

Campion School

Kislingbury Road, Bugbrooke, Northampton NN7 3QG

Inspection dates

11–12 February 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Require improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The quality of leadership requires improvement. This is because some aspects of subject and middle leadership are weak. As a result the quality of teaching, marking and assessment is too variable.
- Teaching is not good enough in all subject areas, particularly, but not exclusively, in science and modern foreign languages. This means that pupils do not make the progress they should.
- Pupils do not attend school regularly enough.
- Some groups of pupils do not make the expected progress, particularly boys, those with special educational needs or disability, and disadvantaged pupils.
- Expectations of what all pupils can achieve are not high enough. Too often, teachers accept work of low quality and do not ensure pupils make the effort they should.
- The behaviour of some pupils is not good enough and is not being addressed effectively.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher has provided effective leadership under challenging circumstances. She has tackled 'head on' some of the issues that required urgent attention. She has been supported well by a strong governing body.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs or disability, and disadvantaged pupils, is much improved.
- The personal development and welfare of pupils is good. Pupils are given a great deal of support and personal responsibility and they thrive as a result.
- Sixth form provision is good. Learners make good progress because they are well taught. They are well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that leadership at all levels is consistently good.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that all pupils achieve well by:
 - raising teachers' expectations of the quality of pupils' work that will be accepted
 - ensuring that all teachers make effective use of assessment information to plan activities that are set at the right level to meet the needs of all groups of pupils
 - addressing the underperformance within science and modern foreign languages
 - ensuring that all staff consistently follow the marking and feedback policy.
- Improve attendance, particularly for those pupils who find it difficult to attend school regularly.
- Ensure that teachers apply the behaviour policy consistently so that all pupils behave well, particularly in lessons.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

requires improvement

- The headteacher has managed an exceptionally turbulent period. She has done this with great fortitude and often under extremely difficult circumstances. Correct actions have been taken to address the significant issues 'uncovered' when she took up post in January 2014. But there is still a great deal to be done. Consequently Campion School is no longer a good school.
- In the past, staffing levels have been too high and financially unsustainable. The headteacher and the governing body have acted swiftly to address this problem. This has led to many staff changes over the past two years. The legacy of these staffing issues remains a challenge and is, in some cases, impeding pupil's progress.
- Despite these changes, pupils' achievement improved in 2015. However, some pupils do not achieve as well as they should. This includes boys, pupils with special educational needs or disability and those who are disadvantaged.
- The headteacher has shown good leadership and has been supported in this by some members of her leadership team, particularly the assistant headteacher in charge of data, assessment and curriculum. However, the quality of leadership is too variable. In some areas of school, weak leadership contributes to low expectations of pupils, inconsistent teaching and poor behaviour.
- The information that leaders use to monitor the performance of individual and groups of pupils is increasingly effective. Nonetheless, there is too much inconsistency in the quality of subject leadership and the way this information is used. In English and mathematics, leaders use this information to make sure that pupils have the support they need if they fall behind. This is not done effectively enough in other subject areas, particularly in science and modern foreign languages. Consequently pupils are not monitored closely enough and do not achieve as well as they should.
- A marking and assessment policy is in place. However, leaders have not ensured that all teachers consistently follow this policy.
- There is now a more effective system in place to manage teachers' performance and leaders have worked effectively to establish an extensive training and development programme for all staff. Staff are involved in training together within the school and with SWAN, a group of local secondary schools in the south west of Northampton. This work is in its infancy and its effectiveness is not well established. The quality of teaching remains variable.
- Pupils' attendance is improving. Leaders have ensured that there are better processes in place to make sure that pupils attend school. The headteacher has sent a clear message to pupils and parents that attending school every day is important. Nevertheless, although improving, the percentage of pupils who are persistently absent remains above national expectations.
- The behaviour of pupils is improving. The number of pupils who are being excluded from school has reduced and many interventions have been implemented to support pupils at risk of being removed from school. Issues remain regarding the behaviour of some pupils within lessons and at break and lunch. The behaviour policy is understood by pupils. This behaviour policy is applied inconsistently by some teachers and leaders.
- The 'welcome to school' provision has been removed. Pupils who have special educational needs or disability now have their lessons in mainstream school. This is an extremely positive step. The achievement and attendance of these pupils is now improving, as is their experience of school.
- The curriculum in place before the headteacher joined the school did not ensure that all pupils were able to move successfully to the next stage in their education. Having been revised, it now better suits all pupils that attend the school. They experience a vast range of extra-curricular activities and are given many opportunities to develop their leadership skills. 'Creativity week' ensures an innovative approach to the delivery of literacy and numeracy. Careers advice and guidance is extensive and involves external partners, business and further education. Pupils said that they appreciated the range of experiences and support they receive. Leaders have made sure that a more meaningful curriculum is in place.
- Disadvantaged pupils are now supported well and additional government funding is used wisely to ensure they make the progress they should. For example, an achievement coach has been appointed to oversee the progress that these pupils make and to provide additional support and intervention. The pupils who receive support from this coach positively raved about the impact he was having: 'we know we can go to him and he will help – he's really good!'
- Leaders have been successful in gaining funding for 'The Hub'. This provides an off-site learning space so

