

# William Parker Sports College

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	114610
<b>Local Authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	338419
<b>Inspection dates</b>	16–17 September 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Jacqueline White HMI

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>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary controlled
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	192
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	192
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr John Court
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	Parkstone Road Hastings East Sussex TN34 2NT
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and six additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 38 lessons, and held meetings with staff, students and governors. They observed the college's work, and looked at a range of evidence including assessment information, key policies and practices, the college improvement plan and the questionnaires completed by the students, parents and staff.

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

- The effectiveness of strategies to eliminate in-college variation in student performance.
- The capacity of leaders and managers to drive and sustain improvement.
- How well teaching challenges students and accelerates their progress.

## Information about the school

William Parker is the only boys' school in East Sussex. It is larger than average and operates a joint sixth form with Helenswood Girls' School. Most students are of White British heritage, with a small number from minority ethnic groups. Very few students speak English as an additional language. The number of students taking up free school meals is below average. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is almost twice the national average. The school has been a specialist sports college since 1998.

**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?**

**3**

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

**3**

## Main findings

The college has come through a period of considerable change in the last 18 months, including the appointment of a headteacher and three deputy headteachers. A fundamental restructuring of teaching and support staff has been successfully achieved. The newly formed senior leadership team is growing in confidence and beginning to operate as a cohesive group with a shared vision for improvement. The headteacher has a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the college. He is driving through improvements in systems and practices with energy and determination but they are not yet embedded and making an impact in all areas of the college's performance. Some leadership practice is highly effective and training programmes are in place to share these strengths. However, not all leaders evaluate the work of their teams and drive improvement independently. As a result of these inconsistencies, capacity to improve is satisfactory and students' performance across subjects is uneven. Overall, students make satisfactory progress to reach average standards. Examination results improved considerably this year, with more students achieving five A\* to C GCSEs and more including English and mathematics in the five.

The college cares for and supports its students well, and most feel safe and enjoy learning. Students' positive attitudes were captured in a comment from a Year 8 student who said, quite simply, 'I like everything about this school.' The strong values of care and respect, promoted through assemblies, tutor time and the house system help students to develop a clear sense of right and wrong. Most behave appropriately and make a positive contribution to the college and wider community. For example, some students are members of the Youth Parliament for Hastings.

The college's specialist status makes an important contribution to students' personal development, particularly in fostering their leadership skills and raising self-esteem. The good opportunities to participate in sporting activities give variety and balance to the curriculum and are greatly appreciated by students. The college has developed strong links with the local community through its Sport Education Centre and Phoenix Arts Centre which offer a range of courses for adults.

Quite rightly, senior leaders have prioritised the improvement of teaching and learning. There is good practice in a number of subject areas. Some teachers plan well-structured lessons which engage the students. They deliver these lessons at a lively pace, with plenary sessions at the end where students evaluate their progress together. These teachers skilfully probe and consolidate students' understanding in lessons, know exactly where students are in their learning and judge expertly when they are ready to take the next steps. These skills are not shared by all teachers.

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

- Embed assessment practices in teaching and learning so that all teachers:
- use assessment information to match learning opportunities to students' needs
- evaluate students' progress in lessons and give them clear feedback about their next learning steps
- help students develop the skills of self-assessment through regular opportunities to evaluate their work in lessons.
- Share best practice in teaching and learning particularly:
  - lesson planning
  - maintaining pace
  - using plenary sessions to evaluate and reinforce learning
  - methods to increase students' participation and engagement
- Develop the skills of evaluation at all levels of leadership and management through:
  - regular lesson observations
  - sampling students' work
  - moderation and analysis of assessment information.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

<b>3</b>
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Students' achievement is satisfactory, with no particular groups underachieving significantly. The college's systems for tracking students' progress and well-being are developing. Teachers have more information to help them tailor provision to individual needs and the more regular review of students' progress is identifying groups who may need additional support. As a consequence, students taking up free school meals are now making better progress. Well-targeted and coordinated support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities ensures they make good progress.

There are good opportunities for students to develop workplace skills but their preparation for economic well-being is hampered by the lack of a coordinated cross-curricular approach to the development of literacy, numeracy and information communication technology skills. In addition, GCSE results in English and mathematics have been erratic over the last two years.

In the majority of lessons observed, students were making satisfactory progress. The quality of students' behaviour in the lessons was usually related to the effectiveness of teaching. Where teaching was at its best, so was students' behaviour. Where teaching was insufficiently challenging and teachers were not skilful in implementing behaviour management strategies, learning was disrupted and students' progress slowed. The great majority of students work productively in lessons and have positive attitudes to learning, as demonstrated by their improving attendance and punctuality.

The college has very good systems in place for monitoring attendance and supporting students at risk of falling into an irregular pattern of attendance. Performance in reducing persistent absence has been excellent.

Specialism in sport contributes well to students' adoption of healthy lifestyles, with high

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participation rates in sporting activities. Students are very proud of the college's sporting achievements which have gained not only local but national recognition.

Along with the staff, students have experienced many changes in recent months. They believe things are improving and value the positive relationships they have with staff. In the student questionnaire, a few students raised concerns about bullying and disruptive behaviour in lessons but most feel safe and have the confidence to take any problems to staff to get them sorted out. The different groups of students interviewed by inspectors were unanimous in feeling safe and well cared for. They knew how to keep themselves safe and avoid situations that would put them at risk.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
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>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>3</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Students' achievement is satisfactory, with no particular groups underachieving significantly. The college's systems for tracking students' progress and well-being are developing. Teachers have more information to help them tailor provision to individual needs and the more regular review of students' progress is identifying groups who may need additional support. As a consequence, students taking up free school meals are

<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.

