

# Westcroft Sports and Applied Learning College

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104413
<b>Local Authority</b>	Wolverhampton
<b>Inspection number</b>	336302
<b>Inspection dates</b>	20–21 October 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Susan Lewis

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>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	4–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	166
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	11
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alan Pentecost
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ann Brown
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	7 May 2007
<b>School address</b>	Greenacres Avenue Underhill Wolverhampton
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. Inspectors visited 18 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff and groups of pupils.

They observed the school's work, including that at its off-site vocational centre. They looked at the documentation relating to safeguarding, school improvement planning, reports on the school's progress, governors' minutes and records of pupils' progress. They also analysed 48 parental questionnaires and took account of staff and pupil questionnaires. Judgements in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage are based on discussion and documentary evidence, including evidence as to the progress of children in previous years.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

how well pupils make progress during their time at the school whatever their starting points, backgrounds, special educational needs and/or disabilities

- the ways in which the leadership and management have improved the work of the school since the last inspection, including the impact of innovations such as in the curriculum and the new Post 16 provision
- the contribution that the school's specialist school status makes to pupils progress, outcomes and to the community, including the partnership working with others
- the behaviour of pupils, including how the school is working with parents and others to improve this and attendance and reduce exclusions.

## Information about the school

Westcroft Sport and Vocational College formerly catered for pupils with general learning difficulties. It has been recently re-designated to cater for pupils and young people aged 5-19 years who have complex cognitive needs. The Post 16 provision started in September 2009. At the time of the inspection there were no children aged 5 years or under on roll. All pupils have a statement of special educational need and moderate or severe learning difficulties. Most have other additional needs such as language and communication, medical needs, autistic spectrum disorder or behavioural, emotional and social needs. The school has specialist school status and is a Sport College and Applied Learning College. It carries out much work related to these specialisms in the community and at its applied learning centre, Timken. An outreach service to mainstream school supports the inclusion of pupils with 'general learning difficulties'. Most pupils are from White British backgrounds. Around half of the learners are eligible for free school meals and 11 are in the care of the local authority. A high proportion of pupils join the school during their late primary and secondary years. Some of these have histories of disrupted schooling because of poor attendance and/or exclusions. The school has Eco schools Silver, Healthy Schools and Sportsmark awards.

**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?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

This is a good college which has much to be proud of. This is because staff and governors are determined that pupils should have every opportunity to succeed, whatever their needs and difficulties. The college uses its specialisms and its work with partner schools, businesses and the community particularly well. For example, using its sports specialism to enable pupils to apply their number and language skills in meaningful and motivating ways and to give pupils opportunities for leadership. At Timken, highly motivating vocational courses prepare pupils in Year 11 and Post 16 extremely well for the world of work, not simply from this college but also from all over Wolverhampton, as they practise and develop important practical skills, but also learn the discipline of more work-like contexts. This work is highly valued, as is the work of the Outreach Team, which is also good. There are excellent partnerships with other schools, businesses and with other agencies that support the learning and well-being of all pupils extremely well, including the most vulnerable. Families praise the college's work in supporting both child and family and rightly so. The safety and well-being of pupils and students are paramount and safeguarding procedures, as well as the care, support and personal guidance given to pupils, are good

Parents say that their child makes noticeable progress from the moment they enter this college. In the short time some have been in college this term, for example in Post 16, there is good evidence of this. Pupils achieve well whatever their starting point or needs, although their progress is strongest in areas such as their personal and social development and independence, in their language and communication and in their excellent understanding of how to live a healthy life. A few could achieve more in the core subjects if the work were even more tightly linked to what they already know. Because of their special educational needs and disabilities their attainment is well below others of their age, but they achieve a good range of qualifications appropriate to their age and ability. A significant minority achieve levels similar to those of their peers in subjects such as art, design and technology, music, sports and physical education and in their workplace skills. Behaviour is good and often exemplary in lessons. The curriculum is very relevant to pupils' needs, helping them to make connections between what they are learning and the real world. This, plus the consistently good teaching and the impact of personalised programmes for the most challenging pupils, underpins the improved attendance and considerably reduced exclusions. Attendance is satisfactory, despite a few being poor or non-attendees before entering the college. The excellent use of specialisms to engage pupils' interest and the new thematic approach to planning the curriculum mean pupils are really motivated. They say 'we do really fun things' and 'I didn't use to like college before but now I know I am, like, learning 'cos it interests me

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more.'

