

# Fitzwaryn School

Denchworth Road, Wantage, OX12 9ET

## Inspection dates

15–16 October 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b> <b>1</b>
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching	Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils	Outstanding	1
Early years provision	Outstanding	1
Sixth form provision	Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- The headteacher and other leaders pursue excellence in all of their activities and are highly ambitious for the future of the school. Leaders have ensured pupils achieve outstandingly well due to high quality training and rigorous checks on teaching.
- Innovative systems to check pupils' progress ensures that anyone who falls behind can quickly catch up. This ensures that a high proportion of pupils make better than expected progress in English and mathematics and in their personal development.
- The governing body has improved its skills and has an accurate view of the school's work. Governors ensure that additional government funding enables eligible pupils to achieve at least as well as their peers and sometimes better.
- Parents are overwhelmingly pleased with the school. They are very happy about their children's progress and the quality of support that they receive.
- Improvements to the range of subjects offered have ensured that these are exceptionally well matched to pupils' abilities so that pupils are very enthusiastic by their learning.
- High quality spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensures that pupils' personal development is outstanding.
- Pupils' behaviour is outstanding in and around the school. They say they feel very safe at school.
- Teaching is outstanding. Very well-planned and often exciting tasks engage pupils in exciting learning.
- Pupils' across the school achieve outstandingly well in English. Progress in communication is of a very high quality because of skilled use of signs and symbols. More-able pupils make excellent progress in reading and writing.
- Pupils' progress in mathematics is outstanding. Planned tasks are practical and challenging so that all groups achieve extremely well.
- Children get off to a positive start in the Reception class. They settle well and make outstanding progress during their time there.
- The sixth form is outstanding. Students gain a wide range of qualifications and benefit from some excellent vocational opportunities.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 11 lessons, most of them jointly with the senior leaders.
- The inspectors spoke with several groups of pupils both during lunch and in the playground. Inspectors also talked to several sixth-formers.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders and the Chair of the Governing Body. Telephone conversations were held with two other governors, including a parent governor, two members of the Propeller Academy Trust and the Chair of the Academy Trust.
- The inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a number of documents. These included the school's own information about pupils' progress, planning and monitoring documents, safeguarding information and pupils' work.
- The inspector took account of the 11 parent responses to the Ofsted online survey (Parent View) and spoke to parents during the inspection. The 32 responses to the staff inspection questionnaire were also considered.

## Inspection team

Denise Morris, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Shela Rowan

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Fitzwaryn School converted to become an academy school on 1st February 2013. When its predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding.
- Fitzwaryn School along with its partners, Kingfisher School and Abingdon and Witney College, are known as 'The Propeller Academy Trust'. All three work closely together but have kept their original names.
- The school caters for pupils who are supported by a statement of special educational needs for their moderate, severe and/or complex needs.
- About a third of pupils have a diagnosis of autism and a few others have additional sensory or physical difficulties.
- Almost all pupils are of White British heritage. A very few are from African or Asian backgrounds and a small number speak English as an additional language.
- The school runs an outreach service to support other local schools.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for the pupil premium is average. This is additional funding for pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after.
- Additional primary school sports funding is provided for primary-aged pupils.
- Year 7 catch-up funding is provided for the few pupils in that year group.
- Off-site training for sixth form students for one-and-a-half days each week is provided by Abingdon and Witney College which is part of the Trust.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is full time. Children in the Reception class share their education with older pupils in Years 1 and 2.
- The school has undergone a significant amount of rebuilding and refurbishment in the past few years.
- The school does not enter pupils early for examinations.

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

- Ensure that all groups of pupils have access to homework that will help them improve their skills even further.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are outstanding

