

Ash Green School

Ash Green Lane, Ash Green, Coventry, CV7 9AH

Inspection dates 14–15 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Over time, students make good progress and achieve well across a range of subjects, including in English and mathematics.
- Teaching is improving strongly. Consistently good teaching promotes good attainment and achievement, especially for students with special education needs.
- The pupil premium is used effectively to support pupils for whom this funding is intended so that they make good progress.
- Behaviour is good and has improved over time. Students show courtesy, politeness and consideration for others.
- Students from minority ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language are well supported and achieve well.
- The sixth form is outstanding because students are taught consistently well.
- Leadership of the school is strong. Clear direction results from accurate school self-evaluation that pinpoints and tackles key areas for improvement.
- Robust and regular checking by leaders of progress against targets underpin high expectations and leads to good improvement over time in achievement, behaviour and teaching and learning.
- Governors and the Creative Education Trust provide support and strong challenge to leaders at all levels.
- Parents and carers are supportive of the good progress that has been made.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Students are not provided with sufficient opportunities to find things out for themselves or work together.
- The good practice observed in English has not been shared with all subject leaders.
- The whole school literacy initiative is not fully secure across the school.
- Marking is not consistently good in all departments.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 41 lessons. Nine of these observations were completed jointly with the senior leadership team. Inspectors also observed breaks, lunchtimes and attended tutorial periods.
- Discussions were held with pupils, staff, governors, the principal, vice-principal, Director of Education for Creative Education Trust, and the attached adviser from Creative Education Trust.
- Inspectors took account of 30 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), parent responses to school questionnaires. They also took account of 69 responses to staff questionnaires, and letters from parents and pupils.
- A wide range of documents was examined, including samples of students' work, student progress and tracking information, the school development plan, the school's self-evaluation, behaviour logs and safeguarding documents.
- Inspectors listened to students read, observed reading-support lessons and the teaching of phonics (the sounds that letters make).

Inspection team

Sherry Gladwin, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Robert Bourdon-Pierre	Additional Inspector
Kerin Jones	Additional Inspector
Derek Wiles	Additional Inspector
Noureddin Khassal	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized secondary school.
- Most students are White British with average proportions of minority ethnic students and those who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is average. This is additional funding for students in local authority care, those known to be eligible for free school meals and those with a parent in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with 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 average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectation for students' attainment and progress.
- The school is a sponsor-led academy within the Creative Education Trust.
- The school works in partnership with North Warwickshire and Hinkley College, Coventry Building Workshop, Bedworth Nursery School and 'Positive about Young People'.
- Year 7 students requiring support with literacy receive catch-up sessions.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning to outstanding by:
 - promoting joint lesson observations among subject leaders to learn from the very good practice already in the school, especially in the English department.
 - securing the good whole-school literacy initiative across all subjects so that students have more opportunities to practise their writing skills.
 - making sure that the whole-school marking policy is applied consistently well across all subjects so that students are informed of what they need to do to improve their work, including the quality of presentation, and respond to the suggestions teachers make.
 - giving more opportunities for students to find things out for themselves and work together so they become more involved in their learning.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Over time students achieve well. The school's information shows that Year 11 is on course to make further improvements in attainment and progress.
- When students join the school their attainment is below average. As a result of good teaching they make good progress and achieve above-average standards when they leave.
- The school teaches reading well. Good investment in a new reading scheme supports reading. Those who find reading challenging are supported through effective programmes to build skills and confidence and improve their reading ages.
- The attainment in English and mathematics of students eligible for the pupil premium has lagged behind that of others in the school. In 2012 students were two thirds of a grade behind in both English and mathematics. This situation has been tackled directly, and these students are currently making progress similar to others in the school.
- Some students are entered early for GCSE examinations, mainly in English and mathematics. The early-entry policy is generally helpful to more-able students, who are able to take their learning of the subject involved to a higher level. Those who do not attain the results expected are required to continue with these courses to improve their results and achieve the highest grade possible.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make better progress than others in the school and similar students nationally. Year 7 catch-up groups in English result in students achieving well in developing their literacy skills.
- Minority ethnic students and those who speak English as an additional language make better progress than other students. This is because they benefit from good provision and teaching especially, in reading and writing.
- Students attending alternative provision make good progress and achieve well because the activities they undertake are well-tailored to suit their needs and aptitudes.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is consistently good across a range of subjects including in English and mathematics. As a result, most students make good progress in their learning and achieve well over time. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of lessons and enrichment activities help enhance their personal development.
- Teaching is improving strongly. Across a range of subjects teaching is consistently good and much is outstanding. Teaching is particularly strong in English and this good practice is now being shared with other subject areas to help improve attainment and progress.
- Teachers set high expectations. They are enthusiastic, possess good subject knowledge, and plan lessons well. Information about student performance is used to create learning activities

that challenge students and match their needs.

