

# Sincil School Sports College

South Park, Lincoln LN5 8EL

## Inspection dates

9–10 February 2016

## Overall effectiveness

**Requires improvement**

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Due to poor attendance, pupils have missed too many lessons, which has had a negative impact on their achievement.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is not consistently good. As a result, pupils do not achieve as well as they could.
- Most pupils have not previously made good progress through the school from their starting points in the key subjects of English, mathematics and science, until recently.
- Outcomes at the end of Key Stage 4 have been significantly below national averages. Not enough pupils have made the progress of which they are capable.
- Pupils' behaviour requires improvement. Some pupils, particularly from Key Stage 4, still miss too many lessons as a result of their poor behaviour.
- Middle leaders have not made a strong enough impact on improving the quality of teaching.
- Assessment processes do not match the national curriculum. As a consequence, pupils' learning is not being checked against all areas of the national curriculum.
- Not all pupils take pride in their work and present their work as neatly as they could.
- Teachers do not set work at the correct level for pupils, particularly the most able. As a result, this group of pupils have underachieved.
- Reading had not been promoted well until recently. As a consequence, the quality of English work, particularly by some older pupils, is below age-related expectations.
- Performance management has not been used well enough, in the past, to improve teaching.

### The school has the following strengths

- The new executive headteacher and head of school have provided excellent leadership to change the culture of the school. As a result, the school is improving quickly.
- Behaviour is improving rapidly. The number of incidents of poor behaviour has reduced sharply since the new leadership team started.
- Good training and development for teachers has improved the quality of teaching at the school.
- In Year 7 pupils have made good progress from their starting points at the end of Key Stage 2, particularly in English.
- Attendance is improving this year. Pupils who had been persistently absent are now attending much more regularly. As a result, their progress is improving.
- The quality of teaching in the Year 7 nurture group, technology and physical education is consistently good.

## Full report

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

- Improve teaching and learning to raise pupils' achievement in English, mathematics and science, by:
  - setting work to match the abilities of all pupils, including the most able
  - assessing pupils' work more closely in line with the national curriculum
  - ensuring that teachers visit other schools to observe good and outstanding practice
  
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - developing the roles of middle leaders to accelerate improvements in the quality of teaching
  - ensuring that performance management targets for teachers are always measurable.
  
- Improve pupils' personal development, welfare and behaviour by:
  - further improving the attendance of all pupils to ensure that they achieve as well as they can
  - reducing the incidents of low-level disruption in lessons
  - ensuring that pupils present their work to a high standard.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The executive headteacher and head of school have demonstrated great drive and resilience to develop an ambitious culture and to raise the expectations of pupils and staff. They are determined that more pupils will realise their potential and attain good-quality GCSE examination grades. Their sharp analysis and accurate evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses has resulted in marked improvements to pupils' behaviour and to the quality of teaching. As a result, pupils are making faster progress in their learning.
- Senior leaders have developed a new vision to the pupils and staff. They have made it clear that all behaviours have a meaning and that pupils' behaviour can change, and, moreover, that the aim of the school is to engage with pupils so that they learn how to behave appropriately in learning and social situations. As a result, pupils told inspectors that teachers care about them and there are fewer incidents that require physical restraint than previously.
- The majority of staff who completed the staff survey said the school was well led and managed and that they enjoyed working at the school. Several members of staff wrote comments praising the new ethos of the school that senior leaders have developed. Senior leaders have also introduced a programme of training and development for teachers to improve their performance and enhance pupils' learning. Expectations of what constitutes a good lesson have been raised and as a result the quality of teaching has improved quickly over the past few months.
- The curriculum is carefully designed to meet the personal development and welfare of the pupils as well as their academic needs. Daily breakfast time allows pupils to develop their social and communication needs. One Year 11 group were observed discussing adoption. They listened attentively to each other, reasoning their own views and accepting those of others without the supervision of adults. The school curriculum offers a very broad range of subjects. Enrichment activities have included visits to colleges and to a local supermarket to observe bread making. Current school information shows pupils are making better progress in the current academic year than previously.
- Middle leaders are beginning to make a positive impact on the improvement of the quality of teaching. The curriculum coordinator has led training on improving lesson planning and as a result pupils are making better progress. The special educational needs coordinator has worked with an external consultant to improve the quality of education, health and care plans. The plans now contain predicted grades for GCSEs and transitional links with colleges and other further educational providers. Personal education plans for looked after pupils contain targets related to their well-being as well as to their academic progress and are reviewed termly. The temporary assessment coordinator has made a good start in tracking pupils' progress and has already identified that some pupils' targets need to be more aspirational.
- There are opportunities within the curriculum that promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils writing in response to the question, 'How do you think the world was created?' showed that they had thought and reflected carefully on the subject. During the inspection the school held a South American day to celebrate a culture different from their own in all of their subjects. For example, in a Year 11 English lesson, pupils were studying poetry by Grace Nichols, a Guyanese poet. Pupils listened respectfully to the poetry to try and understand its meaning. Pupils demonstrated a good understanding of right and wrong and know that there are consequences for poor behaviour. As a result, pupils are better prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school uses the pupil premium well to implement a range of strategies to improve pupils' well-being and attendance in order to improve their progress. The school has funded an education welfare officer to improve attendance. This has been successful in the current academic year for a group of pupils who previously did not attend well. In addition, the school funds therapeutic intervention to support pupils' emotional needs. There are no gaps between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and their classmates.
- Parents and carers who spoke to the inspector were very positive about the changes being made to the school. They say the school is now focused on standards and that staff manage behaviour well. One parent commented, 'I can't fault it. It's a school now, not a social hangout.'
- **The governance of the school**
  - The new governing body has a wide range of expertise and experience to help drive the school forward. Governors have an impressive range of skills to support and challenge school leaders to improve the school. The chair of governors has visited the school and spoke to staff about the new direction for the school.

