

Colne Community School and College

Church Road, Brightlingsea, Colchester, CO7 0QL

Inspection dates 5–6 March 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The executive principal, together with other leaders and governors, have created an exceptional culture for learning and strive for continuous improvement.
- Since the previous inspection, students' achievement has rapidly increased as a result of high quality teaching and learning.
- Students make rapid and sustained progress throughout the school. By the time they leave, the proportion of students making or exceeding the progress expected of them in English and mathematics is extremely high.
- Teaching is consistently good and very often progress in subjects across all key stages is outstanding.
- Students feel extremely safe and have an excellent understanding of potential dangers. They are proud ambassadors of the school. This is shown in their exceptional contributions to the school and community.
- Most students' behaviour and attitudes to learning are exemplary. They make at least good, and often excellent, contributions to their learning.
- Learning meets the needs of all learners. Opportunities for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are exceptional.
- The sixth form is outstanding. The school's unique specialisation is in the 'Sports Academy' and increasing work-related subjects mean students make outstanding progress. The achievement of students at AS and A-Level is good.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team visited 50 lessons, observing 46 teachers. Six lessons were observed jointly with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also conducted a series of further brief observations of learning and conducted a scrutiny of students' work.
- Members of the inspection team discussed with students their views about the school.
- Meetings were held with groups of students, governors, and the school improvement partner, a representative from the local authority, the senior leadership team and staff.
- Inspectors took account of the 43 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the school's analysis of its own questionnaire responses.
- Inspectors observed the school's work and looked at improvement plans, records and analyses of students' behaviour, the tracking of pupils' progress and examples of students' work. They scrutinised the school's attendance figures and monitoring information.

Inspection team

Raymond Lau, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Sally-Ann Harding	Additional Inspector
Heather Housden	Additional Inspector
Edwin Powell	Additional Inspector
Brenda Watson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- This is a larger-than-average secondary school. Almost all students are from a White British background and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of girls in the school is below the national average.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium (additional funding provided to the school for students known to be eligible for free school meals), is below the national average. There are very few looked-after children and no students from service families.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average.
- The proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also average. Most of these students have specific, moderate and learning difficulties.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- There are no students in the main school educated off-site.
- The sixth form specialises in the 'Sports Academy' and work-related courses with approximately three quarters of students completing BTEC and other related courses. This is supplemented by academic A Level courses.
- The school converted to academy status in August 2011. The overall effectiveness of the predecessor school, which had the same name, was judged to be satisfactory when it was last inspected in January 2011.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure all students are sufficiently challenged on a consistent basis and given more opportunities to make rapid progress through finding things out for themselves as well as in collaboration with one another.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Students enter Year 7 with average standards. Because of high quality teaching, students leave the school with well above-average attainment in many subjects, including English and mathematics. Boys' attainment is above average, as is that of the girls. Students' attainment in reading is above average. A range of sharply focused interventions help them to read difficult texts and develop their comprehension skills.
- Early entrance to GCSE examinations supports students' achievements exceptionally well. The school has just received the current examination results with 88% of the Year 11 cohort attaining GCSE grades A* to C, with an increasing number achieving the highest grades possible. This is a considerable gain on the previous years.
- The proportion of students making or exceeding the progress expected of them in English and mathematics is very high. Girls achieve exceptionally well and boys are making rapid and sustained progress. For example, in a Year 10 mathematics lesson, students made exceptional progress completing exercises that challenged all learners.
- Disabled students, and those who have special educational needs make at least as good progress, with many making exceptional progress. This is due to very well-targeted support and intervention programmes, that help them to speed up their progress.
- Students known to be eligible for the pupil premium are making outstanding progress. From excellently targeted interventions, the students' average points scores compare extremely favourably and their attainment is above the national average. There are no gaps between the performance of students known to be eligible for free school meals and other students. Those who are eligible for the Year 7 catch-up premium make similar progress to their peers.
- Many students in the college (sixth form) typically enter with below average attainment. This is because the school accepts a very large proportion of students from other schools and specialises in work-related courses, notably the 'Sports Academy'. Students on these BTEC courses leave with above-average attainment, making outstanding progress. A range of academic AS and A-Level courses are offered and most make at least good progress.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- The quality of teaching continues to go from strength to strength. Many subjects, including English, mathematics, science, media, French, health and social care, have outstanding teaching. The teaching in art and dance is consistently outstanding. Much of this very high quality teaching runs across all key stages, and in particular within the sixth form college.
- The characteristics of the school's outstanding teaching:
 - teachers' very high expectations and investment in the preparation, planning and selection of resources that meet the needs of all learners
 - teachers promote learning through a highly collaborative approach, and a climate for learning that means both the students and the teacher can take risks in their learning
 - students are stretched, consistently challenged with very well-chosen inspirational activities that are tailored to the needs of the individuals exceptionally well
 - opportunities exist for students to be highly independent and resilient in their working

