

# Dame Elizabeth Cadbury Technology College

Woodbrooke Road, Bournville, Birmingham, B30 1UL

**Inspection dates** 20–21 November 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- Since the headteacher arrived two years ago the school has improved rapidly. The leadership team works together well.
- Effective systems help teachers improve their practice. Teachers target their lessons well to the abilities of students and adapt their lessons to meet the needs of disabled students and those who have special educational needs.
- Students' GCSE results have improved significantly. In their lessons, students of all abilities and in all year groups are making good progress.
- The school strapline: 'Believe...' represents an almost tangible ethos of high expectations that pervades the school. Students are proud of the school. They feel safe and behave well in class and around the school.
- The sixth form is good. It is very small but meets the needs of its students well.
- Students with autistic spectrum disorder, for whom the school is a designated provider, make good progress.
- The governing body takes an active strategic lead in ensuring the continuing improvement of the school.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Students do not read widely enough in all their subjects.
- A small proportion of teaching still requires improvement.
- Some teaching is not sufficiently interesting to inspire students with a love of the subject.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with a half-day's notice.
- Inspectors observed 26 lessons taught by 25 different teachers.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders, members of the governing body, teachers and students. Inspectors discussed the progress of the school with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised documentation and records including school self-evaluation, school plans, behaviour records, students' assessment data and governing body minutes.
- Inspectors examined 70 questionnaires completed by staff and 25 responses submitted by parents and carers to the on-line website Parent View.
- Inspectors also heard a small number of students read.

## Inspection team

Robert Barbour, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Alison Moore

Additional Inspector

Sa'ad Khaldi

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized comprehensive school.
- A high proportion of students is known to be eligible for free school meals. The school receives specific Pupil Premium funding based on this number.
- About three-quarters of the students are of White British heritage, with the remainder representing a variety of different minority ethnic heritages.
- The school has specially resourced provision for 14 students with special educational needs. This caters for students with autistic spectrum disorders whose education is integrated with other students.
- The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is larger than average. The proportion of students supported at school action is also larger than average.
- The school is part of the Oaks Sixth Form College, which is a collaborative post-16 provision.
- The school does not make use of any off-site alternative education provider for students aged 11–16.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

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

- Develop students' interests so that they read widely across all their subjects.
- Develop students' skills in speaking and listening across all their subjects.
- Develop teaching strategies that inspire students with a deep interest in the subjects they are studying.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- GCSE results improved sharply in 2012. The proportion of students gaining five grades A\* to C including English and mathematics increased from 42% to 54%. The proportion gaining five passes in any subject increased from 79% to 95%. The progress that students made in English and mathematics since starting at the school also increased significantly. On entry to the school in Year 7, students' attainment is significantly lower than average.
- The most able students, who arrived from their primary schools with Level 5 results, are making good progress. By Year 11, they are working in mathematics on higher level topics such as the manipulation of algebraic fractions. They are taught extra lessons for a qualification in additional mathematics and are gaining confidence in harder algebra. In English, their written work demonstrates a mature analysis of texts, with good use of language and sustained engagement with an author's ideas and attitudes. Students analyse the structure of written texts with good supporting detail.
- The school has made some use of early entry to GCSE examinations. However, this has not been an impediment to higher achievement. Indeed, in mathematics, students have the opportunity in additional mathematics to explore the subject beyond GCSE. However, early entry is one factor that leads students seeing their goals too much in relation to examination success and not enough in gaining a deep interest in subjects for their own intrinsic benefit.
- Students who are known to be eligible for free school meals, and so gain funding for the school's allocation of the pupil premium, also make good progress. Changes to the curriculum make it hard to know if the gap between their success and other students has narrowed when all subjects are taken into account. However, when mathematics and English are considered, these students are making faster relative improvement.
- Students in the sixth form achieved very good results in the engineering diploma in 2012. The sixth form curriculum is also changing and is currently tailored to the needs, interests and aspirations of the very small number of students. These students are making good progress.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make good progress. These students, and those that start with weak reading skills in Year 7, are making good gains in reading skills.
- Students with autistic spectrum disorders, who are at the school due to its specially funded provision, also make good progress. They are fully integrated with other students. Many have high targets relating to A\* to C expectations in GCSE. Inspection evidence showed that these expectations were realistic, with students achieving well in class.
- The wide spread of ethnic heritage groups, with small numbers in each, makes it hard to draw overall conclusions about their relative progress. Indeed, there are differing patterns in each year group. White British students, however, do slightly less well than the other groups when they are aggregated. The school's strapline, 'Believe...' is successfully raising the aspiration of all groups and the school has also successfully created a learning environment where students from different backgrounds mix and work well together.
- Students enjoy reading, but they do not read widely enough across all their subjects. This inhibits them from making outstanding progress as the range of their knowledge is too

restricted.

