



Feltham Community College

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 102535
Local Authority Hounslow
Inspection number 286415
Inspection dates 27–28 September 2006
Reporting inspector Ramesh Kapadia HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Browells Lane
School category	Community		Feltham
Age range of pupils	11–19		TW13 7EF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	02088313000
Number on roll (school)	1227	Fax number	02087514914
Number on roll (6th form)	196		
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair	Mrs Helen Langley
		Headteacher	Mrs Gillian Smith
Date of previous school inspection	9 December 2002		

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11–19	27–28 September 2006	286415

© Crown copyright 2006

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 a team of five inspectors led by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools.

Description of the school

Feltham Community College is situated in an area of west London which experiences considerable social and economic deprivation. Most residents work in lower paid service jobs. The number of single parent families is high, as are youth crime rates. A third of students have learning difficulties and disabilities (LDD), and there is a Local Authority Centre for students with a physical disability in the college; a high percentage of students have statements of special educational need (SEN). About a quarter of students speak English as an additional language (EAL). The movement of students into and out of the college at times other than the start or end of the school year is well above average.

The college recently acquired specialist school status for sport. It is also an extended school and has a workplace nursery, as well as day care on the premises.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Inspectors judge the effectiveness of the college and its sixth form to be satisfactory, in line with the internal assessment made by the college.

Students come to the college with a complex set of needs and overall attainment which is lower than found nationally. Many do not join the college in Year 7, and almost one third of students in Year 11 have had part of their secondary education in another institution. The college has effective procedures for integrating such students, but this can take time and much effort, particularly for those who have specific needs or may have been excluded from another school. Parental support for students is not always strong, as evident from the low, but positive, response rate to the pre-inspection questionnaires.

Achievement overall is adequate but there are variations between the key stages. The progress made by students in the core subjects during Key Stage 3 has been inadequate, partly because of the lack of challenge in the teaching, and also because a quarter of students in Year 9 did not join the college in Year 7. Many students have been diagnosed as having low reading ages on entry.

Progress during Key Stage 4 is better and has resulted in a marked improvement in the GCSE examination results over the last two years. About a quarter of students achieved 5 or more higher grades including English and mathematics. However, few students attain the highest grades at GCSE, pointing to the need to challenge students who are higher attaining. Standards are below average.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is sound. During their time at the college, a range of activities ensure good social development for many students. Behaviour in the college is satisfactory but can sometimes present challenges, which are usually handled effectively. The majority of students enjoy coming to the college and overall attendance is now near the national average. Punctuality to lessons by a small group of students is a concern, which the college has identified for action. Students feel safe and participate in a wide range of extra-curricular events. They are also encouraged to be healthy, and utilise the good provision for sports and the more healthy options in the canteen. Economic understanding is promoted via an effective work-related programme.

There have been improvements in the curriculum, particularly with regards to vocational options which are proving to be popular. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, with a few examples of outstanding lessons. Marking and assessment, whilst adequate overall, are weaker in Key Stage 3 than Key Stage 4, where better tracking of students' progress has led to improvements in GCSE.

The care, support and guidance in the college are sound with some very strong aspects, particularly for those students with physical difficulties who are very effectively supported to play a full part in the life of the school. The college has its own educational psychologist and has good links with a range of agencies including the Child and

Adolescent Mental Health and Youth Counselling Services to enhance the support provided.

The college has a cohesive senior management team. However, there has been a relatively high turnover in teachers over the last few years, including amongst middle managers. This has limited the impact of leadership and management which overall are satisfactory. There is satisfactory capacity for improvement as demonstrated by the marked improvement at GCSE. However, a more sustained effort is needed to improve progress at Key Stage 3, by monitoring lessons more systematically.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade: 3

The college's sixth form is becoming more popular with students. The number of students is increasing and the retention rates are high. Students of a wide range of ability join the sixth form and there is a good variety of courses. Standards in the sixth form are average and students' achievement is satisfactory overall and good in vocational areas. Teaching is satisfactory and there are good relationships between students and staff. As an extended school, there are courses for adults to learn with sixth form students and this provided a supportive environment for a good lesson observed for the Diploma in Child Care and Education.

