

Caludon Castle

Axholme Road, Wyken, Coventry CV2 5BD

Inspection dates	26–27 January 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher, leaders and governors have successfully created a culture where every pupil is valued, supported and encouraged to achieve the best that they can. The quality of care and guidance is excellent.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate view of the academy's strengths and weaknesses because they regularly review their own work and the difference it is making to teaching and to pupils' learning.
- Pupils enter the academy with skills that are broadly average. Attainment at the end of Year 11 is above national averages.
- Progress in English is well above that seen nationally.
- Disabled pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress because of the excellent care and good support that staff provide.
- Teaching is good across the academy overall and in English, drama, music; history and science inspectors saw evidence of outstanding teaching over time.
- Teachers are using the academy's new assessment system effectively to plan lessons that meet the needs of pupils well.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength in the academy. Pupils in the main school and learners in the sixth form have an excellent understanding of the wider world, their responsibilities as future citizens and the importance of respect and tolerance.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the academy because the expectations of leaders and teachers are high. Pupils arrive at lessons keen to learn.
- Safeguarding is effective. Leaders have ensured that systems are in place to rapidly identify and address any concerns that may arise.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Progress in mathematics has been slower than it should be, although it is now improving.
- In some instances, communication of information is not organised well enough.
- Learners in the sixth form make less progress in academic subjects than in work-related qualifications.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further improve teaching in mathematics so that a higher proportion of pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make at least good progress from their starting points, by:
 - ensuring that teachers expect all pupils to work hard in mathematics lessons
 - increasing opportunities for pupils to practise the skills they have learned in and out of lessons
 - ensuring that pupils receive appropriate levels of challenge.
- Build further on the work done in the sixth form to improve the progress that learners make in academic subjects by ensuring that leaders use the full range of assessment information here and in Key Stages 3 and 4 to identify patterns of underperformance and tackle these quickly.
- Improve leadership and management by making sure that where roles and responsibilities are shared, there are very clear communication channels so that senior leaders are always provided with information rapidly.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The large leadership team is well led by the headteacher. Leaders, governors, staff and pupils work together to share and promote the ethos of care, respect and tolerance that is a feature of the academy's daily work.
- Leaders have rapidly tackled all recommendations made following the mathematics survey inspection of July 2015. Consequently, pupils currently in Year 11 are making much better progress in this subject and indications are that progress will be at least in line with national expectations this summer.
- Middle leaders are effective because they have a thorough understanding of their responsibility to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their areas. They are well supported by clear structures and processes, which enable them to tackle any underperformance quickly and to identify where pupils may need additional support to succeed.
- The professional development programme for teachers is very well planned and supports the whole-school priorities effectively. Teachers are encouraged to reflect on their teaching and identify areas of their practice that they want to develop. These are then included in the annual calendar, so that individual needs are addressed. All teachers are required to select from the wide range of provision throughout the year as well as to complete a piece of research that will support their continued development. Teachers are very appreciative of the extensive opportunities they have to develop their skills and interests.
- The recently re-modelled curriculum is broad, balanced and meets the needs of pupils well. Leaders have prepared well for the changes to the National Curriculum requirements. They have ensured that additional time given to English and mathematics has not reduced the academy's wider curriculum provision. Pupils say that they have plenty of choice and that they appreciate the options available to them.
- The academy provides a range of extra-curricular activities, including the Duke of Edinburgh award, clubs for science, technology, engineering and mathematics subjects, art and music and a range of sporting clubs. There are annual drama productions, which are popular with pupils, as well as educational visits for each year group.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very well supported. Leaders see this as a 'golden thread' throughout the academy. Activities are carefully planned and woven through the curriculum, for instance in citizenship, religious education, tutor time and assemblies, but also picked up by subject teachers on a regular basis. Modern British values are promoted and modelled by staff and leaders. Consequently, pupils have a very good understanding of other cultures and religions, respect and tolerance, and are well prepared for the next stages in their lives.
- The academy is a highly inclusive community. For example, disabled pupils are well supported so that they can access all available opportunities, including trips and visits abroad, with additional resources provided if necessary. Pupils feel safe in the academy and say that they do not suffer from any discrimination.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively. For instance, gaps in progress between disadvantaged pupils and others in the school have closed significantly in Years 7 to 10. This is because the member of staff appointed to monitor the achievement of this group has been rigorous in identifying barriers to learning for every pupil within this group. Strategies to tackle these barriers have then been identified and shared with teachers across the academy.
- Year 7 catch-up funding is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement. Nearly all those pupils who entered Year 7 below a Level 4 have now caught up with their peers.
- The arrangements for safeguarding have been reviewed and strengthened, including those for the safe recruitment of staff. Systems and processes are robust and the academy works with external agencies effectively when required.
- Leaders have developed a well thought-out assessment system to underpin the new curriculum. This enables them to judge the progress of every pupil against the expectations for each year group from their starting points. However, at this early point, information is not always collated and communicated in the most effective ways. Consequently, leaders cannot always quickly identify emerging problems or patterns.
- The non-teaching heads of year support those pupils facing problems very well because they have a detailed knowledge of each pupil. They match support and guidance to the needs of these pupils very well and leaders have ensured that there are a range of avenues open to them. However, occasionally