that disadvantaged pupils can complete homework and receive specific intervention. Pupils said that this was a 'really fantastic' thing for the school to have done because it meant they could study outside of school. Leaders are aware that further monitoring of the impact of this provision is needed.

- A small number of pupils attend provision outside of the school that best meets their needs. Leaders rigorously monitor their work and as a result pupils achieve and behave well.
- Leaders plan events that broaden pupils' cultural awareness; this includes effective partnerships with schools in Japan, Germany and Colombia. Enterprise days take place, as do a wealth of opportunities for pupils to broaden their cultural experiences. This aspect of the work of the school is a real strength and leaders are rightly proud of it.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors appreciate and value the difference the headteacher is making. They respect the way in which she has been prepared to make difficult decisions and have supported her in these. They do not underestimate the challenges that are still to be faced in order to ensure that all pupils make the progress they should.
 - The governing body have a slightly inflated view of how well the school is doing, particularly with regard to the quality of teaching in some subject areas. They are aware of this and are addressing it.
 - The Chair of the Governing Body has an education background and possesses the necessary skills required to carry out this role effectively. He has ensured that committee structures are streamlined and more appropriately focused in examining the progress pupils make. The results of the recent governors' skills audit identify this group as a highly skilled and professional governing body.
 - Extensive work has taken place to ensure that the school's finances are now in order.
 - The achievement of each pupil is taken extremely seriously. There is a specific governor who oversees the progress of disadvantaged pupils. Questions about the progress of other groups within the school are a strong feature of all standards meetings.
 - Governors have a high profile within the school and take seriously their relationships with staff. This has been particularly important during this time of change. It was felt important to form a staff and governor group so that lines of communication could be kept open. Staff and leaders appreciated this approach.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders, including governors, take the safeguarding of pupils extremely seriously and the systems in place to keep pupils safe are robust. Pupils said that they valued the amount of support they received within school and the number of staff they could approach if they needed specific advice. Pupils welcomed the opportunities they received to learn about the world outside of school and said that they felt more confident as a result. Bullying is rare. Pupils said that if it did take place it was managed quickly and effectively by staff. Overwhelming, those pupils who were asked said that they felt safe at school.
- The links between key staff and agencies within the community is an effective feature of the work of staff to keep pupils safe. An example would be the work of the attendance officer and parental support adviser in making sure that pupils attend school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

requires improvement

- There is too much variability in the quality of teaching across subjects. Teaching within some aspects of science and modern foreign languages is weak. Consequently pupils do not make the progress that they should.
- Teachers demand too little of their pupils. For example, work within books is often poorly presented and shows a lack of care and pride from pupils. In some books graffiti is a feature, as is scribbling and doodling. This sets the expectations of what pupils should achieve too low. Sometimes pupils are allowed to behave inappropriately: speak when the teacher is explaining to the whole class, listen to their own music on earphones, and, in one case, consume fizzy drinks.
- Opportunities to celebrate and promote learning are missed. Display in many areas is lacklustre and fails to inspire pupils to higher standards of work and achievement.
- Teaching assistants are an extremely valuable resource within the classroom. However, currently they are not being deployed effectively. As a result, pupils with special educational needs or disability do not make the accelerated progress that they need to, and some fail to catch up.
- In some lessons, activities planned are not set at the correct level to match the ability of pupils. Where learning is good pupils have access to a range of activities that carefully build and extend knowledge and

understanding. For example, in a Year 7 English class, a group studying *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens were involved in a range of activities to decide on the importance of each character; they moved to key quotations to provide further evidence for their decisions and then moved to the symbolic language used by Dickens. These pupils were clearly enjoying their learning and the teacher was skilfully using questioning to add further challenge for those pupils for whom it was appropriate. Where learning is poor, pupils are not challenged in this way and appear to 'switch off'. Some pupils do not attain the higher grades that they are capable of because of this.