Students are well cared for and their personal development is sound. They are given good opportunities to take responsibility, such as mentoring younger pupils and helping them with their work. The leadership of the sixth form is satisfactory. Teaching is now being monitored with a view to creating a more independent style of learning. The capacity for improvement is satisfactory.

What the school should do to improve further

- increase the rate of progress of students in Key Stage 3 in the core subjects
- monitor lessons to promote more consistent learning by students
- improve assessment so that students have a clearer understanding of how well they are doing and how to improve
- challenge and extend higher attaining students in lessons.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 3

Standards in the college are below average and students' achievement is adequate. The percentage of students attaining 5 or more higher grades at GCSE has increased substantially over the last two years. Test results at Key Stage 3 have fluctuated, especially in English, and are low.

Students come to the college with prior attainment which is below average. Attainment levels on entry to the college are falling. Students have made slow progress in Key Stage 3 but their progress up to GCSE is better. The contextual value added measure

during Key Stage 3 for 2005 was low, but there are signs that it improved slightly in 2006, using internal data from the college which takes more account of the mobility of students.

At GCSE, the percentage of students attaining higher grades is below the national average, but the percentages attaining five or more graded passes and at least one pass has improved markedly for the last two years, demonstrating the college's inclusive commitment to its students, particularly those who are lower attaining.

In the lessons seen and the work scrutinised, progress is satisfactory and better at Key Stage 4 than at Key Stage 3, where literacy is a weakness. There is literacy support which is inconsistent in terms of its effectiveness, though there is a promising new initiative.

The progress of the small group of higher attaining students is below average; conversely students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and statements of special educational need perform much better than average. The college acknowledges that it set modest targets in 2006; these have been raised significantly for 2007, with a range of actions planned towards achieving this improvement.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 3

The personal development and well-being of students are satisfactory overall with some good features. Attendance levels have been improved in innovative and creative ways and are now closer to national norms, but lateness to lessons hinders the progress of some students. The college has worked hard to improve the attitudes and motivation of students at risk of exclusion and is rightly proud of its success in cutting the number of permanent exclusions. The introduction of vocational courses and extra support for vulnerable students has been instrumental in this respect.

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. The college celebrates the multi-cultural backgrounds of its students and most students display a healthy respect for the dignity and individuality of others. Behaviour in lessons and around the college is generally satisfactory although it is boisterous at times. Students feel safe from bullying and racism. They have many opportunities to take responsibility. For example, older students provide a 'listening ear' to younger students who are having problems and the College Council is effective in raising issues of concern.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 3

Inspectors agree with the college's judgement that teaching and learning overall are satisfactory. Teaching is better in Key Stage 4, where a range of strategies are used to monitor progress; teaching is weaker in Key Stage 3, though still adequate. Lessons are typically well planned and the teachers explain to the students what they should be achieving by end of the lessons. Sometimes this is not made clear enough and the students have difficulty in understanding exactly what it is they should be able to do. Many lessons have good pace and the activities are varied. There are often good relationships between the students and the teachers. In an outstanding lesson on linguistic communication, challenging work built successfully on students' existing knowledge and provided them with clear strategies for improving their progress. In a small minority of lessons, poor behaviour hinders the progress of the rest of the class.

Students with learning difficulties and disabilities make good progress, well supported by teaching assistants. However, in a number of lessons there was insufficient use of extension activities to challenge the higher attaining students.