The good capacity for sustained improvement is evident in many areas. Well targeted training ensures that teaching is adapted effectively to the changing needs of pupils. Appropriate priorities within the college's development planning have led to good information now being available on pupils' achievements and progress. Managers are now in a position to refine target setting for different groups in the college even more. Middle management teams have made a good start on taking more responsibility for standards and progress in their areas of responsibility. They recognise there is scope for further development of their monitoring role and are eager to take this further. The college community cohesion plan does not provide for the development of opportunities for pupils to improve their understanding and appreciation of different ways of life and customs in Britain and other countries. Nevertheless, because of its many links locally and its specialist school work, the school is in a good position to take this further.

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

- Ensure that all pupils and students make at least good progress in the core subjects by:
  - extending the use of the data the college now has about pupils' progress and achievement so that it sets challenging whole college targets for different groups and more precise success criteria in its college development plan
  - developing further the role of middle managers in monitoring the college's work and outcomes.
- Ensure the college's community cohesion plan provides opportunities to help pupils to understand more about how people live their lives differently and what they believe by making more links with different parts of this country and with other countries.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

Attainment is ungraded because of the nature of the pupils' special educational needs and disabilities. The achievements of all groups within the college are good, whatever their age and needs. This is because teaching has also improved since the last inspection, particularly in the use of assessment to meet individual needs and the college now has much more accurate information about what pupils can do and what they should learn to do next. In addition, the range of courses that pupils and students can now undertake has been extended so that each in Year 11 and in Post 16 can opt for courses that challenge and excite them. The large majority of pupils and students make good or better progress and achieve well in their work in the core subjects of English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT), although the college's data shows a few individual pupils make less progress, particularly in writing and mathematics. Subject leaders' action plans and individual pupil's programmes have been carefully devised this year to take account of this. Pupils say they enjoy their lessons hugely. They develop an excellent understanding of healthy life

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styles and good understanding of how to keep safe because these elements are so well addressed in lessons and workshops and through the college's specialist school emphases. They are set up well with the skills they need for later life because of the excellent provision in the workshop, work experience and work related learning opportunities they have during their time at college, and the improvement in their language, communication and personal social skills.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	*
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>1</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>2</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>

### How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good throughout the college and sometimes outstanding No inadequate lessons were seen. Almost all teachers plan their lessons carefully with a strong focus on the needs of the individual as well as the group. support staff are carefully deployed to help all pupils achieve well. Good observational records are kept of how pupils respond in lessons and teachers are quick to adapt their lessons on the basis of these

<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.

\* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

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assessments. Very strong personal social, health education and citizenship programmes and good provision within the college's core subjects of English, mathematics, ICT and science are appropriately focused on and carefully monitored. Achievement in these subjects is being strengthened by the opportunities to apply skills in the new thematic curriculum and the wide ranging enrichment opportunities within college and the community. An ethos of care and concern underpins all of the college's work. Good health and safety and risk assessments are in place and there is strong partnership working with therapists and others to support pupils' broader needs and development. Effective links with the educational welfare services have led to improved attendance and the college is now reviewing its approach to annual reviews to find ways of engaging even more families, so that they have a better understanding of the next steps for their child.

*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?**

Underpinning the college's improvement is the effective and passionate leadership of the senior leadership team and governors. They have a good understanding of the college's strengths and areas for development and had already started work on those aspects which the inspection team identified as being areas for improvement. There is good evidence of the governing body both supporting and challenging the leadership team to explain its outcomes and plans. The college has only recently been in the position of having data that now allows more precise and challenging targets to be set for everyone. The impact of the appointment and excellent partnership working of the home school liaison teacher and good range of meetings and newsletters demonstrates the determination of the college to reach out to and support families. Good safeguarding procedures keep pupils and students safe on both sites and attention to health and safety is meticulous. Pupils say everyone is 'just the same' at their school and indeed it is a highly inclusive college where staff plan and work extremely well together and with others to enable everyone to be included. The high profile the college has locally, and its partnerships with other schools, enables pupils to be included socially and in learning and leisure activities outside college extremely well. Although this aspect of community cohesion is strong, the school does not plan enough opportunities for pupils to gain a wide understanding and appreciation of communities nationally and international. It also leads a highly successful school sports partnership that is recognised nationally. It uses

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all available resources well and has been particularly successful through its specialist school activities in enriching pupils' experiences, providing good value for money and a good capacity for sustained improvement.

