

# Collingwood School & Media Arts College

Stobhillgate, Morpeth, Nothumberland, NE61 2HA

**Inspection dates** 18–19 November 2014

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Leadership and management		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Sixth form provision		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- On entering the school, pupils develop good literacy, numeracy, mathematical and communication skills. For some pupils, outstanding progress is made from their individual starting points.
- Good leadership and management, including governance, ensure that pupils achieve well in this improving school.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Pupils are extremely safe at school because safety procedures are excellent.
- Pupils' behaviour in the school is outstanding. They are supportive and tolerant of each other and respectful to staff.
- The curriculum is based on a thorough assessment of pupils' needs throughout the school.
- The impact of teaching on the learning of all pupil groups over time is good. This includes those who join the school part way through the school year.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is outstanding. Pupils are valued as individuals and staff consistently 'go that extra mile' to help them. Pupils and parents very much appreciate this.
- The sixth form is good. Regardless of their difficulties pupils make good progress and develop a range of skills. The courses they follow prepare them well for their next steps in life.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Pupils do not always know how to improve their work further through teachers' marking of their work.
- Checks carried out by leaders and managers are not always acutely focused to ensure staff and governors know easily and precisely what is going well or what further improvements need be made.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited six lessons to look at the strengths of teaching and its impact on pupils' learning over time. Three of these lessons were jointly observed with senior leaders. An extensive learning walk was also conducted with the headteacher visiting a further five lessons. Inspectors also looked at samples of pupils' work in books and files across the school.
- The inspectors had discussions with the teachers, senior and middle leaders, pupils and members from the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at and analysed a range of documentation, including the school development plan, school self-evaluation, governing body minutes of meetings and the school's system for checking on pupils' progress and teaching over time.
- The inspectors sought the views of parents through 18 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) and through the school's recent parental survey. Discussions with parents also took place during the inspection. Inspectors also took account of the 30 questionnaires returned from staff.

## Inspection team

Michele Crichton, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Sue Smith

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Collingwood School and Media Arts College caters for young people with a range of learning difficulties. These are pupils who are on the autistic spectrum and/or have behaviour, emotional and social difficulties. There are also increasing numbers of pupils with a range of complex needs including speech, language and communication difficulties and those who have mental health issues.
- Pupils attend from across the county of Northumberland and some have experienced significant disruption in their education prior to joining the school.
- Most pupils are White British.
- There is an annual increase in numbers of pupils who join the school part way through the year rather than at the usual transfer time to school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding is similar to the national average. The pupil premium is additional government funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals or those who are looked after by the local authority.
- Since the last inspection, the school has changed its designation to provide education for pupils from four to 16 years to two to 19 years. The school has extended its provision and now has its own sixth form.
- Despite having designation for nursery and reception education, there are currently no children of this age who attend and no children have attended this part of the school since the last inspection.
- Since the last inspection, the school has maintained its numerous national awards and has enhanced its Investors in People Award to Gold status.

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

- Increase the overall quality of teaching to outstanding in order to raise pupils' achievements further by:
  - ensuring there is consistent and useful feedback in books and files so that pupils know exactly how to improve their work.
- Strengthen leadership and management further by:
  - making sure that checks on how well the school is doing, carried out by leaders and managers, are recorded in such a way that staff and governors clearly understand what is going well and what still needs to improve.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management **good**

