

# Foxford School and Community Arts College

Grange Road, Longford, Coventry, CV6 6BB

## Inspection dates

3–4 July 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

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

- Standards were low in 2013. Too few students had made good progress during their time in the school, particularly in English, science and modern foreign languages.
- Achievement in modern foreign languages is still not good enough, and there is still too much variation between different groups of students in some classes. White boys still do not achieve as well as their peers.
- The sixth form requires improvement. Too many students are not achieving the grades they are capable of.
- Teachers do not consistently plan lessons to match the full range of students' abilities.
- Learning is occasionally disrupted by misbehaviour from some lower school students.
- Reading and writing skills are not developed well enough in all subjects.
- Homework is not set regularly.
- Teachers do not always ensure that students act on the advice they are given in marking.
- Leaders' improvement plans do not clearly show how the success of their actions can be measured against students' achievement.

### The school has the following strengths

- Year 11 standards in English and science have improved significantly this year.
- Students are making more rapid progress in most subjects as a result of being set higher targets.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs achieve well.
- Students say they feel safe at the school, and are well cared for.
- Staff morale is good because they recognise that the headteacher and senior leaders are making important and necessary improvements to the school.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 29 lessons, including six joint observations with members of the school’s senior team. They saw registration periods and observed how students behaved around the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, a representative of the local authority, governors, senior staff, subject leaders and other school staff. Informal meetings also took place with staff and students.
- Discussions were held with groups of students across the school about their educational experience and behaviour. Samples of students’ written work were also scrutinised, including in lessons. Inspectors listened to younger students reading.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of documents, including the school’s evaluation of its own performance and its development planning, tracking of students’ progress, monitoring of teaching and staff training, and records of governing body meetings. They also looked at records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance.
- There were too few responses to the online survey, Parent View, for these to be available to inspectors. However, they took account of the results of parental questionnaires conducted by the school as well as the 80 questionnaires completed by staff.

## Inspection team

Linda Austin, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Helen Owen

Additional Inspector

Anthony Felsenstein

Additional Inspector

Isobel Randall

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Foxford School and Community Arts College is an average-sized secondary school.
- The school is part of a charitable trust with Coventry City Council, Coventry University, Henley College, the RICOH arena, Changing Cultures and Coventry and Warwickshire University Hospitals.
- Around half the students are White British. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is above the national average, as is the proportion of students who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above the national average. The pupil premium is additional funding provided to support the education of students known to be eligible for free school meals and those who have been in local authority care.
- The proportion of students that the school has identified as disabled or having special educational needs and requiring extra support through school action is in line with the national average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above the national average.
- A very small number of Key Stage 4 students attend courses at Henley College and Brakes for part of the week, and some sixth formers attend other schools in the Coventry City Consortium to study one of their courses.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress at the end of Year 11.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching by ensuring that teachers:
  - plan and adapt lessons so that students of all abilities and backgrounds are engaged and making good progress
  - check that students act on the advice they have been given about how to improve their work
  - develop students' reading and writing skills across all subjects by following the school policy about reading, the correction of written mistakes and extended writing.
- Improve achievement by ensuring that:
  - the progress of sixth formers is tracked against more aspirational targets
  - standards in modern foreign languages are at least average by the end of Year 11.
- Eliminate low-level disruption from lessons by ensuring that:
  - work planned is at the right level of difficulty for all students
  - staff consistently follow the school's behaviour policy.
- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
  - homework is set regularly by all staff
  - actions for improvement are clearly linked to students' achievement.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Students have not made sufficient progress over time. In 2013, the proportion of students making or exceeding expected progress in English, science and modern foreign languages was well below national figures.
- The least and most able students, and White British boys, made less progress than other groups. Students eligible for pupil premium funding attained, on average, a whole grade below their peers in mathematics and English GCSE. Achievement in modern foreign languages has not yet improved enough. The achievement of White British boys still lags behind that of most minority ethnic groups and students who speak English as an additional language.
- Achievement in the sixth form requires improvement. Students are not making good enough progress. The number of students who achieve an A\* to B grade is too low, and too many fail their AS course. Progress in some subjects, including psychology, is well below average.
- School information and evidence from the inspection shows that improving teaching is enabling students to make better progress this year. The proportion of students making the progress they should in English and science is speeding up and is now at or above the national average. Students in the lower years are increasingly making expected or better progress in most subjects.
- A clearer focus on the most effective use of pupil premium funding this year is helping eligible pupils to catch up with their peers. Those in Year 11 are on track to attain one third of a grade below their peers in English and half of a grade below in mathematics this year.
- In 2013, the school entered students early for IGCSE English and GCSE science courses. Students are able to resit these GCSEs in the summer of Year 11, if appropriate, in order to achieve the highest grade possible. Students who have already achieved their expected grade then go on to study higher level courses, or in some cases improve their achievement in other subjects.
- Achievement of the very few students who study part time on other sites is well monitored, and they make good progress as a result of the personalised teaching they receive.
- Support for disabled students and those who have special educational needs is well focused and effective. Consequently, most of these students now make good progress.
- Years 7 and 8 students who need particular support in English and mathematics make good progress. This is because the school has introduced a 'catch up' programme that involves additional time for numeracy and literacy. They are placed in separate classes called 'Flex' groups where they are given personalised support to improve their basic skills.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Teachers do not always plan and teach lessons that match the full range of students' abilities. As a consequence, work is sometimes insufficiently challenging for the middle ability or most able students.
- Senior leaders have now set more ambitious academic targets for students by requiring them to

