

Fullhurst Community College

Imperial Avenue, Leicester, LE3 1AH

Inspection dates 18–19 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
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 good school.

- The headteacher's inspiring leadership has successfully focused everyone's attention on making the right steps towards improvement.
- Teachers plan lessons so that students build on what they already know and all groups of students make good progress.
- There has been a significant yearly rise in the proportion of students gaining five GCSE grades A* to C, including mathematics and English, since the last inspection.
- Staff and students work well together, sharing a common vision for success and high achievement.
- The highly effective management of staff performance has improved the quality of teaching over time so that most is now good or better and standards are rising.
- Students' behaviour has improved since the last inspection and is now good. They show positive attitudes towards learning and say that they feel safe in school.
- Attendance has improved and exclusions are reducing.
- The governing body makes sure that the school continues to be well led and managed, and effectively checks performance and that its money is wisely spent where it is most needed.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- More students need to exceed national expectations, to reach the highest grades in English and mathematics.
- Attendance is below average.
- Homework is not set consistently by all teachers and students miss out on opportunities to learn more.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 46 lessons or parts of lessons, including additional support provided through intervention work. There were three joint observations with the headteacher and senior leaders and 44 teachers were observed in total. Inspectors also observed breakfast club, an assembly and tutor time for different groups of students.
- Meetings were held with various senior and middle leaders, the Chair of the Governing Body and the local authority representative.
- Students' views were sought throughout the inspection, during lessons and break times and inspectors met with four groups of students, including members of the school council.
- Staff views were noted during the inspection and staff questionnaires were also analysed.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at a number of documents. These included the school's own data on students' progress, policies, planning and monitoring information.
- Inspectors paid close attention to school information on attendance, behaviour and all aspects of safeguarding.
- Parents' and carers' views were taken into account through the nine responses to the online Parent View questionnaire during the inspection.

Inspection team

Aune Turkson-Jones, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Catherine Robinson-Slater

Additional Inspector

Steven Cartlidge

Additional Inspector

Joan McPhail

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Fullhurst Community College is smaller than the average secondary school.
- Approximately three quarters of students are of White British heritage. Many of the remainder have European or mixed heritage.
- The proportion of students that speaks English as an additional language is above average.
- The number of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for looked-after children and those known to be eligible for free school meals, is more than double the national average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have disabilities or special educational needs supported through school action is above average.
- The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The number of students joining the school part way through the school year is higher than typically found. In several cases students are at an early stage of learning English.
- A small number of students in Year 10 and 11 attend courses off site in subjects such as motor mechanics and hairdressing.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Reduce the remaining variations in achievement by:
 - providing more opportunities for students to gain higher grades in English and mathematics
 - ensuring that teachers set more demanding work, which challenges students.
- Reduce persistent absence further and bring overall attendance in line with the national average by:
 - continuing to emphasise the importance of good attendance through the rewards system and year group assemblies
 - developing closer working partnerships with parents and carers.
- Ensure that teachers set homework regularly so that:
 - students have opportunities to learn independently, further developing their knowledge and skills
 - receive clear feedback on how to improve.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- When students join the school in Year 7 they are, on average, two to three terms behind others nationally. The school develops their skills in reading, writing and mathematics to enable them to learn in other subjects. Students are placed in specific tutor groups to help and support them and, as a result, make good progress across a range of subjects and years.
- The school identifies students' needs straight away and provides the necessary support to enable them to attain broadly average standards in GCSE examinations at the end of Year 11. The proportion of students achieving five GCSEs at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, has risen. The proportion of students achieving five GCSEs without English and mathematics has reached a record level and is above the national average.
- Good teaching has meant students' achievement in English and mathematics has improved sharply over the last three years. Progress is now good in Key Stage 3 and, based on students' starting points, the proportion making expected progress by the end of Key Stage 4 exceeds the national figures.
- Further work is needed to raise achievement in both English and mathematics for the most able students. The proportion of students gaining the top A and A* grades is below average. This requires improvement by teachers regularly setting more demanding work.
- The school has an early-entry policy for mathematics GCSE examinations and students complete this during Year 10. This has had a positive impact on results in mathematics and more students are achieving grade C by the end of the year. Some of the most able students have gone on to achieve A grades in Year 11 and study further mathematics, inspired by workshops and activities run by university undergraduates.
- The school makes good use of pupil premium funding, including placing students in specialist tutor groups to receive specific support. As a result, students known to be eligible for free school meals achieve better than others nationally and are closing gaps within the school. These students have improved their results in mathematics and science, and school tracking shows that they are on target to achieve even higher success rates in English, mathematics and science by the end of this school year.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs achieve in line with the others and make good progress because the school creates a unique package of support for each individual student tailored to their particular needs.
- Students who attend courses off site achieve well. They are motivated to learn and say they enjoy these courses because they are 'treated like adults'.
- Students joining part way through the school year, or who speak English as an additional language, receive effective support. The school has specialist staff who help students to improve their English and who also make sure that teachers' training is up to date. This helps students to catch up quickly and make good progress.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching has improved over time and is good. The evidence from lesson observations and from looking at the quality of students' work shows that good teaching enables students to make good progress and achieve well. This holds true for all groups within the school.
- Teachers plan lessons which build on previous learning and meet the needs of different students. Teachers place a strong emphasis on key words and meanings in different subjects so that students can boost their literacy skills. This is especially helpful for students who join the school part way through the year, or who speak English as an additional language.
- In the majority of lessons that are well taught, students are eager to learn and work well in pairs and small groups. Year 7 students made outstanding progress in an English lesson because each had a clear responsibility within the group for helping to create a detailed and accurate group essay. The teacher's expectation was high and students rose to the challenge.
- Teachers ask demanding questions that reflect their good subject knowledge and expertise. This encourages students to think more deeply before explaining answers in their own words. An example was seen in an outstanding mathematics lesson where students had to explain their chosen method by teaching the rest of the class.
- Regular marking provides helpful guidance to students on how to improve their work. In lessons this helps students to think about what they have learned and to gain a better understanding of their own progress.
- Teachers do not always set enough homework which enables students to improve their knowledge and understanding. Homework set is inconsistent across different subjects and students expressed concern about this during the inspection. Because of this, there are missed opportunities for students to enhance their learning.
- A small number of lessons require improvement because teachers do not always plan activities which hold the attention of all students in the class. This sometimes occurs because the work is too easy for the most able students and results in some losing interest and focus. This slows their progress. However, in most of the good or outstanding lessons, their needs are well met.
- Teaching assistants provide good support for students in class. They work closely as a group to develop programmes of support that will help individuals and small groups of students. This has helped particular groups of students to make good progress.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs benefit from additional literacy and numeracy help, both in class and in separate groups. Students supported by the pupil premium and those who speak English as an additional language have access to specialists within school such as the academic mentor, one-to-one tutor or language support staff. This has given them the same chances to learn and make good progress as their fellow students.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Almost all students are polite and well behaved around the school. They respond well to the good-quality teaching they receive and show their positive attitudes to learning. Students co-operate well with staff and each other and work well as a team in groups.
- Where teaching is less engaging, students occasionally lose their focus and become restless, but

