

**Inspection report**  
**Brampton College**  
**Independent School**  
**Ref no: 302/6101**

**Inspection under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002**

**Dates of inspection: 21 - 24 November 2005**

## **INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY**

### **Purpose and scope of the inspection**

This inspection was carried out by the Office for Standards in Education under Section 162A of the Education Act 2002 in order to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

### **Information about the college**

Brampton College is a privately owned sixth form college. It was established in 1989 under its original name of 'The Tuition Centre'. It is situated on a single site in a quiet residential street in Hendon in North West London. The college moved from Golders Green to its present site in October 1998 where an existing building was extensively refurbished to provide the present accommodation. The facilities in the annexe were subsequently added.

There are currently 247 male and female students from 15 to 19 years of age attending the college, although occasionally a student may be older. The vast majority of students take full-time courses. Currently five students are of compulsory school age and there are eleven advanced level (AL) students who attend the college on a part-time basis. All students take either the General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) or AL General Certificate of Education (GCE) courses at Advanced Subsidiary (AS) or A2 level.

The majority of students are from the surrounding area, although some travel from some distance across London to attend. There is a minority of 21 overseas students attending the college. All overseas students are taking AL courses and are above compulsory school age. Currently 12 students are identified as not having English as their principal language. There are no students of compulsory school age who have statements of special educational need. All applicants to the college are selected on the basis of their motivation and ability to meet the demands of the courses that they wish to follow. The ability range of students is broad. There are students, at all levels, who have been identified as having learning difficulties.

The college brochure emphasises its aim of providing a *'friendly and informal atmosphere with a high level of academic discipline and an ethos of hard work, as well as its commitment to the individual student through the quality of care and support that they receive'*. The college emphasises that this is to be achieved *'through having a staff of highly dedicated and enthusiastic teachers together with small classes where students receive individual help and attention'*.

### **Summary of main findings**

Brampton is a very effective college which is well regarded by both students and their parents. It employs a range of carefully considered strategies to support students in achieving their maximum academic performance. The college leadership sets clear goals for providing a supportive learning ethos and management structures are effective in ensuring their delivery. The curriculum is exceptionally

well-matched to students' needs and the teaching is of high quality. Most students appreciate and respect the high quality of the learning environment provided by the college, the individual support that they receive and the generally harmonious atmosphere. The good quality of monitoring and the effective individual support provided through the personal tutor system plays an important part in helping students at all levels, including those of compulsory school age, to develop confidence and subsequently to make good progress.

**What the college does well:**

- it provides high quality teaching, a significant proportion of which is outstanding;
- its assessment system is rigorous and very effective in monitoring the progress of students;
- it cares very well for its students, both personally and academically, through the effective personal tutor system;
- its staff are well qualified for the subjects that they teach and this has a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning;
- its accommodation is outstanding and provides a very good environment for learning; and
- its students demonstrate a mature responsibility and high standards of behaviour in response to the good example set by the diligent and professional approach of teaching staff.

**What the college must do in order to comply with the regulations:**

The college meets all the statutory requirements.

**Next Steps**

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

- draw up a policy and a development plan to underpin the present good practice for supporting students' special educational needs; and
- take greater account of value added measures to enhance even further the current good practice in self-evaluation.

# **COMPLIANCE WITH THE REGULATIONS FOR REGISTRATION**

## **1. The quality of education provided by the college**

### **The quality of the curriculum**

The curriculum is of very good quality and offers students a wide range of courses which lead to the GCSE, AS and A2 qualifications. The college takes great care to ensure that courses are precisely tailored to meet individual students' needs. For example, Music has recently been added to the range of subjects available in response to student demand. Ongoing and effective monitoring throughout the courses provided ensures a swift response to students' changing course requirements. The relatively small numbers of overseas students who attend the college have access to an English as a Foreign Language course. Although there are no students with statements of special educational need currently at the college, well-focused specialist support is provided for students who experience learning difficulties at all levels. All students have access to guidance in relation to careers and higher education choices. Careers education is a component of the Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE) course taken by all students of compulsory school age. Two experienced part-time careers counsellors provide effective support. A majority of AS students have up to two weeks' work experience during their course. Occasionally GCSE students have work experience to inform their choice of AS level courses. Through these and other opportunities offered by the curriculum, students of all ages are well prepared for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

The vast majority of students attend the college on a full-time basis. This includes all students of compulsory school age. Currently, these students are all taking one-year GCSE courses and transferred to Brampton to complete the final year of their studies. Their curricular experience is appropriately broad and balanced as they follow a core curriculum of English, Mathematics, PSHE and physical education (PE). In addition, a wide range of subjects, including science, languages and the arts, is available to them. Where on occasions students of compulsory school age are taking AS courses, the college ensures that they receive their full entitlement to PSHE and PE. The students attend PE sessions supervised by a specialist instructor at a local sports centre. Most AL students take courses of AS followed by A2 over two years, although one-year and one-term courses are available. A number of students join the college to improve the grades awarded to them previously in AL examinations taken elsewhere.