### **The quality of teaching** is good

- The quality of teaching has improved a great deal over the past two years.
- Relationships within classrooms are very good, and these foster a strong climate for learning. Teachers support students to work independently. Teachers know their students' abilities well and are skilled in setting work at the correct level. They are also skilled in providing appropriate work for the differing ability levels of students in the same class.
- In a Year 9 science lesson, students made outstanding progress as they explored the properties of rocks. The teacher used a whole range of activities, from student investigation to memorable 'rock songs'. Students were stretched to apply their knowledge to the possible types of rocks that might be found on the planet Mars. Students not only learned a great deal but also gained a fascination for the subject.
- In a literacy intervention session, students made outstanding progress with reading, speaking and listening. A teaching assistant led the session, in which the students took part in a short published play. This not only gave them practice in reading, but developed their skills in timing, expression and interaction with the other participants. The use of drama within reading practice took the students well beyond the experience of the simple interpretation of sounds and into a wider set of skills. In other sessions, the use of phonics, where students learn the links between letters and sounds, was also well developed.
- In the vast majority of lessons observed in the inspection, students made good progress. However, they did not make outstanding progress largely because the elements of fascination or wider skill development were limited. Teaching was precise and well-targeted, but at times lacked inspiration.
- There is some teaching that still requires improvement. In these lessons, the teacher dominates the lesson too much and students have limited opportunities to be active and to practise skills of speaking and listening to each other. This limits their learning and their wider development of important life skills.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs are taught well. Teachers use appropriate techniques to help students with dyslexia or autistic spectrum disorders. Teaching assistants are used effectively and are skilled in helping students to learn independently.

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

- Students behave well both in lessons and around the school. School records show a trend of improving behaviour. This has been achieved despite the fact that the school receives students who have been excluded from other schools. The incidence of fixed-term exclusions is falling steadily each year.
- Incidents of bullying are rare, and are dealt with quickly. The school has a network of student mentors whose role is to be available for students to report matters to quickly. The school also has good systems to deal with cyber-bullying. As a result, students say that they feel safe in school.

- Students' attendance has improved and is average. Their punctuality is good.

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

- Since the headteacher took up his post in 2010, the school has improved rapidly. He is supported by skilled and committed senior and subject leaders. Planning and self-evaluation are good and give confidence in the capacity for further improvement.
- School leaders are active in helping teachers to improve their practice, and this is very much appreciated by teachers themselves. The professional development programmes for teachers are tailored to individual needs. Areas of practice that were once weaknesses were identified as strengths during this inspection. This shows that the professional development has been both relevant and effective. Teachers make use of specially adapted rooms where they can observe one another without their presence being apparent to the students.
- Teaching has also improved because the performance of teachers is managed well. Teachers are held accountable for the progress of their students. Records of the way teachers are paid were scrutinised during the inspection (but without names) and these show a close link between performance of teachers and their pay.
- The curriculum of the school is changing fast. It had been overwhelmingly vocational in character but now offers many more GCSEs. It now matches the needs, interests and aspirations of students well. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered through citizenship classes, trips, speakers and collections for charity. It is also aided by the mixed-age tutor groups.
- Pupil premium funding has been allocated for extra staff to assist in the development of students' literacy and numeracy. Some is focused directly on helping Year 7 students who start with an immediate need to catch up. There is evidence of faster progress by these students in mathematics and English.
- The local authority recognises the school as one that is improving rapidly. The authority assisted with a review of management shortly after the headteacher's appointment. Other than this, external support for the school has been largely through support brokered with local schools. The authority has provided very helpful support in legal and human resources issues.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body knows the school well. Governors have a good understanding of the quality of teaching and areas of strength and relative weakness. They have full reports on the use of salary progression within the school and how this affects the promotion of teachers. They were fully involved in decisions over pupil premium funding, which are clearly displayed on the school's website. Their understanding of the safety of students is strong, and is partly based on reports they receive and partly on interviewing students directly. Governors ensure that all legal requirements for safeguarding are met. They take a full part in decisions on the strategic direction of the school, such as the future of the sixth form. Governing body minutes show that governors consider their own development carefully and take up 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>	103494
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	400624

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>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<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>	592
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	13
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alastair Rae
<b>Headteacher</b>	Richard Tattersfield
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	13 January 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 4644040
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