Staff turnover has had some impact on the students' learning. The quality of the marking of students' work is not sufficiently regular. Many comments are not specific and do not help students to improve their work. Some students have an understanding of how well they are doing, but the use of assessment information to set targets and to inform the next learning steps is in its early stages.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 2

The curriculum in the main school is satisfactory with some good features. It is good in the sixth form because a wide range of courses are closely tailored to the individual needs of students. A strength is the support for pupils with learning difficulties, ensuring that they have access to the same learning opportunities as other students. In particular, pupils who are physically disabled are extremely well integrated and have full access to the curriculum. Students who are gifted and talented have been identified and benefit from a stimulating programme of extra-curricular activities but they are not given enough opportunities in lessons to excel. Work-related learning and vocational courses are now well developed and promote economic understanding. A wide range of extra-curricular activities provide very good opportunities for students to deepen their enjoyment of learning, especially in drama and other arts and sport.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 3

The college provides very good care and support, and adequate guidance for its students. Many students speak very warmly of the college and enjoy being a part of it.

The college caters sympathetically for the needs of its many disadvantaged students in imaginative ways. It provides particularly good support for students with learning difficulties and enables many of these students to achieve well. The care shown to students with physical disabilities is exceptional. These students are fully integrated into the life of the college and their presence has a positive impact on the attitudes of others.

There are well-established and successful programmes to help students make decisions about their future careers. An extensive range of local contacts underpins the high-quality work experience programme in Key Stage 4.

However, in their day-to-day work many students do not have a clear understanding of how well they are doing and how to improve. They either do not know what their targets are, or else their targets are not challenging enough, or are too vague to help them make good progress. The quality of guidance needs to be improved.

The requirements for child protection are in place and arrangements for safeguarding students are robust. Adults are alert to symptoms of distress and there are generally good relationships in the college.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Grade for sixth form: 3

The headteacher and her senior management promote a strong caring ethos and exploit the college's close links with outside agencies to enhance opportunities for students, particularly the most vulnerable. The specialist status for sport is already beginning to have a positive impact on students' attitudes to exercise and increasing their participation in sporting activities.

Self-evaluation is adequate and the development plan involves the whole college community. Recent initiatives have brought enhanced vocational provision and improvements in standards at GCSE; the college has successfully tackled most issues from the last inspection. This indicates a sound capacity to improve.

The monitoring of performance is now done more regularly. It has had some impact and led to improvements, particularly in Key Stage 4. The systems for monitoring lessons and using performance data to track students' progress in Key Stage 3 are limited.

College leaders are effective in meeting the challenges presented for new staff by ensuring that there are clear induction procedures for them; a workplace nursery is available. The professional development programme is comprehensive and linked to the college's priorities and individual needs. The programme is proving satisfactory with regards to less experienced teachers but is not having a great enough impact across the college as a whole.

Governors are supportive and raise issues with the college over some aspects of its work such as behaviour. They ensure that the college environment is safe for students through monitoring visits and ensure that financial resources are used sensibly. Their role in holding the college to account with regards to achievement is not well developed.

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

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	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?	3	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	3
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	3
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?	3	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	
The behaviour of learners	3	
The attendance of learners	3	
How well learners enjoy their education	3	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	3
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	3	3

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.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	
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	

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for your help in talking to us about the work you do and what you think about your college. You get on together and enjoy the college. Teachers and other adults look after you very well, especially on occasions when you need extra help.

The college is giving you a satisfactory education. The adults in the college have imaginative ways to provide strong support if you have any difficulties. You have many opportunities to take part in a range of sporting activities and the college has recently acquired special status in this aspect of its work.

As a whole, you make satisfactory progress during your time at the college; progress is slower in Key Stage 3, but GCSE results have improved over the last two years. Your behaviour is usually satisfactory.

There are a few areas for improvement, some of which you can help to achieve.

- Standards in Key Stage 3 in English, mathematics and science need to be improved.
- College managers should monitor lessons so that your learning is more consistent.
- Your work should be marked more regularly so that you can improve your learning by acting on teachers' comments.
- Some of you need harder work so that you can do even better in tests and examinations.

Thanks very much for your help and good luck for the future.

R Kapadia

Her Majesty's Inspector