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now making better progress. Well-targeted and coordinated support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities ensures they make good progress.

There are good opportunities for students to develop workplace skills but their preparation for economic well-being is hampered by the lack of a coordinated cross-curricular approach to the development of literacy, numeracy and information communication technology skills. In addition, GCSE results in English and mathematics have been erratic over the last two years.

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Specialism in sport contributes well to students' adoption of healthy lifestyles, with high participation rates in sporting activities. Students are very proud of the college's sporting achievements which have gained not only local but national recognition.

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*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>3</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Senior leaders are ambitious for students and for the college. The fulfilment of every student's potential is central to the college's ethos. Equality of opportunity is promoted through the curriculum and initiatives such as Train to Learn. Incidents of racism are

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rare and any discrimination is tackled forcefully. The use of target setting to raise achievement is strengthening but there is more work to do in using information about the achievement of different groups of students proactively to tailor learning, prevent underachievement and accelerate progress.

The college is working more effectively to develop good partnerships with parents. Parents are involved in reviewing students' progress but formal opportunities to set and review learning targets are infrequent. The thriving parent and teacher association contributes to college life through a wide range of social and fundraising events, and by supporting educational activities.

The new staffing structure and performance management system are raising standards of professionalism and increasing accountability for student outcomes. Governors are very committed to the college and passionate about its continuous improvement. They provide good support and satisfactory challenge. An influential core know the college well but the effectiveness of governor links with departments is variable and evaluation of the work of teams across the school is not systematic enough.

Safeguarding procedures are robust and meticulously maintained. The college has made appropriate checks on all adults who work with the students and ensures its single central record of such checks is updated at the recommended intervals.

Activities spearheaded by the college make a valuable contribution to community cohesion. For example, the community football programme helps to tackle any disaffection amongst youths in the locality and promotes team building and leadership skills. However, the college does not evaluate the impact of its work in the community in a coherent and organised way.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<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>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>3</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>3</b>

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## Sixth form

Arrangements for the leadership and management of the joint sixth form have been significantly strengthened alongside systems for monitoring and evaluating provision. Concerted action has been taken to ensure that courses are now well matched to students' aptitudes and aspirations. Interviews and taster programmes are helping students to make the right choices. Consequently, outcomes for students are improving, with increasing numbers entering higher and further education.

The sixth form lessons observed were satisfactory or better. Teachers have good subject knowledge but methods for increasing participation and developing higher order thinking skills in lessons are sometimes limited. Assessment information is not used consistently well to plan learning that stretches students and accelerates their progress.

Student attitudes are positive and relationships are strong. Effective measures are taken to support, guide and keep students safe. The sixth form enriches the college; students make a positive contribution to college life and act as good role models by readily taking on roles of responsibility, involving themselves in voluntary work and supporting younger students when they can.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

## Views of parents and carers

Most parents who completed questionnaires are supportive of the college and are satisfied that pupils are kept safe, learn well and enjoy college life. A small minority of parents are concerned that the college does not deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of students registered at William Parker Sports 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 12 statements about the school.

Inspection team received 200 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1367 students registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	55	28	126	63	13	7	4	2
The school keeps my child safe	49	25	136	68	9	5	4	2
The school informs me about my child's progress	49	25	125	63	13	7	3	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	52	26	114	57	18	9	3	2
The teaching is good at this school	56	28	121	61	9	5	3	2
The school helps me to support my child's learning	33	17	123	62	23	12	7	4
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	40	20	133	67	16	8	4	2
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)	50	25	118	60	11	6	5	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	50	25	121	61	13	7	6	3
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	47	24	99	50	23	12	18	9
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	15	124	62	22	11	7	4
The school is led and managed effectively	42	21	125	63	19	10	4	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	64	32	112	56	14	7	3	2

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.**



18 September 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of William Parker Sports College, Hastings TN32 2NT

Thank you so much for helping us when we came to inspect your college last week. We were impressed with how welcoming and polite most of you were. You enjoy college life and this is evident in your improving attendance. Your academic achievement is satisfactory and you have demonstrated real strengths in some subjects. You are particularly proud of the college's sporting achievements. In the majority of lessons observed, you were making satisfactory progress. In the most effective lessons, you made good progress. Your behaviour is generally satisfactory but a few of you become involved in disruptive behaviour in lessons, especially when teachers do not stretch you enough or follow the college's behaviour management system. The overall effectiveness of the college is satisfactory.

The college works hard to make sure you are safe, well supported and cared for. The good relationships you have with staff are important to you. You appreciate the extra-curricular activities available and have a good choice of courses in Key Stage 4. After lots of changes, most of you believe that things are settling down and getting better. Your headteacher and many of the other leaders know what needs to be done to improve the college, and have already started to do this. We have prioritised the following:

- ensure teachers match learning closely to your needs, check your progress in lessons, give you clear feedback about your next learning steps and help you develop the skills to assess your own work
- share the best teaching practice
- ensure all leaders can assess and improve the effectiveness of their teams.

You can help the college to move forward by working hard in lessons and not allowing yourselves to be distracted.

Good luck in the future.

Yours faithfully

Jacqueline White

Her Majesty's Inspector

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