- Leaders, along with members of 'The Propeller Academy Trust', have worked tirelessly to improve all aspects of the school. As a result, pupils' achievement is outstanding in English and mathematics.
- The headteacher and senior leaders consistently communicate very high expectations and ambition through regularly seeking new ways to improve outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders, together with the governing body, know the school very well and have an accurate view of its performance. Policies are well thought out to ensure that pupils make at least good and often better than expected progress in literacy.
- The wide range of subjects on offer engages pupils very well and ensures that they want to learn. This contributes to pupils' outstanding academic achievements, their physical skills and their excellent spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Activities, such as a performance of *Hamlet* at the 'Shakespeare for Schools Festiva', help to promote pupils' outstanding behaviour exceptionally well.
- Leaders have a very strong impact on pupils' outstanding behaviour through their positive encouragement and consistent systems for managing behaviour.
- Senior and middle leaders have successfully developed an innovative system for checking pupils' progress. This ensures that all pupils' achievements are regularly assessed so that any pupil falling behind can quickly be supported to improve.
- Parents are very pleased with the school. The few who spoke to the inspector agree that the school ensures that their children achieve extremely well.
- Partnerships with the other academy school, the college and other local schools are very effective. Other schools welcome the assistance that this school provides as part of their learning support for pupils across the local area.
- Procedures for setting targets for teachers are rigorous and leaders ensure that salary increases are not awarded unless staff have met their targets, based on pupils' progress. As a result, leaders have developed and improved teachers' skills. Leaders ensure that all staff have regular training in managing behaviour, the safeguarding of pupils, and in the use of communication systems. This ensures consistent practice across the school.
- Leaders make very effective use of additional sports funding for the benefit of pupils. As a result of the use of additional expertise pupils' sports skills are rapidly improving.
- The school receives regular support from the academy. Links with the wider community are excellent and work-experience placements for older pupils are very successful. There are excellent examples of pupils receiving work experience placements in recent years. Careers guidance is of a high quality and ensures that pupils have a realistic understanding of what is on offer to them.
- Safeguarding procedures meet current requirements and leaders ensure that staff are well trained in identifying pupils at risk of harm.
- Leaders ensure that checks on alternative provision are rigorous and regular so that pupils behave well and are safe and secure at each venue.
- Leaders at all levels promote tolerance for all pupils and help them to be very well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Disadvantaged pupils now achieve as well as their classmates in English and mathematics, and sometimes better. This is because the pupil premium is used very effectively to support them. Equality of opportunity is assured for all pupils, and there is no discrimination of any kind.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body knows the school well and provides good support and challenge to leaders. Governors are fully involved in checking teaching and behaviour and looking carefully at how well pupils are doing. They regularly check on the effectiveness of the school, so that they know what is working well. Governors have received training and have a good range of skills which they use to benefit the school. They understand the use of data and know how it compares with similar schools. Frequent checks on pupils' achievement through the school's review of its performance ensure that governors know how effective the school is. Good management of finances means that the additional government funding is used to improve the learning of those pupils for whom it was intended. It is used well to provide additional support and resources so that eligible pupils' achievements and progress are as good as those of their classmates, and sometimes better. Governors rigorously ensure that the best teachers and staff are rewarded and they understand the process of setting targets for teachers well.

**The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding****Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils themselves say so and it is evident in and around the school. School documentation is thorough and any incidents are regularly recorded.
- Pupils' excellent behaviour is promoted by positive relationships with staff and between pupils. There are some marked improvements in behaviour over time for individual pupils. Pupils say that they really enjoy school.
- Pupils told the inspectors that there is no bullying of any kind at the school. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are promoted very well by the excellent range of relevant learning for all groups. As a result, there have been no exclusions in the past two years.
- The promotion of pupils' personal development is outstanding, through the positive support that they receive and the exciting activities they experience.
- Very effective provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils includes excellent quality links with other schools. Pupils understand the difference between right and wrong and there is a balanced approach to pupils' broadly Christian religious education which encompasses world faiths.
- Pupils are extremely well prepared for their lives after leaving school through their high quality achievements and accreditation.
- Students in the sixth form, and children in the early years provision behave outstandingly well in lessons and in their free time.

**Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Children in the early years setting are safe and secure in class and in the outdoor play area. Students in the sixth form are safe and secure in their own school accommodation and in the alternative provision.
- Older pupils told the inspectors that they feel safe and said that they know about the importance of staying safe in the community and while using the internet.
- Risk assessments are of good quality and ensure that pupils' individual needs are fully taken into account for any activity or visit.

**The quality of teaching is outstanding**

- Teaching over time in most subjects, including in English and mathematics, is outstanding and never less than good ensuring that all groups of pupils achieve outstandingly well and make excellent progress.
- Teachers have very high expectations and help pupils to deepen their knowledge through exciting tasks, in order to make excellent progress in all areas of learning.
- Outstanding teaching has been achieved due to improved training and rigorous checks by leaders.
- Reading, writing, communication and mathematics are taught exceptionally well. The teaching of English typically engages pupils in the use of a wide range of communication aids and the effective use of technology which support pupils' learning outstandingly well.
- High levels of support in literacy ensure that pupils can complete their tasks, offer opinions and make the very best progress that they can. Literacy skills are promoted very effectively in subjects such as history.
- The teaching of reading is very effective because of the regular teaching of sounds and letters (phonics) and reading practice. As a result, the most able pupils can read simple stories well while others learn to read words or symbols or respond to signs. However, not all pupils take their reading books or their symbol books home daily. The teaching of writing benefits from excellent use of technology enabling many pupils to gain confidence to respond and share their ideas.
- Outstanding teaching in mathematics results in some high quality achievement by pupils.
- The marking of pupils' work is usually verbal and is regular, accurate and typically helpful, giving examples of how pupils can improve their skills. This is particularly evident in English.
- Teachers do not set regular homework and in discussion several pupils told inspectors that they do not have homework. Parents agree, and several commented that they would like their children to bring more work home.
- Teaching in the early years provision and in the sixth form is outstanding.