communication between heads of year and senior leaders is not always as effective as it could be.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors and the board of directors of the academy trust know the academy very well. They have a very clear and detailed understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and take a strategic role in identifying what needs to be done to secure further improvement, checking regularly on progress made. Support and challenge for the headteacher and senior leaders is appropriate. However, Board of Director minutes do not always make this clear, or what actions have been required in response to questions posed.
- Arrangements for performance management are well understood by governors and they scrutinise all pay progression agreements carefully. They know how additional funding is spent and check on the impact this has had on improving outcomes for pupils.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- All teachers have very good subject knowledge and use this to plan interesting and engaging activities that meet the needs and interests of pupils. They use the academy's new assessment system well to identify what pupils need to learn next. As a result, pupils make at least good progress in the vast majority of subjects.
- Where inspectors saw evidence of outstanding teaching over time, they noted the highly effective use of questioning. In these instances, teachers had clearly planned their questions to help pupils move on in their understanding and to encourage them to think creatively. This was particularly the case in drama, history, English and science.
- Teachers in all subjects promote literacy effectively. For instance, in a science lesson, the teacher made sure that pupils understood how to organise their scientific writing, as well as stringently checking their use of the correct scientific language. All classrooms have literacy resources and these are used to encourage pupils to independently check that spellings are correct and grammar is used accurately.
- All teachers apply the academy's marking policy. Inspectors noted that pupils had opportunities to participate in the assessment process through self-assessment and assessing the work of their peers. In most cases, pupils were keen to demonstrate that they had taken on board the advice teachers gave them on how to improve their work.
- In many lessons, and where appropriate, teachers made effective use of the academy's 'Take it Further' strategy to challenge the most able and encourage independent thinking. However, in a few cases, including in mathematics, teachers set the same additional task for pupils of different abilities. In these instances, less-able pupils struggled to complete their work and a few were demotivated as a result.
- Teaching has improved in mathematics, and its impact over time is now usually good. However, in some lessons and work set to carry out at home, teachers do not make sure that pupils work hard to apply and practise what they have learned.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The vast majority of pupils, including those in the sixth form, are confident learners who approach their learning with enthusiasm. Low-level disruption is rare in the main school and non-existent in the sixth form, because nearly all pupils are engaged in their learning.
- Academy leaders ensure that the emphasis on pupils' welfare is unwavering. As a result, all pupils have a good understanding of potential risks and how to keep themselves safe, including online.
- Arrangements for checking on the quality and safety of alternative provision placements are thorough and effective in ensuring pupils' welfare.
- Heads of year play an important role in ensuring that those pupils who struggle to meet the academy's expectations for good behaviour are supported to do so. As a result, these pupils are helped to stay in education and to achieve their potential, including those who have previously struggled in other schools.

- The focus in the academy on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development ensures that pupils understand and demonstrate respect and tolerance for others. Consequently, pupils say bullying is rare and when it does happen, it is dealt with very effectively.
- Inspectors noted that pupils were pleasant and polite to each other and adults as they moved around the school. Dinner staff told inspectors that pupils always remembered to say 'please' and 'thank you' when they were served with their food.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The vast majority of pupils behave well in lessons and around the school. Most pupils say that this is the norm. Although a few did not agree with this, inspectors saw no evidence that the behaviour seen during the inspection was not typical.
- Attendance is above the national average overall and for most groups of pupils. Leaders have introduced a range of suitable strategies to address higher levels of absence for some groups of pupils compared to others in the school, and these are beginning to have an impact.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Attainment is above the national average for five GCSEs at grade C or above, including English and mathematics.
- Progress in English is significantly above national averages from all starting points. In this subject, disadvantaged pupils make better progress than others nationally and similar progress to that of other pupils in the school. The academy's own monitoring suggests that this is set to continue.
- Pupils with a disability or special educational needs make good progress from their starting points across the curriculum. This is because they have excellent support from well-trained staff, who ensure that they are well-cared for and that their needs are met through tailored additional activities.
- As a result of the good strategic use of assessment information for disadvantaged pupils, and a good understanding of the barriers faced by individuals, gaps in progress between this group and others in the school have narrowed significantly in Key Stage 3 and in Year 10.
- In 2015, attainment in mathematics and the proportion of pupils making better than expected progress improved and were broadly in line with national figures. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils also improved, and gaps between the progress of this group and others in the school closed by six percentage points. However, despite these improvements, the gap remained large. This year, and as a result of the actions taken by leaders, the academy's monitoring indicates that progress has improved significantly for all pupils currently in Year 11, including for the most-able disadvantaged pupils.

