

Croydon Metropolitan College

Independent school standard inspection report

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Reporting inspector	David Young

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.^{1, 2}

Information about the school

Croydon Metropolitan College is an independent co-educational day secondary and post-16 college registered for students aged 14 to 35 years, located in south Croydon. The college was first registered in September 2011. The maximum permitted number on roll was increased to 120 students following a material change visit in July 2012. There are currently four full-time students on roll, aged 16 to 18 years. In addition, two post-16 students attend part-time after school hours. There are no students with a statement of special educational needs. Additional English language tuition is provided for a small number of students for whom English is not the language spoken at home. The college aims to 'provide an education of the highest quality for students, according to their individual needs and aspirations. This education encompasses the academic, physical, cultural and social development of the whole person'. This is the college's first full Ofsted inspection.

Evaluation of the school

The college provides a good quality of education. Students make good progress in their examination subjects as a result of good teaching and students' outstanding behaviour. The curriculum is satisfactory. It offers good opportunities for students to achieve academic success but is not broad enough to contribute fully to their personal development. Arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of students, including safeguarding, are good. The college meets the requirements of most regulations.

Quality of education

The curriculum is satisfactory, rather than good, because there is not enough time given to experiences, which develop students' social, cultural and physical skills. The focus on academic excellence is effective but this alone does not prepare students adequately for the wider responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

The only full-time students currently on roll are aged above 16 years and they study a range of subjects, including English, mathematics, sciences, information and communication technology (ICT), and psychology, to A levels. What the college offers in these subjects is good. Students have mostly, but not exclusively, chosen subjects which they have studied previously and in which they wish to improve their

¹ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/contents.

² www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2005/18/contents.

grades. The college is successful in enabling them to do this. In addition to taught lessons, study time is provided during which students research, extend their reading, prepare for tests, or seek additional support with their learning. The staff know their students well and are available to provide additional help with individual assignments or to assist students with the selection of suitable resources.

The college also supports students well as they prepare to move on to further education. Suitable careers guidance is provided, supported by a well-stocked careers library, together with guidance on the preparation of curriculum vitae and letters of application. Students are provided with good advice and guidance on the selection of pathways into further education or university.

The college is registered to enrol students in Key Stage 4 and has prepared a broad curriculum for this age range, which mostly meets regulatory requirements. However, there is no provision for physical education or personal, social and health education.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and use this to prepare lessons, which are intellectually challenging and set clear expectations for the students. The quality of teachers' questioning is a major strength in the majority of small group or one-to-one classes. Teachers deepen and extend students' understanding by requiring them to explain and develop their answers; in the best lessons a continuous dialogue is maintained. For example, in a physics lesson about Newton's laws of motion, the student responded well to the opportunity to 'teach' the chosen concept to the teacher, making good use of the whiteboard to explain his interpretation of a graph and to show the sequence of his calculations. In another example, in an ICT lesson an interactive visual presentation was used effectively to enable students to understand and engage in a relatively complex sequence of learning about data validation processes. The teaching of students who require extra help with their English is very well adjusted to their needs.

Students' work is assessed thoroughly, based on the assessment requirements of the A Level subjects studied. Weekly tests, using examination questions, are a good feature of each student's timetable. Work is marked promptly and used to identify the next stages of learning for the individual student. Teachers are aware of the individual learning needs of students, for example, the need to improve their analysis of examination questions, to include more detailed explanations in their written answers, or to improve the presentation of their work. Appropriate support is provided to individual students in lessons, including effective literacy tuition for any student for whom English is not their first language at home. Plans are currently under consideration to introduce additional short courses in, for example, study skills or creative writing to provide additional guidance for students across a range of subjects. As a result of good teaching and the positive relationships between students and teachers, students make good progress in their learning. GCE A Level results in summer 2012, the college's first full year of teaching, show that last year's students made good progress, gaining mostly A and B grades in subjects where they had previously achieved very limited success. Current students are demonstrating

similar improvements in their knowledge and understanding in classwork and formal tests.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils

The provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Students' attitudes to their learning are consistently positive and contribute to the high quality of relationships throughout the college. The college enables all students to increase their self-esteem and their recognition of personal achievement. They are regularly encouraged to reflect on their successes to date and to maintain high expectations for what they can go on to achieve. Students' behaviour and attitudes in lessons are outstanding. The college has not had to make use of its published sanctions for serious misbehaviour since it opened in September 2011. The students currently on roll are known individually and their personal needs are understood by the staff. Every effort is made to create the conditions in which they may develop their personal confidence and identify any barriers to successful learning. However, the timetable focus on academic learning restricts students' opportunities to experience aspects of wider learning, such as community festivals and celebrations, community service, outdoor sports and activities, charitable fund-raising, or enterprise activities, which would prepare them for the wider responsibilities of adult life. There is no teaching about, or engagement with public services and institutions in the local and wider community. Small numbers of students have taken part in debating or yoga classes but such activities do not form a systematic part of the experience of all students. The college is successful at integrating students from a variety of backgrounds into the harmonious multicultural community of the college.