make more than simply expected progress. However, this transition towards higher expectations is not yet fully embedded in subjects, such as modern foreign languages. Students make insufficient progress in some lessons where the teacher has low expectations or gives students too long to complete simple activities, or they are allowed to choose tasks that are not challenging enough.

- The quality of marking has improved. However, in many subjects teachers do not ensure that students respond to the suggestions they make about how they can improve their work.
- Homework is not being consistently set across the school to support learning in class. Students reported that they did very little homework, and the books sampled showed that there was too much variability in the quantity and quality of work set within subjects and in most year groups.
- Initiatives to improve support for literacy, including those to accelerate progress in reading, are improving achievement in Key Stage 3 for 'catch up' students. However, in a number of mainstream lessons observed, reading texts were too easy, and school guidance was not followed as spelling mistakes were not corrected and students were not set extended writing tasks.
- Where learning is most effective, teachers make good use of information about students' achievement in planning lessons. They ask challenging questions to check students' understanding and deepen their understanding, and the pace and range of activities keep students engaged.
- Information gathered from looking at students' books and from regular assessments of their progress indicates that teaching is improving. This is clearly making a difference in accelerating students' progress and promoting their achievement in English and science.
- Support from teaching assistants is usually good and inspectors saw examples of students with special educational needs being supported very effectively, both in mainstream classes and when receiving individual support out of lessons.
- Data show that the progress of students in the sixth form requires improvement. This indicates that teaching has not been good enough. As Year 12 students were at Aberystwyth University at an annual study week, few sixth form lessons could be seen. However, in the very few folders looked at, marking was thorough and students were given clear advice about how to improve their work in relation to the examination criteria.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** requires improvement

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. Although many students behave well, minor disruptions hinder learning in some lower school lessons. Younger students and a very small number of staff expressed these concerns, and they were verified in the school's incident log.
- Engagement in lessons is linked closely to the quality of teaching. In some lessons, where it is weaker, teachers have not planned work at the right level of difficulty, resulting in students' lack of enthusiasm and insufficient pride in their work.
- Where activities are engaging and support students' progress, behaviour is good. For example, in a Year 10 English lesson, students were all engaged in interesting tasks and made good progress throughout the lesson because the teacher consistently challenged all students to succeed and asked lively, searching questions.