The college newsletter reflects a good range of activities and clubs that are available to students. Examples from the extra-curricular activities available include about fifteen students each year taking the St John's Ambulance First Aid course and visits to the theatre. Questionnaires returned by parents and students prior to the inspection indicated that a significant minority would like the college to provide a wider range of extra-curricular options to students. However, the opportunities available to students to take part in sports and extra-curricular activities, as well as to undertake educational visits as part of their courses, are good, particularly in the light of the high expectations placed on their commitment to work and home study.

Careers activities provide students with the opportunity to hear outside speakers and for AL students to attend events at universities.

The college provides students and prospective parents with a carefully considered range of information about courses and subjects available. Details provided by specialist departments form part of a carefully planned range of procedures used to ensure that students are placed on appropriate courses. Helpful information outlined in the college brochure is augmented by more detailed information relating to subjects and courses provided through curriculum notes which are available to students. These are also issued helpfully to prospective students during an enrolment period in August and September and throughout the year.

The grouping of subjects into departments, for example science and arts and humanities, reflects the clearly defined college management structure. Schemes of work for subjects are good, including those which relate to GCSE courses. The college places considerable and successful emphasis on the value of schemes of work and department handbooks, for example in supporting consistency in the quality of the teaching.

### **The quality of teaching and assessment**

Teaching is of a high standard. Most lessons seen during the inspection were good, and in around one quarter of lessons the teaching was outstanding. There were no examples of unsatisfactory teaching.

The good teaching is based on effective planning for courses and thorough planning for lessons that ensure that the learning needs of all students are met. The lesson plans demonstrate a good match between the teaching methods and learning activities chosen and the needs of individual students. One common characteristic of most lessons is the high level of students' engagement. Energetic and enthusiastic teaching promotes good efforts by the students, and teachers demonstrate high expectations of them. There is a good range of methodology deployed that requires students to work in a number of ways to support their learning, including paired work, individual learning, group discussions, whole class activity and the use of information and communication technology (ICT). The very good quality of teaching and of classroom management, and the positive attitude of well-motivated students, combine to make very good use of time and to maintain a high pace of learning.

The assessment system is rigorous and is very effective in tracking the progress of students. Students make it clear that they feel very well supported by the frequent assessment and high quality tutorial work, and they become clear about how well they are achieving and what they need to do to improve further. They demonstrate responsible attitudes to their work, which is, overall, complete and well presented. When students experience difficulties with their work the personal tutor system is responsive, and they are able to access teachers' time and expertise to overcome the problems they encounter. Teachers are effective in using the assessment data to understand the prior attainment and aptitude of students, to plan lessons to meet their needs, and to ensure progression in their learning. Comparison with national standards is readily achieved because the GCE and GCSE grading systems are

used to describe students' performance. The assessment data generated are accessible to all teaching staff and are analysed rigorously to identify students' performance and the success of different courses. The analysis is used to further inform planning and course development.

All staff are graduates in the subjects they teach, many have higher degrees, and many are examiners for awarding bodies. The lesson observations showed that teachers are well aware of a varied range of teaching and learning styles and these are deployed with skill. Teachers have a good range of resources at their disposal. Classrooms are well equipped and the quality of materials and resources used is good. The college is expanding its resources to support teaching, including those for ICT, for example, the number of data projectors and associated equipment.

***Does the college meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

## **2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students**

The college provides good opportunities for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students. The calm and harmonious learning environment is appreciated and commented upon by students. They cite these qualities as contributing positively to their ability to concentrate on their work and subsequently to make good academic progress. Staff set good examples for students by their diligent and professional approach to their responsibilities. Students are in no doubt of the teaching staff's good will and support.

In addition to the personal tutor system, the frequent monitoring of personal and academic progress plays an important part in the college's aim of raising students' self-esteem and encouraging them to develop their self-knowledge and self-confidence. Students are encouraged by tutors and subject teachers to evaluate their own performance, to identify how their work might be improved and to set realistic learning targets. Development of students' self-knowledge is emphasised by the college as a key idea in its approach to learning.

In lessons observed during the inspection, the spiritual development of GCSE students was encouraged by their reflection on the feelings and emotions of characters whilst studying the play *'Educating Rita'*; in Art, AS students were encouraged to develop sensitivity to form, texture and colour through painting and using textiles and other decorative materials. The college sets high expectations of responsible behaviour within its buildings. Students respond very well to these expectations and show great respect for their learning environment. For example, this provides an opportunity for the extensive use of art to decorate all parts of the college. Students' thoughtful behaviour to one another and to their tutors and teachers reflects the college's high aspirations for good interpersonal relationships.

Students develop a good knowledge of public institutions in a range of subjects, for example for students of compulsory school age through citizenship within their PSHE programme. Students of all ages have supported the larger community through

charity fund-raising events, such as a five-a-side football tournament to raise money in support of Children in Need. Students have many opportunities to learn about other cultures. The study of English Literature and visits to art galleries and museums, through courses as well as extra-curricular activities, provide students with the opportunity for broad cultural development.

***Does the college meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

### **3. The welfare, health and safety of the students**

Students are very well cared for. The college has a full suite of policies that clearly set out standards and procedures in all the required areas, such as anti-bullying, behaviour, child protection and health and safety. All these policies are up-to-date and have been reviewed recently.