**The achievement of pupils is outstanding**

- Pupils' attainment on entry is usually well below that expected for their age, because of their learning

difficulties.

- However, progress across year groups in a wide range of subjects is consistently outstanding as shown by school records. Inspection evidence shows that achievement in English and mathematics is outstanding.
- All groups of pupils, including those who receive additional funding, those with a diagnosis of autism, or sensory or physical difficulties, achieve outstandingly well.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is similar to that of other pupils in the school so that gaps between pupils are closing fast. This was very evident in English, for example, where pupils in Years 10 and 11 looked at TV news clips to improve their language skills. All groups achieved equally well because of very high quality materials, expectations and support for each pupil.
- School records show that almost all pupils make outstanding progress in mathematics, enjoying the practical aspect of the subject. Additional funding in Year 7 has enabled the school to provide additional expertise in mathematics as well as new resources to improve enjoyment and understanding by pupils.
- Pupils with additional special educational needs receive very effective support to enable them to work alongside their classmates. They make similar progress because of the additional expertise provided for them.
- Pupils' sports skills are improving due to additional funding that has enabled the school to provide extra coaching. Pupils are developing very healthy lifestyles because they are able to take part in physical activities on a daily basis.
- After-school clubs are very well attended and contribute some excellent activities that help pupils to develop new and different skills. Older pupils have the opportunity to complete the Duke of Edinburgh Bronze award, for example, and many do so.
- Children in the early years provision and students in the sixth form achieve outstandingly well.

### The early years provision

**is outstanding**

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage have made a very effective start to their school lives. They benefit from sharing their learning with their older peers in Years 1 and 2.
- The education offered has depth and breadth across the seven areas of learning and provides some exciting activities which children enjoy.
- Adults have very high expectations and plan activities that are set at the right level. For example, children enjoyed playing in the spacious classroom with many colourful and exciting toys, having fun while they learn.
- Learning opportunities are very well organised. The planning contributes extremely well to the development of children's physical and emotional health, safety and well-being including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Outdoor learning is creative and exciting and children have opportunities to explore a wide area.
- Children are taught phonics regularly ensuring that they quickly learn how to match letters and sounds through playing games.
- Staff work extremely well with parents keeping them well informed about their children's progress.
- Safeguarding and child protection policies are implemented very well so that children are safe and secure.
- Leaders have a very accurate understanding of the importance of staff training and development so that all staff have appropriate qualifications to support pupils. Checking has already begun ensuring that this area of the school is of a high quality.
- Children behave exceptionally well and are starting to interact with adults and other children.
- Excellent leadership of the early years provision ensures that the classroom area is very well prepared for the children when they eagerly arrive each morning.

### The sixth form provision

**is outstanding**

- The sixth form is outstanding. The accommodation is of a very high quality and programmes and accredited courses fully meet students' individual needs and abilities.
- Relationships between students and staff are outstanding and staff are very keen for pupils to do well. Students are very well supported in lessons and in their free time. They get on extremely well with staff and know that there is always someone to talk to.
- Progress is outstanding. Students are given as much independence as possible and staff work hard to help

them make the best of their time in the sixth form.

- Achievement in English and mathematics is outstanding because of the high focus placed on these areas. More-able students are able to improve their reading, writing and numeracy skills because of the regular focus on practical experiences, for example writing about a sequence of planting a primula which they had just completed.
- Students in the sixth form make excellent progress on their accredited courses, preparing them very well for their futures.
- Students attend Abingdon and Witney College for one-and-a-half days each week to undertake work-related courses, mainly in horticulture, which they thoroughly enjoy and which contribute to their employability. These courses contribute well to their work in school. Students working on their Entry Level Diploma's worked together extremely well to learn about plant growth.
- Students have many opportunities to undertake work experience to ensure that they learn the skills they will need in their future employment.

## 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>	139322
<b>Local authority</b>	Oxfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	448150

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Academy
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–19
<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>	83
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	13
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The Propeller Acadmy Trust
<b>Chair</b>	Pat Hudson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stephanie Coneboy
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01235 764504
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