- Break and lunchtime behaviour is good and students demonstrate respectful relationships with staff, each other and visitors.
- Parents who responded to the in school questionnaires believe that students behave well and feel safe.
- Behaviour of sixth form students is good. One said, 'The school has helped to build my confidence, is supportive and has helped to piece me together like a jigsaw.' Sixth form students are proud to help younger students with their studies.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. The arrangements for safeguarding students meet statutory requirements. The school has a robust approach to identifying students at risk. All the required policies and procedures are in place, and staff and governors receive regular, appropriate training to enable them to carry them out effectively.
- Students are well aware of the different forms of bullying and reported few incidents. They also commented that incidents are dealt with effectively. They have learnt about e-safety and the dangers of drug abuse in lessons, and are very aware about how to keep themselves safe.
- Students' attendance has improved and is now at the national average. The school works well with the parents of students who are persistently absent. This has resulted in an improvement in their attendance.
- School systems to support vulnerable students, through separate learning areas, mentoring and individual support plans, have resulted in few fixed-term and very few permanent exclusions.
- Students are proud of their school and feel that they can express their views through the school council. They are keen to take up positions of authority and to raise money for charity.

### **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- Despite some improvements, the actions taken by senior leaders have not yet led to good teaching across all subjects. Some systems and approaches have only recently established, and are yet to have a clear impact on standards.
- The school has recently improved its checks on the quality of teaching and students' achievement. The comprehensive system that is now used to track students' progress has ensured that expectations for students' achievement are higher. It is being well used by most leaders.
- Neither senior and subject leaders' improvement plans nor their evaluations link proposed actions to students' achievement in a measurable way.
- The new subject leaders in English, science and mathematics have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects and have employed a variety of approaches to monitor the work of their teams. However, this is not consistent across the work of all subject leaders.
- Leadership of the sixth form requires improvement because the achievement of sixth form students in their academic courses is too low. However, the 16 to 19 study programme, combined with good careers advice, enables all sixth form students to move into higher education or

employment.

- Leaders have worked effectively to improve the weakest teaching. A broad range of training opportunities helps to address the individual needs of staff. Teachers and support staff have conducted research linked to the school's priorities for improvement. Teachers' performance is assessed rigorously and teachers can only progress up the pay scale if they are proving to be effective in raising students' achievement.
- Leadership and management of provision for disabled students and those who have special educational needs are strong. Well-trained staff ensure that specific needs are quickly identified and acted upon.
- Leaders are working well to improve the achievement of students eligible for pupil premium funding. Well-chosen help and guidance, including the use of graduate mentors, are enabling them to catch up with their peers. This is evident in most years, but more evident in English than mathematics in the lower school.
- The curriculum is flexible in allowing students to choose different pathways to match their abilities and aspirations. In Key Stage 4, students chose one of three pathways, enabling them to study the right balance of academic, practical and work-related subjects. Students are given helpful advice to help them determine the pathway that suits them best. The school works effectively with a range of organisations, including members of the charitable trust, to ensure that those who leave the school at 16 move on successfully into further education and employment.
- The school is effective in promoting students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Opportunities for students to work collaboratively in lessons and to work with others through volunteering and fundraising activities contribute to this. Students benefit from a range of visits, and visitors to the school have included a member of the European Parliament, former students and other speakers.
- The school's parental questionnaire confirms that this sample of parents is supportive of the school and is confident in its work. A large majority of staff are positive about school leadership and believe that leaders are doing all they can to improve teaching.
- The local authority has provided helpful support in the form of a whole-school review of progress, and advice to governors and to subject leaders.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors now have a good understanding of the school's strengths and most of the areas that need improvement. The recent appointment of new governors, combined with more detailed information from the school about students' progress, has strengthened the governing body. It is now able to hold senior and subject leaders to account, particularly with regard to asking challenging questions about students' achievement, the quality of teaching and the management of staff performance. Governors are committed to improving the school and are receptive to guidance on how to do this. A school improvement committee involving governors has met to monitor action points in the school improvement plan and those arising from a local authority review. Governors monitor closely the progress of students supported by the pupil premium, and challenge leaders on the effectiveness and impact of the support provided for them.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	103732
<b>Local authority</b>	Coventry
<b>Inspection number</b>	442526

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	994
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	136
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Linda Bigham
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ruth Williamson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 September 2012
<b>Email address</b>	mail@foxford.coventry.sch.uk

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