

Landau Forte College

Inspection report

Unique reference number	135120
Local authority	N/A
Inspection number	395351
Inspection dates	2–3 May 2012
Lead inspector	David Martin HMI

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1132
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	286
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Ashworth
Headteacher	Elizabeth Coffey
Date of previous school inspection	1 October 2008
School address	Fox Street Derby DE1 2LF
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Age group	11-19
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Introduction

Inspection team

David Martin	Her Majesty's Inspector
Richard Douglas Masterton	Additional inspector
Janet Bird	Additional inspector
Sean Thornton	Additional inspector
Roisin Chambers	Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed 51 lessons or parts of lessons, taught by 51 different members of staff. They also made shorter visits to classrooms to look at tutor time and other activities, including reading sessions. Meetings were held with groups of students, staff, senior leaders, the Chair of Governors and the Chief Executive. Inspectors took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, observed the school's work, and looked at a range of documentation including: school improvement planning and self-evaluation; performance and assessment data; attendance, exclusion and other records; records relating to safeguarding and recruitment. The responses from the 68 parental questionnaires received were analysed and considered, along with those returned by students and staff.

Information about the school

Landau Forte College is a larger than average secondary school. It opened in 1992 as a city technology college and was re-designated as an academy in 2006. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is around average, but rising. The proportion of students from a minority ethnic background is above average and rising, as is the proportion that do not speak English as a first language. While the large majority of students are White British, around 37% are from ethnic minority backgrounds, with 24% from Pakistani or Indian heritage, as well as a small proportion of students from a variety of other ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of students who are supported at school action, school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is a little below average. The college is heavily oversubscribed; the admissions criteria provide for a spread of ability which secures an intake that fully represents the local area. The college draws from a large number of primary schools.

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	1
Achievement of pupils	1
Quality of teaching	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	1
Leadership and management	1

Key findings

- Landau Forte College is an outstanding academy. It has improved since the previous inspection, where it was also found to be outstanding. It excels in all aspects of its work and has made a marked improvement in the overall quality of teaching, moving it from good to outstanding.
- Attainment is high across the college, including in the outstanding sixth form. Students make rapid and sustained progress from their various starting points. Students' academic and personal achievements prepare them exceptionally well for the next stage of their education and their future lives.
- Teaching is consistently good across the college. More than half of the lessons seen during the inspection were judged to be outstanding. Although a little above the college's own on-going evaluation of outstanding teaching, this is a growing proportion. Teaching has improved due both to challenging performance management by leaders and governors and supportive, appropriate and well-targeted professional development. Students have outstanding attitudes to learning, attend regularly and take full advantage of the wealth of opportunities on offer to them.
- Students are outstandingly well cared for. They feel extremely safe and are very well supported by all adults in the college. This is due to excellent systems and remarkable staff commitment to each individual. This is embodied in the Personal Tutor approach that is at the heart of integrated pastoral and learning support and leads to outstanding behaviour. The social, moral and cultural development of students is exceptional.
- This outstanding achievement and provision is underpinned by exceptionally strong leadership and management. Governors and the wider charitable trust provide a clear and ambitious vision for the success of its young people. This vision is turned into effective action by current leaders and managers at all levels and is reflected across an outstanding curriculum.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- The college has no significant weaknesses. However, there is no complacency and leaders and managers have very detailed plans in place to make yet more improvements.

Main report

Achievement of pupils

Students all make exceptionally good progress in their learning from broadly average starting points. They have been taught exceptional learning skills and attitudes from when they first join the college. As a result, they are keen and enthusiastic participants in the classroom. Inspectors saw many occasions where students took great delight in the achievements of themselves and of others. There were many moments of genuine excitement and wonder. In a Year 9 class where students were being taught the 'Doppler effect' in sound, stunning and highly motivating visual aids enabled them to understand how sound frequencies change and realise what was happening when an aircraft travelled faster than the speed of sound. In another Year 9 lesson, students took genuine pleasure in the musical performances of other groups, yet felt able to offer really helpful suggestions as to how they might improve them further.