generally respond to teachers' reminders about their behaviour. The school manages behaviour well and staff are consistent in their use of the school behaviour policy. Students appreciate this and say that behaviour has improved.

- The small number of parents and carers who responded to Parent View and staff who completed the staff questionnaire generally agree that behaviour in lessons and around school has improved. Student support staff make doubly sure that students move around the site without incident. Students say that they feel very safe in school.
- Students express great pride in their school community and older students speak positively about how the atmosphere has changed for the better. Students treat each other with mutual respect and are tolerant of each other's differences. There are few racist incidents and discrimination is not tolerated.
- Bullying is rare and dealt with effectively when it occurs. Students understand risk and know about different types of bullying and how to keep themselves safe, especially on the internet. This is because the school raises their awareness through assemblies and teaching in different subjects. The school has recently gained an anti-bullying award.
- Although attendance has improved since the last inspection and exclusions have reduced, it is still below average. The school has been active in raising attendance and continues to tackle persistent absence. The school is working with an attendance specialist to strengthen contact with families who struggle in this area.
- The school carefully checks the attendance of students who attend courses off site and a key worker liaises between school and the course providers. Students' attendance at these courses is high because they make them feel more positive about what they can do when they leave school.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has provided inspirational leadership since joining the school in 2010. Working with the full support of a new governing body, he has made some difficult decisions which include re-structuring the senior and middle leadership teams. This has had a positive impact on school leaders, who now work with a common sense of purpose and share a clear vision.
- Faculty heads make sure staff are focused on raising standards through good quality teaching. All staff have appraisals and individual targets which make them directly responsible for achievement in their classes. This is reflected in teachers' pay, where additional salary points are linked to performance.
- School leaders have established a system for tracking students' progress and this forms the basis of detailed, half-termly progress checks for all students. Staff use this system with confidence so that they can monitor students' achievements on a regular basis. This means that staff respond promptly to keep students on track if any are at risk of not achieving their targets.
- Staff share leaders' vision of the school and express their pride and commitment to its continued success. This was evident from their questionnaire responses and comments made to inspectors. Several spoke of the strong support they receive from colleagues and from the headteacher himself.

- The local authority has actively supported the school, including organising support from an executive headteacher as well as other advisers. This support has contributed to improvements in the quality of teaching and strengthened the leadership of the school.
- The school offers students a range of different subject choices and enables them to learn through both school-based and work-related courses. Students benefit greatly from other trips, visits, clubs and activities and from 'collapsed days' where there is a focus for a whole day, such as learning skills, enterprise, politics or resilience.
- Students', spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is nurtured through the school's ethos of mutual respect and through contributions from assemblies, personal and social education and a range of other subjects. The school encourages tolerance and full inclusivity for all students with equality of opportunity at the heart of its work. This is reflected in students' good attitudes and behaviour.
- Safeguarding meets current requirements. Staff training in child protection is regularly updated and all necessary checks are in place for the safe appointment of new staff.
- The school fosters good relations with parents and carers and other organisations so that students are fully supported in their education.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors take a lead in thinking about the school's future and asking searching questions of senior leaders. They ensure that financial resources continue to be efficiently managed, for example in the way that pupil premium money is spent on providing additional teaching for pupils who are behind in their literacy and numeracy. Governors see that staff performance management is checked carefully, so that improved teaching remains the key to driving up standards of achievement. The governing body has a development plan that focuses their visits on key areas of the school's work, such as achievement, quality of teaching, or leadership and management. This helps them to gain a good working knowledge of the school's strengths and what still needs to improve.

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	120298
Local authority	Leicester City
Inspection number	379991

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11-16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	862
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Rick Moore
Headteacher	Tom Campbell
Date of previous school inspection	6 July 2010
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