

Foxford School and Community Arts College

Grange Road, Longford, Coventry, CV6 6BB

Inspection dates 18–19 September 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Too many students completing examination courses in Year 11 are not achieving as well as they should.
- Students' progress in English has been too slow as a result of reading and writing problems that were not corrected early enough.
- Students have not been given enough opportunities to practise writing more than short sentences in subjects other than English.

The school has the following strengths

- The achievement of students currently in the school is good. They make good progress and are on track to achieve much better examination results.
- Teaching is good or better in a large majority of lessons. Teachers are passionate about their subjects and think carefully about how to help students learn most effectively.
- Teachers have high expectations of students which are shared by the students themselves.
- The students behave very well at the school and have good attitudes to learning. They feel safe and incidents of bullying are very rare and dealt with effectively.
- The sixth form is good. Teaching and learning are good and improving. With its consortium partners, it offers a wide range of subjects to its students.
- Leaders, managers and governors make a very positive impact on achievement and the quality of teaching, and as a result, the school is improving rapidly.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 48 lessons, of which four were joint observations with senior leaders. In addition, the inspection team made a number of shorter visits to lessons as part of themed learning walks and listened to students reading.
- Meetings were held with four groups of students, representatives from the governing body, a representative of the local authority and school staff, including middle and senior leaders.
- Inspectors took account of the 11 responses to the online parent questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection.
- They observed the work of the school and looked at a number of documents, including minutes of governors' meetings; performance management documentation; records relating to attendance, behaviour and the monitoring of the quality of teaching; and documents relating to safeguarding.

Inspection team

Simon Blackburn, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Kevin Harrison	Additional Inspector
Bruce Clark	Additional Inspector
Jean Samuel	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is an average sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is above the average.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is broadly in line with the national average but the proportion supported through school action plus or by a statement of special educational needs is high compared to the average for similar schools.
- The school accesses additional vocational education for some of its Year 10 and 11 students through Henley College and City College and has informal consortium arrangements to extend the curriculum in the sixth form.
- Just under half of the students are from minority ethnic groups, which is high compared to secondary schools nationally, and the proportion of students identified as speaking English as an additional language is also high.
- The school meets current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve achievement, particularly for middle attaining pupils, by ensuring that the work students are asked to do is consistently challenging and is a good match to their abilities and needs.
- Increase the rate of progress in English by:
 - ensuring the consistent and rigorous use of data to identify underachievement and to intervene effectively to promote rapid improvement
 - develop students' extended writing skills across all subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Students join the school with standards that are well below average. In 2011, the proportion of pupils making or exceeding expected progress was below national figures. Standards at the end of Year 11 were too low in the last validated results for 2011, with those students who join the school with average attainment levels performing least well.
- The 2012 results show an improvement from 2011 for rates of progress and attainment, but these results remain below national averages.
- Since the school's last inspection, leaders and managers at all levels, particularly the reconstituted senior team, have made sustained and highly effective improvements to the quality of teaching in the school. As a result, tracking shows that students currently in the school are making faster progress from lower starting points than previous year groups, with predicted higher standards.
- Improvements in the quality of teaching were not sufficiently embedded to reverse the period of weaker teaching offered to recent leavers in Year 11. However, the current Year 11 students are on track to achieve 53% 5 A* - C GCSE's (including English and mathematics) with progress rates that exceed national averages for mathematics and English. The progress tracking for current Year 10 students indicates further improvements in achievement.
- The school's accurate progress tracking system and evidence from lessons and students' books, confirm that disabled students and those with special educational needs are currently achieving well as a result of well-targeted support and carefully designed interventions from well trained staff.
- Students for whom English is an additional language are well supported by a specialist team of teachers, intervention tutors and teaching assistants as well as translators from the community. As a result, these students make rapid gains in language skills and are able to learn effectively in all main school lessons. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds make progress that is similar to other pupils in the school.
- The school's leaders have a clear strategy for the support allocated to students eligible for the pupil premium so that interventions are focused and effective in overcoming the barriers they face in their learning and as a result, gaps in attainment and progress are closing.
- As a result of targeted teaching for literacy that extends into partner primary schools, students are now making better progress in Key Stage 3. As a result, the proportion predicted to make and exceed expected progress is favourable when compared to national figures.
- Students read well and have many opportunities to read in lessons. A number of students observed reading in Year 7 did so with fluency, using their phonics skills to work out new words where necessary.
- Students are given opportunities to develop their skills in communication and mathematics in many subjects across the curriculum but more extended writing is too often limited to their experience in English lessons.
- Learning and progress in the sixth form are good as a result of the level of individual challenge that teachers provide to students. The most recent A Level examination results