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of students are good. Staff recruitment procedures fulfil statutory requirements and ensure that staff appointed are well matched to the needs of the college. Staff have received training to the required levels in child protection, health and safety, and first aid. The designated person for child protection maintains his training to the appropriate level at required intervals. Policies for the management of behaviour, the prevention of bullying, and the completion of risk assessments for on- and off-site activities are comprehensive and implemented effectively. A fire risk assessment has been completed for the premises and routine checks on all fire safety equipment are completed by a commercial company to the required timescales. Admission and attendance registers are kept to the required standard.

Suitability of staff, supply staff and proprietors

The college implements suitable procedures for the safe recruitment of staff. All the required checks on the suitability of staff are completed systematically and entered into a single central register.

Premises and accommodation at the school

The premises and accommodation provide a suitable environment for safe and effective learning. There are classrooms of various sizes, all of which are suitable to accommodate the current small teaching groups, and which provide for larger groups as the college expands. The accommodation includes enough toilets and washrooms for staff and students, facilities for any student who may be ill, together with offices and private study spaces. The premises are maintained in a good state of repair and decoration but there are no displays of educational artefacts, students' work or pictures to provide a vibrant, welcoming sense of a place of learning.

Provision of information

All of the required information is provided, or made available to parents, carers and others. The prospectus is currently being updated but the college website ensures that current and prospective parents and carers are provided with the full range of college policies.

Manner in which complaints are to be handled

The college procedures for the management of any complaints meet requirements.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The proprietor has ensured that the school meets The Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, schedule 1 ('the Regulations'), with the exception of those listed below.³

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of the quality of education provided (standards in part 1) and must:

- ensure that the curriculum policy is implemented effectively (paragraph 2(1))
- ensure provision is made for personal, social and health education which reflects the school's aims and ethos (paragraph 2(2)(f))
- ensure there is a programme of activities appropriate to the needs of students above compulsory school age (paragraph 2(2)(h))
- ensure the curriculum provides adequate preparation of pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life 2(2)(j)).

The school does not meet all requirements in respect of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils (standards in part 2) and must:

³ www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1997/contents/made.

- ensure provision is made to give pupils a broad general knowledge of public institutions and services in England (paragraph 5(d)).

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by regulations, the college might wish to consider the following points for development:

- ensure that the college premises, and particularly the teaching rooms, present a vibrant and welcoming appearance of a place of learning.

Inspection judgements

outstanding	good	satisfactory	inadequate
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The quality of education

Overall quality of education		✓		
How well the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of pupils			✓	
How effective teaching and assessment are in meeting the full range of pupils' needs		✓		
How well pupils make progress in their learning		✓		

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

Quality of provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development			✓	
The behaviour of pupils	✓			

Welfare, health and safety of pupils

The overall welfare, health and safety of pupils		✓		
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School details

School status	Independent		
Type of school	Secondary day school		
Date school opened	September 2011		
Age range of pupils	14–35 years		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 2	Girls: 2	Total: 4
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 1	Girls: 1	Total: 2
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational needs	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Number of pupils who are looked after	Boys: 0	Girls: 0	Total: 0
Annual fees (day pupils)	£2,350 – £3,590 per subject		
Address of school	30-32 South End Croydon CR0 1DN		
Telephone number	0208 6885777		
Email address	admin@croydonmet.org.uk		
Principal	Muhilan Mohan		
Proprietor	Sinnadurai Pathmamohan		

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.



27 September 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Croydon Metropolitan College, Croydon, CR0 1DN

I would like to thank you for making me welcome when I visited your college recently. The inspection found that the college provides you with a good quality of education. You make an important contribution to this good quality by your regular attendance, your outstanding behaviour and the positive attitudes, which you bring to your work. Your teachers have a very good understanding of the subjects they teach and they choose interesting methods to help you learn. The quality of the conversations between you and your teachers and your willingness to think deeply about the questions they ask, help you to understand difficult work and to make good progress with your learning. You are being well prepared for examinations in your chosen subjects.

I have asked the staff to provide a broader curriculum for students. I have asked them to review what is on offer at present and to include a wider range of experiences for all students, such as sports, enterprise, learning about the local and wider community, and the study of the services and organisations of British public life. The idea is to make sure that you are well prepared for the experiences and responsibilities of adult life. In addition I have suggested that the rooms in the college might be brightened up to create a more lively and welcoming atmosphere. I am sure you will have good ideas about how this might be done.

You impressed me with the way that you take your studies seriously and the good efforts you are making to succeed. I would encourage you to continue your efforts and wish you every success in your further studies and chosen careers.

Yours sincerely

David Young
Lead Inspector