- Staff are adept at building and sustaining positive relationships. Staff and governors create a school ethos where everyone works together with a commitment to continuous improvement. For example, targets from the school improvement plan are visible around the school and staff teams work together to meet them. This ensures school improvements are tangible and are driven forward at all levels.
- Middle leaders make a positive contribution to the school's work. Subjects are planned well so that pupils have a range of experiences which serve to deepen their knowledge and understanding. Subject reviews regularly take place to ensure all areas of the curriculum are of at least good quality. Activities specifically introduced to improve the quality of reading and phonics (the sounds that letters make) within the school have been successful and pupils' reading levels have consequently risen.
- Overall, senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's performance. The large school development plan shows achieved targets and priorities for further development.
- The leadership of teaching is positive. Both senior and middle leaders regularly check on the quality of provision throughout the school. Coaching is available for those who may need this and there are opportunities for continued professional development which are available to all staff.
- Senior and middle leaders diligently monitor the school's performance, including the quality of teaching and information about pupils' achievement gained from their assessments. This is all shared with teachers and governors. However, the school's current systems for doing this result in extensive amounts of information. This makes it time consuming for staff and governors to acquire an understanding of what is going well and what still needs to be worked on.
- Staff understand that pupils' rates of progress will influence their pay progression and that the Teachers' Standards underpin all expectations. The school has achieved an appropriate balance of combining robust performance management with effective professional development and targets to ensure the whole school improves too.
- The provision for sport is good. The school uses its sport funding effectively and is spent on additional training to enhance the skills of primary teaching staff and also to bring in an external dance teacher. This has ensured that pupils are more physically active and also have fun learning.
- The school works well in partnership with parents. Reviews on Parent View show overwhelming support from parents with 100% expressing they would recommend this school to another parent.
- The quality of the curriculum is good. There are two pathways for pupils to follow which take into account the needs of the individual. There is a strong emphasis on developing communication skills, literacy, numeracy and personal social and health education at every stage of learning. Further improvements are being implemented for pupils to access Year 14 who need just a little more time to secure independence and other personal skills.
- Older pupils and sixth form students follow appropriate programmes, work-related learning and examination courses. Through discussions with staff and parents, it enables pupils to make informed choices about their futures.
- The local authority provides good challenge and support for the school, through, for example, regular reviews of its work. This is appreciated by staff and governors.
- The additional funding to enable Year 7 pupils to catch up in literacy and numeracy is used well. Most recently it has been spent on targeted staff support to enable pupils to make good progress in subjects tailored to the individual.
- The school effectively promotes equality of opportunity, fosters exceptionally good relationships amongst pupils and adults and ensures no discrimination takes place.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is an asset to the school. Governors are well aware of the strengths and areas for improvement of the school and the challenges that redesignation has brought. They are diligent in their approach to their own training and are fully involved in the strategic direction of the school. For example, they have been involved in training and reviewing changes for the new National Curriculum. They have also brought support and challenge regarding the increased provision associated with the greater numbers of students that are now at the older age range of the school.
  - Governors have good knowledge about the impact of additional finance, such as the pupil premium, primary physical education and sport funding and Year 7 catch-up funding on the achievement of pupils. They know that eligible pupils' achievements and progress are as good as those of their classmates, and usually better. Governors have a sound view of what the school does to reward good teaching and tackle underperformance. The governing body ensures that safeguarding procedures meet all

requirements.

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

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils are polite, considerate and understanding of each other. They are courteous and polite to visitors and respectful to staff.
- Exemplary behaviour was seen on entry and exit to the school and consistently throughout the school day. Lunchtimes are social times where pupils meet and communicate well. Movement between lessons is orderly and calm.
- Pupils have excellent attitudes to learning in lessons and always try their very best. Staff know pupils exceptionally well and are extremely skilful in preventing any potentially unwanted behaviour issues before they can actually arise.
- Staff have a range of strategies they employ to maintain such excellent behaviour. They display discrete and almost invisible actions of support, for example, guiding certain pupils away from another, engaging specific pupils in focused conversation to secure learning or changing the direction of their learning to make sure it is absolutely appropriate to help them to succeed.
- Pupils in turn are very appreciative of all that staff do for them, for their care and their support. Pupils are proud and confident enough to say that 'this school changed my life'. Many relate a history of negative experiences at previous schools. A typical pupil comment was, 'I've found the place where I can belong'.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. They learn about other cultures, religions and countries in their lessons, assemblies, outings and from visitors into the school. Importantly, they are expected to conduct themselves by the school's core values of diversity, respect, honesty and integrity. All attributes which serve them well for life in modern Britain with British values.

### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is outstanding.
- Leaders ensure that all staff are updated with all safeguarding arrangements. Induction information to any new staff is clearly focused to maintain the high standards that leaders set and gives clear information about what is expected of staff.
- School procedures to support pupils with medical conditions are exemplary. Record keeping is systematic and clear. Coordination between professionals and different agencies is very effective which means that any concerns or issues can be dealt with quickly.
- The effectiveness of these strategies is clearly evident through how well pupils are able to relate what they have learnt to keeping themselves safe. Sixth form students, for example, can remember what they learn about safety at each key stage such as road and railway safety and using mobile phones and the internet safely. The curriculum is geared to ensure pupils understand how to keep themselves safe appropriate to their age and understanding.
- There have never been any exclusions at the school and attendance is above average compared to similar schools.