- Teachers and teaching assistants carefully plan learning for disabled students and those who have special educational needs. They regularly check students' understanding and progress so that support is timely and effective. As a result, students make very good progress in English and mathematics and perform better than similar students nationally.
- Classrooms are positive places to learn because teachers listen to students, value their contributions and ask questions that stimulate discussion, generate reflection and deepen learning. Most students respond well and show that they are keen to learn.
- Reading, writing, communication and mathematics are taught well. Rigorous tracking of students' progress helps to identify students requiring extension activities, or additional support. Enrichment activities and targeted support are provided during the school day, after-school and during the school holidays. The whole-school literacy initiative does not yet provide sufficient opportunities for students to practise writing across a range of subjects.
- In most subjects, teachers set homework and mark students work accurately and regularly. However, marking is not consistently good. Teachers' comments sometimes do not inform students of what they need to do to improve their work or require students to respond.
- Teaching in the sixth form is consistently good with much outstanding practice. Teachers possess very good subject knowledge and plan stimulating learning activities, well matched to students' needs. Students make good progress in developing knowledge, understanding and skills across a range of subjects.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Over time, behaviour has improved significantly because rigorous systems are in place to help manage behaviour consistently well. Students respond well and value learning. Attitudes in lessons are positive. Students feel safe and enjoy coming to school. This is reflected in above-average attendance.
- Students are courteous and respectful in lessons and around the school. They work well in small groups and show insight, empathy and compassion when engaged assessing one another's work. This was particularly evident in a drama lesson on bullying.
- Students co-operate well with teachers and other adults working in the school to create an orderly, calm and purposeful working atmosphere that is generally free from bullying and unkindness. They know about different types of bullying, such as racist and homophobic bullying.
- Students value the school's rewards system and feel that it motivates them to learn and behave well in school. They participate in, and enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular provision including visits, after-school sports and arts clubs, and enrichment days.
- Students develop high aspirations and self-belief. This was observed in a tutorial period that made effective use of a video clip followed by class discussion. Students are confident and progress to college, employment and training.

- School behaviour records indicate a decline in fixed-term exclusions to below average. There are good internal systems for managing students with challenging behaviour at risk of exclusion. School information shows that the school has successfully worked in partnership with parents and external agencies to improve the behaviour of individuals and groups over time. Students attending alternative provision behave responsibly and attend regularly.
- The house system, together with mixed-age tutor groups and the prefect system, present opportunities for students taking leadership. They work in partnership with staff to promote an orderly environment and act as role models. Year 11 students talked to inspectors about how they took these roles seriously.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The school is well led. The leadership of the principal provides clear vision and direction for school improvement. The principal is well supported by the senior leadership team, governors and the Creative Education Trust. Leaders at all levels share the ambition for school improvement and raising standards.
- School self-evaluation is rigorous and robust, providing an accurate analysis of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Key priorities are identified and addressed in the development plan. Systematic checking against targets by the senior leadership team and governors provide the basis for holding staff to account.
- High expectations of what students can achieve and what teachers and support staff should do to make sure students receive high quality teaching is at the heart of the school's drive to raise standards. This has resulted in students making good progress over time and strong improvements in teaching.
- Well-thought through policies underpin the school's work but delay with the new school website meant that these were not available on the website for parents and carers at the time of the inspection. This is being addressed by the principal.
- The school's curriculum provides balance, breadth and access for all, including those who are disabled, or who have special educational needs. Partnerships with local providers enhance provision for students. Some parents expressed concern about the recent loss of music from the curriculum. On investigation it was found that the principal is addressing this staffing issue.
- The sixth form opened in September 2012 in response to requests from parents for this type of provision in the locality. It is well planned and well resourced. Early indications suggest that numbers will expand considerably next year. All students are on course to achieve AS and BTEC Level 3 targets.
- Most parents are supportive and praise improvements in behaviour, teaching and learning, and pupil achievement. The school works hard to engage the small minority of hard-to-reach parents and carers. Regular parent surveys help inform the school development plan but some parents would like to be consulted more.
- Safeguarding arrangements meet statutory requirements.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity. Students from all backgrounds make good

progress. For example, the pupil premium is used effectively to provide support for eligible students. As a result, the achievement of these students is better than that of similar students nationally. Funding provides small-group tuition and enrichment opportunities for students.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are committed and well organised in appropriate committees. They systematically monitor progress with the school development plan. Together with the Creative Education Trust they provide challenge and support for school's leaders, holding them to account for the quality of teaching, behaviour and students' achievement. Governors understand and regularly review the school's information about students' performance and know how it is used to set targets. Governors have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses, including the quality of teaching and learning. They understand the importance of good teaching and the difference it can make to different groups. Governors are clear that only good or better teaching should be rewarded by a rise in pay. They know what the school is doing to tackle any underperformance. Alongside the Creative Education Trust they manage teachers' performance well and make sure that resources and staff are efficiently deployed. Governors can account for the use of the pupil premium and explain how it is contributing to the raised attainment of eligible students.

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	137781
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	402771
Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Foundation
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	818
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	38
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Martin Walsh
Principal	Andrew Clay
Date of previous school inspection	N/A
Telephone number	024 7636 6772
Fax number	024 7636 6383
Email address	info@ashgreenschool.org.uk

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