- The school effectively promotes 'pupils as leaders'. In physical education, one such leader expertly demonstrated a specific sporting skill to 58 of his classmates. He continued to support his peers through the lesson. These leaders have exciting potential.
- There are very many opportunities for pupils to receive additional help if they fall behind. The achievement coach works effectively with subject leaders to make sure that pupils get the support they need.
- The quality of teaching is best within English and the sixth form. This teaching is characterised by the good subject knowledge of the teacher. Pupils and learners value this highly.
- Teachers are now involved in developing their practice in a variety of ways. This includes weekly teaching and learning briefings and bespoke training sessions. There are opportunities to work with partner schools and to observe the teaching of colleagues. This training and development provides a wonderful opportunity to spread the good practice that does exist within the school.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good
- Members of staff receive high-quality training in order to help pupils keep safe. Staff also deliver training to parents. Recent events include training on e-safety and drugs awareness.
- Pupils are, on the whole, confident, self-assured and happy to talk to adults about their work and their school. Their self-awareness is developed as they move up the school and are expected to take on additional responsibility, such as being a prefect. One pupil spoke to inspectors about her role in organising the mental health awareness day that was taking place during the inspection. She was well informed and passionate about this and a positive advocate for the cause and for her school.
- Pupils' physical and emotional well-being raises no particular concerns as safeguarding measures are effective. Pupils say they feel safe in school and that they are taught to feel safe.
- Pupils are aware of different forms of bullying and say that bullying is rare but that if it did happen they are confident that staff would deal with it effectively.
- The management of attendance is much more systematic than previously. As a result, attendance has improved for almost all groups of pupils because it is now monitored effectively.
- The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent from school is decreasing, but remains above the national expectations. Attendance leaders, including the parent support adviser and attendance officer, are engaged in creative ways within the community to continue to address this issue.
- Pupils are given additional responsibilities as they move through school and thrive on these increasing expectations.
- Pupils reported that they appreciated being part of a vertical tutor group. Year 7 pupils said that knowing a range of pupils of differing ages had helped them to 'settle in'.
- Pupils in alternative provision away from the school site are receiving good support and making good progress as a result.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Pupils' conduct is generally good in lessons where teaching is good. However, where teaching is less engaging, pupils show less concentration and effort and, as a result, some off-task behaviour arises. This can lead to low-level challenge such as chatting and talking over the teacher. In some extreme cases, it can lead to purposeful disruption. The way in which this behaviour is dealt with by teachers and leaders is inconsistent.
- Some areas of the school are not well cared for and are 'tired'. This does not promote a positive environment for learning. Some pupils show disregard for spaces such as corridors. These areas are littered after lunch and break.

- Pupils take too long to go to lessons after break- and lunchtimes. There is a lack of urgency to get to their learning. Teachers do not routinely encourage pupils to their lessons and welcome them to their class.
- The majority of pupils behave well. Key stage managers have a great deal of information regarding individual pupils and they provide welcome support.
- Fixed-term exclusions are reducing, although disadvantaged pupils are over-represented in these figures. There have been no permanent exclusions so far this year. Leaders have not evaluated the impact of the strategies they are using to support those pupils most at risk of exclusion.
- The majority of pupils arrive to school by bus. Pupils arrive at school in orderly manner and are well supervised. It is a good start to the day.
- The behaviour of pupils who are receiving their education at alternative provision away from the school site is good.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Outcomes for pupils require improvement because pupils do not make the progress they should due to inconsistencies in teaching.
- Boys do not achieve as well as girls – this issue remains a challenge for the school.
- Achievement in science, modern foreign languages and some aspects of humanities is not good enough. Science continues to be a challenge for the school.
- Pupils with special educational needs or disability do not make the progress they should. However, this is steadily improving, as more pupils are, quite rightly, learning within mainstream classes. But it is not yet good enough.
- Disadvantaged pupils do not make the same progress within English and mathematics as the national figure for all pupils but they are making faster progress than in previous years. The progress of these pupils is predicted to continue to improve. The achievement gaps at GCSE between disadvantaged pupils and their non-disadvantaged peers are closing but at too slow a rate. Information from Key Stage 3 suggests that gaps are decreasing more quickly.
- The majority of pupils enter the school with prior attainment that is above the national average. In 2015, the proportion of pupils who achieved five or more good-quality GCSEs including English and mathematics was above the national average. This trend is set to continue.
- In 2015, the proportion of pupils who made expected progress in English and mathematics was above the national average. Current school information suggests that this is set to continue.
- Leaders have ensured that target setting is more ambitious and the tracking of pupils' progress is now more reliable. Pupils know their targets and therefore know better what they are aiming for. The target setting in Key Stage 3 is less clear and leaders are currently working to improve this.
- The majority of pupils are extremely well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment. Support for this is independent and extensive and involves a vast range of activities and access to business, higher and further education and outside speakers. Leaders have made sure that the curriculum is meaningful in ensuring that all pupils make positive next steps.