## **The quality of teaching** is good

- Staff have created a calm, purposeful and productive atmosphere which permeates across the school. In lessons they ensure equally good attention to different groups of pupils, including the most able and disadvantaged pupils.
- There are some missed opportunities to develop pupils' skills further. This is because there is not consistent or effective feedback in pupils' books and files to let them know specifically how to improve their work, especially for those who are most able.
- Most pupils make good progress, some make outstanding progress, in most subjects, including literacy, reading, communication and mathematics because teaching over time is at least consistently good. Extensive school records show that the proportion of good teaching is improving because of high quality training and rigorous checks by leaders.
- Teachers have a very good knowledge of the different needs of their pupils and use this information well to support behaviour and learning.

- It is particularly commendable how quickly staff gauge the needs of pupils whenever they join the school as new pupils. Consequently, high quality learning and behaviour ensues from the start. This is because staff have high expectations, are consistent in their team approach, use interesting resources and are persistent in their extensive strategies to enable excellent learning and behaviour to take place.

### **The achievement of pupils**

**is good**

- Pupils' attainment on entry is usually well below that expected for their age, because of their learning difficulties. However, progress across groups of pupils and key stages in reading, writing, mathematics and communication development is at least consistently good. For some individuals, outstanding progress is made in each subject. Mathematics is taught well by specialist staff who know their subject well.
- All groups of pupils, including those for example, who receive help through additional funding, those with a diagnosis of autism, or those students in the sixth form, achieve equally well. In-school data shows that pupils supported through the pupil premium funding are achieving better than their classmates in school and in comparison to similar pupils nationally, especially in reading.
- All pupils are given individual targets in line with the national expectations for pupils with special educational needs. Some pupils' achievement in reading, writing and mathematics is not as strong as it could be, this is especially so for the most able. This is because there is a lack of consistency in their feedback from teachers in their books on how precisely to improve.
- Pupils work diligently at school and make good progress so that by the end of Year 11 all pupils have gained some form of accreditation or qualification, which may include GCSEs, Entry Level and Functional Skills certificates.
- At the end of Year 11 due to the good guidance they receive, pupils then continue their education, mostly in the school's own sixth form.
- The focus for school improvement on pupils' progress in reading has improved the quality of pupils' reading abilities. This is notable for some pupils where significant gains to their reading ages have been made. It has enabled them to read more widely and to enjoy reading, sometimes for the first time. They build successfully on their skills as readers during English lessons and this in turn helps to support their writing skills.
- All groups of pupils, regardless of their background or whether they are boys or girls, make good progress overall. Information about pupils' progress is now used very effectively to identify any pupils that are at risk of falling behind to provide closely targeted support. For example, the school works closely with professionals such as occupational therapists to ensure that pupils are making rapid improvements in their writing.

### **The sixth form provision**

**is good**

- The sixth form is well led and managed. Leaders have maintained the two distinct curriculum pathways to reflect the very different needs of its students. They ensure continuity of learning but at raised age-appropriate levels.
- The school closely tracks students' progress to make sure they achieve well. Students' work files and their subsequent records of achievement illustrate the good progress they make at the school.
- The behaviour of students and their feelings of safety are of the same outstanding quality as in the rest of the school. All students, regardless of their special educational needs, develop a good range of skills to aid them in their next steps in life. The quality of teaching is good. Staff demonstrate a range of skills to challenge students further and work is well matched to the individual student. Scrutiny of students' course work confirms this.
- The school provides good opportunities for career guidance about future options. On leaving the sixth form students frequently go on to study, for example, Life Skills, Basic Skills and Independent Living skills at Northumberland College, Newcastle College or Tyne Metropolitan College.

## 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>	122389
<b>Local authority</b>	Northumberland
<b>Inspection number</b>	447788

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>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	2–19
<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>	144
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	40
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Alan Nixon
<b>Headteacher</b>	Richard Jones
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	26 May 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01670 516374
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