As a result of lessons where maximum time is spent on learning and students enjoy and participate fully, they achieve well at all levels. Attainment at the end of Year 11 is high, and progress is very good right across the curriculum. All groups of students attain equally well because any additional help required is recognised early and highly effective interventions are put in place. This was seen, for example, in reading and mathematics programmes in the earlier years and in the highly-tailored individual support aimed at students with a disability and those with special educational needs. Individual education plans are written clearly and are given detailed consideration by all staff in planning. This is exemplified in lessons, where students of all abilities are well catered for, are able to learn effectively and are well challenged, including the most able.

Sixth form students also attain highly and make exceptional progress. Almost all students go on to apprenticeships, work or higher education as a result of the results that they achieve. They show highly mature attitudes and commitment to their own learning and, in addition, spontaneously offer to help younger students in tutor time. Parents and carers overwhelmingly recognise the excellent achievement of students.

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Quality of teaching

Parents, carers, and students express great satisfaction with the quality of teaching in the college. Teaching is at least good in the great majority of lessons and is outstanding in a large and growing proportion. Particular strengths in teaching include exceptionally consistent and detailed planning across the curriculum, often linking work across subject areas, particularly in terms of literacy and numeracy. Lesson plans take into account the prior learning of students exceptionally well. As a result, activities are very well matched to the learning needs and the interests of students. Lessons are characteristically active and varied, often inspirational in the approaches used. Teachers assess how well students are learning and adjust their teaching accordingly. Students frequently assess their own work and that of their peers so that they understand exactly what they are learning, how they are learning and what they need to do to improve further. As a result, teachers have high expectations and offer students of all abilities a challenge that they invariably rise to. At no time during the inspection were any students left behind, particularly those who find learning more difficult, have disabilities or special educational needs; all were thoroughly engaged by fast-paced, engaging activities. Lessons also gave very good attention to developing students' social, moral and cultural understanding. Students worked easily in a variety of groupings and were very quick to support and help each other. They showed tolerance and respect and great enjoyment in working together.

Inspectors enthused about many outstanding lessons; these are just examples from many memorable learning sessions. In a Year 8 mathematics lesson introducing distance-time graphs, the imaginative use of a section from a filmed motorcycle chase led to great student enjoyment, contributing to outstanding progress as they eventually tackled complex problems. High expectations, probing questions and a strong selection of visual resources enabled a Year 13 English group effectively to grasp key linguistic terminology to deal with spoken language transcripts reflecting on the election of the first black President of the USA.

Areas from the previous inspection that limited the grade for teaching have been successfully addressed. Questioning is invariably good and often outstanding, assessment is superbly used to help students to learn and lesson activities are now tightly matched to the needs and interests of students.

Behaviour and safety of pupils

Students, parents and carers informed us that the superb behaviour seen during the inspection was typical. Records of attendance, incidents and exclusions fully supported this view. Attendance is high, there are few incidents of misbehaviour and students are confident that such issues are dealt with quickly and effectively by adults. This included any rare incidents of bullying. Students are taught about all kinds of bullying, including prejudice-based, homophobic, and technology-based bullying through very strong curriculum provision. The many students that we spoke to had a strong understanding of the issues in question and were adamant that the

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college acted quickly and effectively to promote tolerance and respect. This was seen in action during tutor time, when students of different ages and backgrounds mixed easily and confidently together in a family atmosphere.

All groups of students clearly feel very safe and well cared for, and parents and carers agree. The Personal Tutor is seen as a key point of contact, but all staff are felt to be highly approachable and supportive, both of learning and personal difficulties. Students invariably showed great care for each other. They conduct themselves safely and maturely, for example being trusted to use complex and expensive technology independently, repaying the trust by being totally reliable. There is excellent attention to students' safety where any potentially dangerous or hazardous materials are used; the sensible conduct of students ensures that the whole college environment is immaculate and well cared for.