16 to 19 study programmes

are good

- The quality of teaching is better within the sixth form than the rest of the school. Where learning is most effective, teachers use their good subject knowledge to stretch and challenge learners. Skilful questioning of learners by teachers is a further strength of teaching in the sixth form. Learners value the high-quality teaching they receive and are positive about their learning.
- Leadership of the sixth form is good. Leaders are keenly aware of the progress of learners and often find bespoke solutions to address any underperformance. The monitoring of teacher quality is undertaken rigorously and achievement has improved as a result. The proportion of grades A* to B at AS level has increased, as have outcomes at AS and A level.
- The small proportion of disadvantaged learners make good progress and progress to university, higher education or training.
- The quality of advice and guidance is good, and as a result more learners than previously proceed from Year 12 into Year 13, particularly boys. This is because of strengthened recruitment procedures and

extensive guidance provided to make sure that learners select the correct courses.

- Attendance is closely monitored by the sixth form leader and is improving, particularly for Year 12 learners.
- Behaviour within the sixth form is good. Leaders have implemented the 'yellow card' system. Learners said that this has been effective in helping them monitor and manage their own behaviour.
- A small number of learners receive support to retake their examinations in English and mathematics. The provision for this is good and success rates are improving.
- Learners benefit from strong support in making applications to higher education. They also benefit from a range of provision to understand alternative choices, including work experience. Some learners choose to study apprenticeships as a result. Destination figures over time are strong; no learners were identified as not being in education, employment or training in 2015. Those learners intending to go to university have places.
- There are many and varied opportunities for learners to develop their wider skills and their personal development. Learners are given the responsibility to contribute positively to the life of the school and to volunteer within the wider community.

School details

Unique reference number	137087
Local authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10000799

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 comprehensive
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,308
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	352
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Peter Burrell
Headteacher	Claire Whitmore
Telephone number	01604 833900
Website	www.campion.northants.sch.uk
Email address	csoffice@campion.northants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 September 2011

Information about this school

- Champion School is much larger than most secondary schools with a sixth form.
- A large majority of pupils are of White British heritage and speak English as their first language.
- The proportion of pupils who are disadvantaged, and therefore supported by pupil premium funding, is below average. This additional government funding is provided to support those pupils who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs or disability who are supported by an education, health and care (EHC) plan is below average.
- A small number of pupils attend off-site training at Rushmere Academy, Complementary Academy and HITZ Northampton.
- The school is part of the SWAN partnership, a group of secondary schools in the south west of Northampton.
- The school receives school improvement support from Northampton local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 42 lessons, the majority of which were jointly observed with senior leaders.
- Inspectors conducted three learning walks to observe the behaviour of pupils at different points during the day.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior and subject leaders, and other members of staff. The lead inspector met with the headteacher and three governors.
- Inspectors spoke formally with groups of pupils in lessons and during break- and lunchtime.
- The views of 142 parents who responded to the online questionnaire, Parent View, were considered, as was one additional letter.
- The views of 88 members of staff who responded to the online survey were also taken into account.
- Inspectors held telephone conversations with members of staff from the Rushmere Academy, Complementary Academy and HITZ to discuss the progress of pupils receiving education off-site.
- Inspectors looked at a variety of documentation, including information relating to pupils' achievement, and considered the schools own self-evaluation of how well it is doing. They also checked the school's records regarding behaviour, attendance, exclusions and policies designed to help keep pupils safe. Inspectors reviewed documents provided by the Chair of the Governing Body.

Inspection team

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