

# Court Fields Community School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123885
<b>Local Authority</b>	Somerset
<b>Inspection number</b>	314754
<b>Inspection dates</b>	21 November 2007
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Peter Sanderson 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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	885
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Steve Altria
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Elaine Faull
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	2 - 5 February 2004
<b>School address</b>	Mantle Street Wellington Somerset TA21 8SW
<b>Telephone number</b>	01823 664201
<b>Fax number</b>	01823 660812

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<b>Age group</b>	11–16
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	21 November 2007
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors. During a one-day visit, the inspector evaluated the overall effectiveness of the school and investigated the following issues: achievement and standards; quality of teaching and learning; aspects of leadership and management, care guidance and support; and personal development. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation, published test and examination results, policies, minutes of meetings and other school documentation, observation of the school at work, interviews with staff and students, and parental questionnaires. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail but the inspector found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in its self-evaluation form, were not justified, and these have been included where appropriate in the report.

## Description of the school

Court Fields Community School is a slightly smaller than average sized secondary school that has increased in size since the last inspection. Most students are of White British heritage and the proportion of students whose first language is not English is well below the national average. The number of students eligible for free school meals is well below that found in most schools. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average. The school was awarded technology college status in 1998.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

**Grade: 2**

This is a good school with outstanding features. It is very inclusive, and effectively strives to achieve its mission statement of 'Believe, Learn, Inspire, Succeed – Together'. As one parent said, 'The school provides a great many opportunities for children to grow and develop.'

Students enjoy their life at school and feel they have the respect of staff. A strong feature of its work is the way that students are consulted and their views listened to. Students play an important role in developing the school's community ethos and they are good ambassadors for the school. The majority of students behave very well, both in and outside of lessons. Some parents expressed concern about the behaviour of a small minority of students. However, staff manage and support very well those students whose behaviour can at times be challenging. Attendance is above the national average and staff are working effectively to reduce the number of parents taking children on holiday during term-time. Students appreciate the importance of healthy living, enthusiastically participating in sport and understanding the value of eating well. The school has achieved the Healthy Schools award and Sportsmark in recognition of the quality of its work in this area. Students rightly say that they feel safe in school and report that any instances of bullying that do occur are resolved effectively. The school meets all safeguarding and child protection requirements. Staff take very good care of students. They work extremely well with a range of outside agencies to provide vulnerable students with very good and effective support. Students have a very good awareness of those who are less fortunate than themselves as demonstrated by their involvement in the make poverty history campaign and raising money for the Tsunami appeal. The quality of careers support from the school and the students' confidence in their own capabilities in numeracy, literacy, information and communication technology (ICT) and teamwork are preparing them very well for future life.

Standards at the end of Year 11 have been rising and in 2006 were above the national average. Standards remained at this level in 2007. Given the students' attainment on entry to the school this represents good achievement. The school analyses information on students' achievement well and is aware that there is variation in their achievement between subjects. For example, progress in English between Year 7 and Year 11 was outstanding in 2007 while in science it was only satisfactory. Effective action taken by the school last year to raise standards in technology has proved very effective. Students are now making good progress in technology subjects. A similar approach to raising standards is being taken with Science. Examination results in 2007 indicate that its specialist school targets were achieved in Technology but not in Science. The progress of all groups of students throughout the school is good.

The quality of teaching is good. There is much good and some excellent teaching within the school which is being effectively shared with all staff. Teachers plan lessons well so that they contain a range of interesting activities. Assessment information is used well by most teachers to pitch tasks at the right level for all students in the class ensuring they make good progress. In some lessons, however, the pace of learning is slow and tasks do not provide sufficient challenge for all students, which means that progress is satisfactory. Senior and middle leaders set

challenging targets for students, which has raised the level of expectation across the school. Students are aware of their targets and what they need to do to improve. The progress of students is tracked well and good intervention programmes are in place to support those who are making less progress than expected.