Attendance is high and punctuality notably good. As one younger student said to us: 'Why wouldn't you want to be here?' There have been no permanent exclusions since the last inspection. The college rightly believes that the withdrawal of privileged access to the many and varied additional opportunities that the college offers is more effective than punishments such as detention. Temporary exclusions are rare, only used as a last resort and are tactically successful in reducing repeat offending. Students, including those in the sixth form, greatly value the rewards system.

Leadership and management

The college governing body and Trust have relentlessly pursued their stated vision from the opening of the college. The vision is to raise the performance, hopes, aspirations and ambition of students; this has been achieved with conspicuous success and there is an excellent capacity for further improvement. The current principal and senior team embody the principles and have built strongly on previous strengths. Leaders, managers and governors accurately monitor and evaluate the work of the school and relentlessly work to improve provision and outcomes through strong performance management. Planning is highly focused on key priorities and drives improvement right across the college. As a result, there are minimal gaps in the performance of different subjects and no significant variations in the performance of different groups of students. At the same time, there is an unswerving focus on supporting and overcoming any barriers to full student participation in the wider life of the college. For example, a slight dip in English results in 2011 due to marking irregularities was rigorously examined and actions put in place; as a result, banked scores for 2012 are very high. Similarly, provision for information and communication technology (ICT) has been thoroughly reviewed, leading to significant improvements and teaching and outcomes, in this aspect, that are now good and improving.

The outstanding curriculum is extremely well matched to students' needs and aspirations and promotes high academic achievement. At the same time it provides suitable yet challenging courses for the less academic. Through excellent enrichment and additional programmes students are able to develop their special talents and

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interests across all areas of college life. This has a powerful impact on the spiritual, social and cultural development of students. Many examples could be given, and to single out any one area of the college's work would be invidious. However, as an example, recent work in art and design with a local film company has given students the opportunity to engage with real life film production techniques. Similarly, students produce their own college television programme, using a wide range of technological and interpersonal skills. The student council is given genuine responsibility for improving the college and is outward looking, coordinating successful charity work, notably for Oxfam.

It is notable that the college offers these opportunities to all students, who take up the opportunities willingly, whatever their background or circumstance. Safeguarding procedures are robustly overseen by the governing body and meet all requirements.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all 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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance:	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour:	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards:	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and 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:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
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.
Safety:	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

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.



4 May 2012

Dear Students

Inspection of Landau Forte College, Derby, DE1 2LF.

I would like to thank you for your superb contribution to the inspection of your outstanding college. The comments made to us about your work in learning sessions, meetings and around the college confirmed many of the great things that we saw on our visit. There are so many things that your college does well that singling any particular aspects out is difficult. The college is outstanding for many reasons. You all achieve a great deal in all lessons. This means that, by the time you leave college, your examination success is much higher than in most schools in relation to your starting points. This is equally true in the sixth form. Your teachers deliver good and often outstanding lessons, giving you many truly memorable experiences. You are very well cared for and your Personal Tutor is a key adult ensuring your excellent learning and personal progress. The senior staff and governing body are ambitious for your success and constantly seek ways to make the college even better. You appreciate and take advantage of the many stunning additional activities that the college provides. We were amazed by the energy and enthusiasm shown by staff and students at the end of a long learning day in these additional activities.

You also play an important part in making the college outstanding. You have excellent attitudes to learning and take part enthusiastically in exciting activities right across the curriculum. You show tolerance and respect in your dealings with each other and with adults. More than this, you help to create a real sense of community through the unselfish help and support that you give to each other. The inspection team are confident that you will continue to maintain this and to ensure your attendance and punctuality remain excellent. It is usual for the inspection team to leave one or two suggestions as to how the college could improve further. In this case, we could think of no weakness; the Principal and her team of staff already have plans to make your college even better than outstanding! We would, however, like to wish every one of you every success in the future that the college prepares you for so very well.

Yours sincerely

David Martin
Her Majesty's Inspector

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