16 to 19 study programmes

are good

- Study programmes are well planned. There is a wide choice of options across both academic and vocational (work-related) qualifications, and the majority of learners follow a mix of academic and vocational courses. In some cases, study programmes are highly personalised to meet the specific needs of learners. For instance, some learners with health issues have been supported through the provision of part-time learning over three or four years so that they can complete their qualifications of choice. Consequently, the proportion of learners who complete their courses is high.
- Careers advice and guidance in the sixth form is good. Leaders ensure that learners have access to a wide range of independent advice, including visits from and to local universities and those further afield. Learners are very well supported in making their selections and applications for universities or employment. As a result, they are well prepared for the next stage in their lives. This is reflected in the proportion of learners who move on to sustained employment or education, which is higher than the national figure.
- All learners take part in work experience and some are able to participate in additional work-related experiences in a particular area of interest where this would further enhance their study programme. For instance, a learner joined a theatre company to gain further experience of a career in this area.
- Staff and learners see the sixth form office as the 'hub' of the centre. Learners say that they can talk to

staff at any time with absolute confidence and that they will get the help and support that they need, including mentoring and additional tutoring. They say, and inspectors agreed, that the care and guidance they are offered is excellent and they are clearly proud to play a part in the caring culture of the provision. For instance, many are mentors to younger pupils, providing good role models to those who may be struggling with some aspect of school life.

- Teaching in the sixth form is good. Teachers know their learners well and plan learning that meets their needs. For instance, in an economics lesson, learners were encouraged to develop their own ideas and to express themselves fluently through the very effective use of questioning and activities that required them to find answers to problems by themselves.
- Sixth form learners have many opportunities to enhance their experiences. For example, some lead fundraising events and a number run after-school activities for younger pupils.
- All learners who enter the sixth form without a GCSE grade C or above in English or mathematics are required to follow a course of study to help them progress towards a C grade. This year 75% have already achieved a C grade in English as a result. The lower entry profile for mathematics means that not all learners have yet taken an examination in this subject.
- In 2015, attainment at A level and in vocational qualifications was well above the national average. However, progress in academic subjects was below the national figure. Leaders have tackled this decisively and records suggest that progress has accelerated and that current learners will make progress in line with national outcomes. However, new systems for tracking and recording progress are not yet organised well enough. Consequently, although teachers and leaders know how well individual learners are doing, and what additional support they may need, they cannot easily identify patterns of underperformance.

School details

Unique reference number	139292
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	10007485

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1523
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	340
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Friday
Headteacher/Principal/Teacher in charge	Michele Marr
Telephone number	02476444822
Website	www.caludoncastle.co.uk
Email address	enquiries@caludoncastle.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This is a large secondary school which converted to academy status in March 2013 and is part of the Castle Phoenix Trust. When its predecessor school of the same name was last inspected it was judged to be outstanding.
- The academy has a collaborative sixth form with 18 other schools across the Coventry Federation.
- A very small number of pupils follow vocational courses at Hereward College. A very small number also follow courses at Moor Farm Stables, Heart of England Training or Woodlands School.
- The academy is a teaching school and the lead school within the Castle Phoenix Teaching Alliance. The headteacher is a National Leader of Education and facilitates school-to-school support across the alliance.
- The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils with a disability or special educational needs is above the national average.
- The majority of pupils are White British and the vast majority speak English as their first language.
- The academy meets the current government floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act as a result of a qualifying safeguarding complaint and concerns about falling standards. It was also deemed section 5.
- Inspectors observed learning in 37 lessons, four of which were seen together with senior leaders. Inspectors also made a number of shorter visits to lessons.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle leaders, subject staff, including those who are newly qualified teachers, pupils, the Chair of the Local Governing Body and the Chair of the Board of Directors.
- Inspectors observed the academy's work, scrutinised safeguarding documents and practices, policies, monitoring records, minutes of meetings, the academy's self-evaluation and improvement planning and samples of pupils' work.
- The views of 23 parents who responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View) were taken into account, alongside those gathered from parents by the academy.

Inspection team

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