*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>1</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>2</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>2</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

Although no children of five years and under are currently on roll, scrutiny of past planning and of the data relating to the progress of the few who have attended since the last inspection confirms the provision to be good and well set up for any new arrivals. The coordinator has a good grasp of the new requirements and the mixed class provision is already planned along Early years Foundation Stage lines. There are separate parts of the classroom for the different areas of learning which are bright and inviting and contain a range of good learning resources. The school plans to develop the outside play area experiences even further before new children arrive. Staff are well qualified in all aspects relating to children's development and well-being.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2



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## Sixth form

The fact that this provision is already operating well and student progress is at least good over this short time is testament to the work of the senior leadership team and Post 16 coordinator. Students have made strides both in their practical and core work and particularly in taking more responsibility for their own health, safety and well being. Teaching is good, often with outstanding features and includes thorough planning and attention to students' diverse needs. Effective assessment is beginning to inform each student's programme. A range of work-related and vocational courses, as well as support for key skills, are in place and there are plans in place for this to be extended. Good use is made of Timken and of the local community facilities to help students apply their developing skills. Students are already making good progress towards the awards they will take. The enthusiastic sixth form leader has developed strong links with parents and carers and is determined to nurture learning and success in a safe, secure environment, which nonetheless challenges - and it does!

*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

Parents and carers are overwhelmingly positive about this school, rarely disagreeing with the statements below. They agree that their children are safe, that they are kept well informed about children's progress and say are happy with their child's experience at the school. Some wrote highly positive comments praising the teachers and their child's experience. The very large majority of parents and carers were pleased with the progress their child was making. A very small minority were not and felt their child could make more progress, for example in reading and writing. Inspection findings agree with parents views and acknowledge, as does the college that a few pupils are making insufficient progress in reading and writing. Individual parents also had individual concerns relating to their own child.

Inspectors considered all issues raised carefully and found progress to be good overall for all groups of pupils.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Westcroft Sport and Vocational College to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team/inspector received 48 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 166 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	31	65	14	29	3	6	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	35	73	13	27	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	29	60	17	35	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	33	69	11	23	4	8	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	31	65	15	31	1	2	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	28	58	19	40	1	2	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	30	63	14	29	1	2	0	0
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)	27	56	13	25	1	2	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	58	16	33	1	2	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	27	56	17	35	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	29	60	15	31	2	4	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	27	56	20	42	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	35	73	9	18	2	4	0	0

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 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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

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 were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## 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 pupil's 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.**



23 October 2009

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Westcroft Sport and Vocational College, Wolverhampton WV10 8NZ

Thank you for being so friendly when we visited your school. We did enjoy sharing in your lessons and talking with you. You really helped us. We think your school is a good school that does some things really well. These are the main things we found out about your school:

Your really enjoy school and you behave well

You are well taught and most of you make good and sometimes really good progress in your learning

You enjoy the thematic curriculum and learn well from it

You are lucky to have Timkens. The activities you do there are very helpful in preparing you for when you leave school.

You have lots of really good sports activities and have an excellent understanding about how to keep healthy

The school looks after you well

Mrs Brown and her team manage the school well.

We have asked the school to do the following two things:

Help you to do even better in subjects such as English, mathematics and science by setting high targets for the school, checking against them often and getting more of the other teachers involved in this

Help you to understand more about how people live their lives differently and what they believe by making more links with different parts of this country and with other countries.

You can help by trying to attend school every day. We hope that you all continue to enjoy your lessons and that you will be successful in the future

Yours sincerely

Sue Lewis

Lead Inspector

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