were the best the school has achieved.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good with some examples of outstanding teaching in some subjects and in some year groups, for example in English and in Year 10. Evidence from the school's robust monitoring system, discussions with teachers and students, and students' work all indicate that improvements in teaching have been sustained over a period of time. Progress rates for all groups of students are improving and as older students leave the school the overall picture is of rapid improvement. The impact of previous teaching which required improvement led to a legacy of underachievement. This is now being eradicated convincingly.
- Teachers develop very positive relationships with students and very often use humour to engage and motivate. Classrooms are generally happy and productive places with a climate that promotes achievement.
- Where teaching is at its best, teachers use all the information they have about students' abilities and aptitudes to design lessons that challenge and stimulate them.
- This level of challenge is not consistently provided and, in some lessons, the work students are asked to do does not take account of their existing knowledge, skills and understanding so that their progress is slower or not sustained.
- Teachers use questioning well to challenge and deepen understanding. In a Year 11 art lesson a teacher responded to a student's question with a series of questions that drew out the student's understanding in a very effective way.
- In discussions with students, they were particularly appreciative of the feedback they receive about their work and the way it helps them to improve. Marking and informal feedback observed during observations of lessons and in a work scrutiny confirm that it is regular and provides students with valuable information about the next steps they need to take to succeed further.
- Students feel that teachers know them well and have high expectations of their learning and behaviour. Students know their targets and can generally say what they need to do to achieve them.
- Teaching to support vulnerable students is well planned and delivers valuable experiences. For example, a number of students for whom English is an additional language attend special lessons each morning to develop their language skills. They were observed making good progress as a result of a warm and caring learning atmosphere and the use of resources that were carefully matched to their needs.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good. It is characterised by skilful questioning that challenges students and promotes curiosity and enquiry.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- During the inspection, students behaved very well around the school, exhibited courtesy and good manners to visitors, staff and to one another. In lessons, students have positive attitudes to learning, arriving punctually and settling to work quickly. School records show that this is typical behaviour.

- A large majority of the parents and carers who expressed a view agreed that the school makes sure its students are well behaved and students themselves generally echoed this view, although some felt that behaviour could be improved.
- Attendance is improving and is now broadly in line with the national average. There has been a significant drop in persistent absence as a result of the consistent approach taken by the school and effective support provided to families.
- The school has a simple but effective rewards and sanctions system that is well understood by students and consistently applied by teachers and other adults. As a result, students' moral development is promoted and the school is a purposeful learning environment.
- The use of fixed-term exclusions has reduced significantly over recent years and is now below average. The school introduced a range of effective strategies to improve behaviour and attendance at the time of the last inspection that have been strengthened over time. The number of internal exclusions continues to fall as a result of coaching and mentoring on return to normal classes and fewer students are involved more than once.
- Students in all year groups have a clear awareness of the different types of bullying and report that bullying of any kind is very rare. The school carefully logs incidents with details of actions taken to deal with it.
- Students' attendance at alternative provision is managed well, and their behaviour and attendance are tracked and monitored effectively.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, supported by a highly capable senior team, provides good leadership and an ambitious vision, shared by all staff, for the school's future success.
 - The leadership of teaching is a particular strength, with systematic reviews of teaching quality that are informed by accurate judgements. The performance management system is well structured. It very effectively links the needs of teachers to high quality continuous professional development.
 - Teachers report that the monitoring of teaching quality is a very supportive process and that the range of support and training offered to staff as a result is of high quality. Coaching is a key feature of the programme of improvement and the school continues to invest in training new coaches to support colleagues. The quality of teaching has significantly improved over time as a result, as evidenced by monitoring records, tracking of student progress and students' work.
 - The school's self-evaluation and action planning cycle are clear and informed by accurate judgements. Action plans identify appropriate objectives and steps to success, with clearly articulated monitoring activities to assess progress. The methods used to evaluate the impact of planned actions need to be more clearly stated so that all stakeholders can engage with the process of improvement.
 - The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced at Key Stage 3 and offers three clear pathways at Key Stage 4 which are tailored to the needs of the students at the school. Vocational courses are offered through two local colleges and the quality of this offer is monitored and evaluated. Outcomes of these courses are good. There is clear adjustment of the curriculum for a range of pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language and who often commence their education mid-year.
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- The school maintains a wide range of positive partnerships which impact very positively on students' achievement, including a link with the Ricoh Arena which saw students performing groundsmen's duties during the Olympic Games.
 - The local authority provides effective support across a range of priorities which has contributed to improvements in teaching and behaviour management.
 - The school's arrangements for safeguarding students meet statutory requirements.
 - The governance of the school:
 - has a clear vision and sets clear, strategic direction with the school. Governors challenge the school very effectively on all aspects of leadership and management and secure improvements in teaching and learning
 - provides a wide range of expertise which is utilised effectively in all areas of school life and particularly in the oversight of financial allocation, including the use of the pupil premium.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	103732
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	404900

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	985
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	127
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Linda Bigham
Headteacher	Ruth Williamson
Date of previous school inspection	24 November 2010
Telephone number	024 76369200
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