently than in the past. Students' good understanding of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle is confirmed by their high levels of participation in out-of-school sports activities, and by their choice of healthy options at lunchtime. Students behave considerately towards one another and treat their new building with respect. Many take on positions of responsibility as prefects or help with reception duties. The school's specialist status enables many of them to develop leadership skills by acting as sports leaders, working with younger students as well as with primary school pupils. This, together with their increasing ability to apply basic skills, for example in ICT, gives them a satisfactory preparation for further study and employment. Students gain a good understanding of different faiths and traditions through lessons and assemblies. A high proportion enjoy developing their creative and performing skills by taking part in the college's ambitious and successful drama productions.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

**How effective is the provision?**

Most teaching is securing good learning and progress. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which they use to good effect to motivate and engage students. Lessons are well planned to include a range of activities, although these do not always include enough

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opportunities for independent learning, through, for example, group or paired work. Students know their targets and what they need to do to reach them, because teachers mark their work thoroughly and make sure students know what to do to improve. In an outstanding drama lesson, the teacher ensured that students gained an excellent understanding of technical vocabulary, such as 'vocalisation'. They then put their knowledge into practice in group activities, where they all showed an extremely good grasp of the techniques they had been learning about.

The college has adopted an integrated approach to learning in Years 7 and 8. This eases students' transition from primary school and enables teachers to focus on developing students' skills, for example in English and mathematics, through other aspects of the curriculum, such as history and geography. The college now provides a greater range of vocational options for students in Years 10 and 11, although the impact of this has yet to be fully reflected in students' achievement. Students benefit from a good range of extracurricular activities, particularly in sport, as well as a variety of trips and educational visits. The high quality of art work, created by students and displayed around the college, indicates that this area of the curriculum is also strong.

The college has established effective systems for ensuring that students, irrespective of when they join the college, settle in quickly. Several parents and carers commented on this. The college has raised its expectations with regard to students' behaviour. Initially, this resulted in a rise in the number of those who had to be temporarily excluded, but this has now been reversed. The college carefully monitors patterns of student absence and promptly addresses any areas of concern. As a result, the attendance of those groups of students whose absence rates nationally are above average is in line with or above that of their peers. The college has strong links with a wide range of outside professionals and organisations, such as the local family advice service, which enable it to provide very good support to potentially vulnerable students, including those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. This ensures that these students make good progress, so that, in many cases, the college can scale down the amount of support it provides, because the students can be successfully reintegrated into mainstream classes.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Leaders regularly monitor the quality of teaching and learning by observing lessons and scrutinising students' work. Their evaluation of strengths and weaknesses is accurate and robust, and they have put in place systems, including coaching, which have considerably improved teachers' capacity to raise students' attainment. The principal has a highly visible

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presence around the college. He has raised expectations with regard to students' behaviour and staff performance. Leaders communicate their vision for improvement clearly. Although not all staff are as yet comfortable with the level of challenge they are facing, most, including the committed and effective middle leaders, have responded positively. The governing body includes a good range of experience and expertise, is very much aware of the college's priorities for improvement and is strongly involved in strategic planning. Policies are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect college developments as well as national requirements. The college has secure systems for safeguarding students, including vetting staff appointments and ensuring that staff training is regularly updated. It has established effective procedures for communicating with and consulting parents and carers, including those whose children are learning English as an additional language. The college has implemented successful policies and procedures for promoting equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination. It has succeeded in adapting its provision to meet the needs of different groups, with the result that all significant groups represented in the college achieve equally well. Racist behaviour is extremely rare, and there is no evidence of discrimination. The college's promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory. It has established good relations with the local community but has yet to forge direct links with, for example, schools elsewhere in the United Kingdom or the wider world.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

**Sixth form**

Students join the sixth form with levels of attainment that are lower than those found nationally for students when they begin sixth form courses. By the time they leave the college, their attainment, as indicated by their performance in gaining nationally recognised qualifications including A and AS level, is in line with national averages. This represents good achievement, and enables all to progress to higher education, further training or employment. Students enjoy their time in the sixth form, which they say is like

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a 'big family'. They make a good contribution to college life through the help they give to younger students. Teaching in the sixth form is good. Teachers know their subject areas well and share with students, to good effect, their awareness of examination requirements. Students know how well they are doing and what to do to gain the grades they need, because teachers give them detailed and constructive feedback about their work. Students say that teachers are always willing to give them extra help when necessary. The college provides a satisfactory range of courses, including choices which are made possible by its collaboration with other schools. They receive good advice about options for future study and employment. Leaders and managers, including the principal, have a very good knowledge and understanding of what constitutes high quality sixth form education. They have accurately identified the provision's strengths, as well as priorities for further development.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

## Views of parents and carers

Inspectors' judgements support the views of parents and carers. A very large majority of those who responded to the questionnaire say their children enjoy college life and most are happy with their children's experience there. Most believe that the college keeps their children safe and agree that teaching is good, that their children are making sufficient progress and that they are well prepared for the future. A large majority of parents and carers believe that the college is well led and managed, that it takes account of their suggestions and concerns and that it helps them to support their children's learning. Most believe that it helps their children to have a healthy lifestyle, and are pleased with the quality and frequency of communication from the school, including concerning their children's progress. A very small minority do not believe that the college deals effectively with poor behaviour, or that it meets their children's particular needs. A few parents and carers expressed concern about specific issues, which inspectors discussed with school leaders.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

The inspection team received 123 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 780 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	41	33	63	51	8	7	3	2
The school keeps my child safe	48	39	68	55	4	3	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	30	24	75	61	12	10	3	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	29	67	54	11	9	5	4
The teaching is good at this school	37	30	64	52	6	5	2	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	31	25	73	59	12	10	4	3
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	38	31	73	59	6	5	3	2
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)	37	30	65	53	7	6	5	4
The school meets my child's particular needs	38	31	63	51	11	9	4	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	42	34	62	50	8	7	6	5
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	25	20	75	61	13	11	4	3
The school is led and managed effectively	42	34	69	56	7	6	3	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	47	38	58	47	6	5	5	4

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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## 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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



14 February 2011

Dear Students

**Inspection of Chessington Community College, Chessington KT9 2JS**

I am writing to thank you all for being so welcoming and helpful to the inspectors who recently visited your college. The purpose of this letter is to tell you about what we found.

Your college provides you with a satisfactory standard of education. Your attainment is rising fast and progress is improving. Most of you enjoy college life. You say you feel safe and you are not particularly concerned about bullying because you say there is less of it than in the past, and that is dealt with well. Most of you behave well in lessons and around the college, especially when you are given the chance to work in pairs or groups. You know your targets and what you need to do to reach them. You understand the importance of healthy lifestyles and lots of you enjoy taking part in sport. You make a good contribution to the college and wider community by helping as prefects, or as sports leaders working with younger children. You get on well together and many of you are involved in the exciting drama productions. You benefit from a good choice of subjects in Year 10 and in the sixth form. Staff take good care of you and you know who to turn to if you need help. The 'Skill 7' system helps you make the change from primary school easily. Many of you say how quickly you settled into college life, and your parents and carers agree. We think you need more chances to learn first-hand about life elsewhere in this and other countries.

The principal, staff and governors are all working hard to make the school even better. To help them do this, we have asked them to do the following things.

- Ensure all the teachers give you enough chances to learn for yourselves and from each other in lessons, and check that you understand what you are doing.
- Extend the 'Skill 7' approach more widely across the school.
- Give you more chances to learn directly about other communities in the United Kingdom and around the world

We wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Robin Gaff

Lead inspector

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