- skilful use of questioning challenges the students to achieve more
 - behaviour and students' attitudes to learning are consistently outstanding.
- Teachers use assessment highly effectively to support learning. Outstanding teaching was observed in a Year 11 dance lesson as students prepared for a 'Bollywood' style dance. Students observed their previous performance and set targets for themselves and others. They instantly applied the feedback from their peers and the teacher into their routine, demonstrating exceptional and rapid progress. There was excellent teamwork and this strengthened the students' social and cultural development exceptionally well. Marking and feedback were mainly of high quality and aided students' learning well.
- The school strategy of students using 'confidence arrows' help them to measure their own progress. In an exceptional Year 9 lesson, the teacher innovatively used this process to measure the smaller steps to success, challenging the students specifically to explore how success would look, sound and feel when doing this.
- However, where lessons are not as outstanding, this is because teachers do not consistently challenge students to explore what they could further achieve. On a very few occasions, teachers control the lesson and students work diligently under them, but without sufficient opportunities for them to work independently.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Students are very proud representatives of their school. They proudly display their achievements through different badges worn on their uniforms and the four-house system enables competitive and collaborative team development. Events and activities from the houses, and the school collectively, have recently raised over £6,500 for national charities. The sixth-form students make highly valued contributions to support the development of younger students.
- The safety of pupils is outstanding. Students feel very safe in the school. Parent View shows that almost all parents and carers support this view. Students have an excellent understanding of what constitutes safe and unsafe practices. They have a considerable knowledge of the different types of bullying and report this when it very occasionally occurs. Students say that there are highly effective procedures in place, and that bullying is swiftly dealt with.
- The school is active in educating students on the dangers of homophobia. For example, drama performances raise awareness of the importance of promoting equality amongst all students, irrespective of race, gender, or sexual orientation. Discrimination of any kind is not tolerated.
- Students are very polite, courteous and friendly towards staff, visitors, and generally to each other. The school works tirelessly to see that all students are included. There are specific interventions that support and develop the positive behaviours of students, which have a striking impact. For example, in a Year 8 programme the 'Sky Sports' intervention expertly develops students' motivation, confidence, behaviour and feelings, alongside their academic achievement, through science and physical education.
- In lessons, where behaviour is outstanding, students demonstrate their hunger for learning. Teachers have excellent relationships with the students and successfully create a purposeful learning environment. This is not always the case across all lessons as some teachers provide limited opportunities for joint work with other students, and this results in behaviour and

attitudes to learning that are good, rather than outstanding.

- Attendance is above average. The rate of exclusions has significantly declined as a result of effective and consistent behaviour management by all staff.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The executive principal provides inspirational leadership. He gives the school exemplary vision and foresight, with a continuous passion that strives for excellence. He is very well supported by a highly effective senior leadership team in driving achievement, the quality of teaching and standards of behaviour to a high standard. As a result, the school is extremely well placed to continue to improve further.
 - The systems for the tracking and checking of students' achievements are exemplary. There is high rigour in the analysis of student performance by leaders at all levels. Staff are adept in using this information for planning teaching, and intervention strategies, so that all students achieve extremely well. Such outstanding systems provide an exceptional opportunity for equality of learning for all students.
 - The leadership team has successfully used pupil-premium funding to support a range of initiatives, including the deployment of additional staff and resources, to increase the achievement of students and raise attainment.
 - Leaders of subjects and aspects of the school's work are highly effective. They conduct their monitoring and activities with detail and precision. They are inclusive in reviewing all aspects of their work, build teams, trust, and support colleagues in their professional practice.
 - The training of staff is exemplary. Each individual member of staff has a 'personal improvement plan'. An appointed mentor helps individuals. Frequent staff conferences offer specific training for staff.
 - Learning opportunities are very well supported by enrichment activities which are notably strong in the sports specialism. The uptake of activities is extremely high. One Year 8 student recalled developing her debating skills. She stated, 'It's not just all about trips, we get a very big range of activities and these help me for the future'. Dance and cheerleading are very well-supported. For example, over 300 students are involved in a community dance event.
 - Students' spiritual, moral, social, and cultural understanding is very well developed. The annual 'Activities Week' offers greater social integration. There are very well-established exchange links to Thailand and the USA, which strengthen students' cultural awareness. During the inspection, an inspirational assembly discussed the first-hand experiences of an individual that brought to life the struggles of a refugee in a different country. This developed students' spirituality by encouraging them to consider how they belong to their community.
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■ **The governance of the school:**

- The governing body is highly active and demanding of the school. Collectively, governors have adept systems for checking the effectiveness of the school's work. Through the various committees they know about the standards of teaching and make sure that they analyse performance information effectively so that any student achievement that is not acceptable can be checked. They know how well the school compares nationally. They have excellent knowledge of how leaders manage the performance of staff and tackle any underperformance. They support the school's recruitment and retention of high quality teaching staff through reward programmes. The governing body is highly aware of how the school uses the pupil premium. Governors measure the impact of this spending on the performance of the students. They identify any training that might increase their own effectiveness as a governing body.
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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	137429
Inspection number	406673

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

Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Non-maintained
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	1396
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	190
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Michael Hindley
Executive Principal	Nardeep Sharma
Date of previous school inspection	19–20 January 2011
Telephone number	01206 303511
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