The anti-bullying policy is clear and inclusive; it addresses the teaching and student community in a way that is purposeful and readily understood. The roles and responsibilities of every person are underpinned by a clear description of the nature and consequences of bullying. The anti-bullying culture is described in positive terms and demonstrates the importance of equal opportunities. The systems in place offer rapid and effective responses to any bullying identified, although no students interviewed reported any incidents of bullying.

The child protection policy was revised and implemented in November 2005. The policy complies fully with guidance from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) and provides a sound basis for managing and responding to child protection issues. It is very evident that students feel secure in the college; they speak of their high regard for the level of care demonstrated by staff. Students are confident that they can raise any issues of concern with tutors, and they acknowledge the effectiveness of the personal tutor system.

Health and safety issues are carefully analysed, and policies are in place that are relevant, fit for purpose, and recently reviewed. There are clear responsibilities ascribed to named members of staff and the policies comply with regulations. The procedures for the management of educational visits provide a sound basis for activities taking place outside the college environs. Within the college the measures required to keep students safe are good. Fire equipment and the associated regulatory requirements are up-to-date. Emergency exits are efficiently signed and students understand the safety measures and what is required of them in the event of, for example, a fire. If students have an accident, First Aid equipment and qualified staff are readily available. Any accident or injury is recorded in appropriate detail in an incident book and discussed at termly meetings of the college's health and safety committee. Committee members also make regular health and safety inspections to ensure that the college meets the required standards.

Matters of administration are carried out efficiently and effectively. These include keeping admission and attendance registers, recording sanctions imposed on students and ensuring that the running of the college complies with regulatory

requirements. The college has a clear policy of not discriminating against those with disabilities, and extra support is available for those students with a range of needs, including hearing and visual impairment. The college has provided access to the ground floor of the building for the physically disabled, and has a detailed and timed development plan to further improve access.

***Does the college meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

#### **4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff**

Clearly established procedures are applied for ensuring that all teaching and other staff are checked prior to taking up appointments at the college. The college is registered with the Criminal Records Bureau for the purpose of these checks. Procedures are applied meticulously. All the required references are taken up for new staff, including those relating to their health and fitness.

***Does the college meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

#### **5. The suitability of the premises and accommodation**

The accommodation provided by the college is outstanding. The main building is on three floors and is very well maintained, well decorated, tidy and clean. Rooms are well lit, well heated and ventilated and provide a very good environment for learning. Additional well-maintained accommodation is provided in an annexe, which is close at hand and consists of general teaching rooms on two floors and a new art suite. There are plans to upgrade the accommodation provided by the annexe by creating an entrance for students separate from that used by other occupants of the building. Both buildings are well managed.

The premises offer very good facilities for learning. In the main building these include four well-equipped laboratories which provide high quality areas for the pursuit of science, including practical work. In the annexe the new and purpose-built art suite has a dedicated textiles room, spray room and enhanced lighting. In all rooms there is sufficient space for students to work and the furniture and fittings are appropriate for the students' needs and specialist activities. Students have good access to ICT and rooms in which quiet individual study can be carried out without disturbance. There are areas in the college where students can relax and associate freely with each other in a safe environment. The college has ensured that emergency exits are clearly identified, and that there are no hindrances to the safe evacuation of the buildings for staff and students, including those with physical disabilities.

***Does the school meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

## **6. The quality of information for parents and other partners**

The college provides parents, parents of prospective pupils and all interested parties with the full range of the required information. The college brochure is a particularly informative document, which as well as providing a range of basic information, informs readers about the additional information that is available upon application to the college. This includes the college's clear policies towards bullying, health and safety and child protection. The college website sets high standards in its developing aim of providing a range of information relating to the content of the curriculum, including homework information and deadlines as well as information for staff, parents and prospective parents.

The college reports very regularly to both parents and students on their progress. The value of the reports is greatly enhanced by the effective systems used by the college for monitoring all students' progress.

***Does the college meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

## **7. The effectiveness of the college's procedures for handling complaints**

Brampton College has a policy on handling concerns and complaints that fully complies with regulations. The policy is written with clarity and the procedures it describes are carried out thoroughly.

***Does the college meet the requirements for registration?***

Yes.

## SCHOOL DETAILS

Name of school:	Brampton College
DfES Number:	302/6101
Type of school:	Sixth Form College
Status:	Independent
Age range of pupils:	15 - 19 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll (full-time pupils):	Boys: 125    Girls: 111    Total: 236
Number on roll (part-time pupils):	Boys: 5    Girls: 6    Total: 11
Annual fees (day pupils):	£2,620 to £13,195 depending on the level of the course.
Address of school:	Lodge House Lodge Road Hendon London NW4 4DQ
Telephone number:	020 8203 5025
Fax number:	020 8203 0052
Email address:	enqs@bramptoncollege.com
Headteacher:	Mr B Canetti
Proprietor:	Brampton Educational Services Ltd
Reporting Inspector:	Mr MThirkell
Date of inspection:	21 - 24 November 2005

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