The curriculum is outstanding and meets the needs and interests of students extremely well. There is good provision for gifted and talented students, with opportunities for students to take GCSE examinations in mathematics and art earlier than is normally the case. A broad range of both academic and vocational courses is available for students to study in Years 10 and 11. Staff provide students with a wide range of trips, clubs and sporting activities out of school hours. These are appreciated and well attended by students.

The headteacher and the senior leadership team lead the school very well. The school's inclusive ethos and the opportunities and achievements enjoyed by students are in large measure due to the energetic and forward thinking leadership of the headteacher. The drive for improvement is supported by all middle managers but they currently do not all play a sufficiently rigorous part in monitoring, evaluating and improving work in their areas of responsibility. Governors know the school well and provide the leadership team with effective support and challenge. The school's specialist status in technology is central to its drive for improvement. Funding has been used effectively to improve resources and students' learning experience. For example, students regularly use ICT to support their learning in lessons. The family learning programme provides valuable support to parents. Links with feeder schools is strong and effective support is given to these schools to raise standards in technology, science, mathematics and ICT. The school works extremely well with a wide range of partners, including local businesses, the University the Third Age and other secondary schools. In its role as a Mentor School, it also effectively shares advice and expertise with other secondary schools. Issues relating to the last inspection have been tackled very successfully. The school is in a good position to continue to improve.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding lessons.
- Raise standards in science by the end of Year 11.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

<b>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate.</b>	<b>School Overall</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	<b>2</b>
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	<b>Yes</b>
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	<b>1</b>
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	
The effectiveness of boarding provision	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	<b>2</b>

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	<b>2</b>
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	<b>2</b>
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	<b>2</b>
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	<b>2</b>

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	<b>1</b>
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	<b>1</b>
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	<b>1</b>
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	<b>2</b>
How well learners enjoy their education	<b>1</b>
The attendance of learners	<b>2</b>
The behaviour of learners	<b>2</b>
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	<b>1</b>
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	<b>1</b>

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	<b>1</b>

<sup>1</sup> 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

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	<b>2</b>
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	<b>2</b>
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	<b>2</b>
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	<b>2</b>
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	<b>2</b>
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	<b>2</b>
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	<b>2</b>
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	<b>Yes</b>
Does this school require special measures?	<b>No</b>
Does this school require a notice to improve?	<b>No</b>

**Annex B**

22 November 2007

Dear Students

**Inspection of Court Fields Community School, Wellington, TA21 8SW**

I would like to thank you for the warm welcome you extended to me during the recent inspection of your school. I very much enjoyed my discussions with you. I thought you would like a summary of the inspection findings, but also hope that you will take the opportunity to read the whole report. Your school provides you with a good education and has several outstanding features. The main strengths of the school are summarised below.

- Your headteacher and other senior teachers lead and manage the school very well. They make sure that all of you are provided with good opportunities to achieve well and enjoy your time at school.
- You are taught well and as a result, you are making good progress in your learning. This helps you attain good results at the end of Year 11.
- You told us that you appreciate how well staff listen to your views and opinions. You have played an important role in creating the community ethos within the school.
- Most of you behave very well in lessons and around the school site. Some of you who find it hard to behave well all the time told me that you appreciated how staff were helping you improve your behaviour.
- Staff in the school take very good care of you. They work extremely well with a range of people outside of school to ensure you are all well supported.
- The school curriculum meets your needs and interests extremely well. You are able to choose from a wide range of both academic and vocational courses in Years 10 and 11.
- The school's specialist status in technology has enabled ICT resources to be improved and helped develop links with local schools, business and industry. This is benefiting all of you.

Although your school is good, it could become even better and I have identified two areas for improvement. In many of your lessons, no time is wasted and teachers provide you with engaging activities that both interest and challenge you. We have asked the leadership team to ensure that more of your lessons are like this. We have also asked them to ensure that you all get better results in science at the end of Year 11.

I wish you well and look forward to hearing good things about you all in the future.

Yours sincerely  
Peter Sanderson  
Her Majesty's Inspector