- Governors do challenge leaders about the provision for different groups of pupils, including looked after pupils and other disadvantaged pupils. However, they have not always challenged leaders about the progress of all groups of learners.
- Governors have used an external adviser, who represents the local authority, to set performance management targets for the executive headteacher.
- Governors are aware of their statutory obligations relating to keeping children safe.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The new family resource worker has worked hard to set up a range of training courses linked to safeguarding for staff to complete. Staff have had training on child sex exploitation, anti-bullying, extremism and e-safety. In addition, a new system has been set up for staff to raise concerns which are then acted upon by school leaders. Record keeping is detailed and shows prompt and persistent action being taken by staff to ensure that pupils are kept safe. Records are securely stored. Staff work with a range of external professionals to meet the needs of the pupils. Parents who spoke to the inspector said they are pleased that the pupils' behaviour is better managed and as result the pupils are coming to school willingly.
- Previous performance management targets for teachers have not always been measurable to enable leaders and governors to judge if actions taken have been successful. As a result, teaching is not consistently good.
- The external adviser, working on behalf of the local authority, has supported the new leadership team well and provided good support. He has quality assured the monitoring of teaching and learning and supported leaders to create the new vision for the school.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment** requires improvement

- Teachers do not always plan work which meets the needs of all learners or takes into account pupils' prior learning. As a result, the most-able pupils are not always challenged well enough across the school, which can cause pupils to misbehave.
- The quality of teaching of spelling, grammar and punctuation is too variable across the school. Scrutiny of pupils' work, particularly at Key Stage 4, shows that pupils' writing contains too many errors. If pupils are asked to complete a longer piece of writing, the quality of their work reduces markedly. In addition, older pupils' knowledge of different text types is insecure.
- Teachers and teaching assistants can sometimes give too much support to pupils without first asking pupils to try and solve challenges with minimal support. As a consequence, pupils are not always developing resilience with their learning.
- Teachers are not assessing pupils' progress against the standards in the new national curriculum. As a consequence, pupils are not being assessed against all the new requirements of the curriculum. In mathematics there was little evidence of pupils' reasoning skills being developed.
- The quality of teaching in English, mathematics and science has previously not been good enough to enable pupils to make the progress of which they are capable. As a result of putting English and mathematics lessons on in the morning, pupils are starting to make better progress, particularly in mathematics. Current school information shows that progress is improving in science from low starting points.
- In the Year 7 nurture group, the quality of pupils' writing is impressive. Pupils are writing at length, varying the length of their sentences and using a range of punctuation. In addition, pupils have been studying the *Jabberwocky* poem and created their own poems in a similar style to a good standard.
- Teaching in technology and physical education (PE) is consistently good. During the inspection pupils made Brazilian stuffed breads and followed the recipe diligently. The teacher and teaching assistants supported pupils' learning well within the lesson. The pupils were proud of their baking and eager for school leaders to try their bread. There was a real sense of pride for one student when leaders declared the bread delicious! In PE pupils were encouraged to run around the hall as a warm-up and were challenged to increase their speed. All pupils were engaged and pushed themselves to achieve well.
- In art, pupils respond well to the teacher's feedback to improve their work. Pupils successfully followed the teacher's advice when designing a quilt based on the work of the artist Tracy Emin and when designing ironic postcards. Pupils' art folders are well presented and show a sense of pride about their work.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupil's personal development and welfare requires improvement. Some pupils are not always wanting to engage in lessons. As a result, pupils miss key parts of lessons and their learning stops. Pupils are expected to complete the work in their own time in line with the new behaviour policy.
- Pupils do not always present their work to the standard of which they are capable. As a result, some of the pupils' work in books is scruffy. Moreover, pupils don't always complete the amount of the work they are capable and can be resistant to staff's efforts to improve the quality and quantity of their work. As a consequence, pupils don't always make the progress that they should.
- An increasing number of pupils are becoming more aware of the need to become a successful learner. Pupils told inspectors that they realise education is important and they are doing more work this year than they completed the previous year.
- Pupils are knowledgeable about all forms of bullying and are confident that the school staff will deal with any issues they have effectively. Pupils said that homophobic and derogatory language are not accepted at school and there are consequences for pupils if use this language. Pupils show a good understanding of how to stay safe on the internet.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. There is still too much low-level disruption, which can quickly escalate and disrupt lessons. This is more prominent at Key Stage 4. As a result, valuable learning time is lost and pupils do not make progress in those lessons. However, detailed school records show the number of incidents of poor behaviour has reduced markedly since the start of the academic year. Indeed, pupils told inspectors that behaviour has improved at the school and there are fewer incidents which require staff to use physical restraint.
- There had been an increase in fixed-term exclusions during the autumn term. However, the number of pupils who have had more than one exclusion is low. Pupils' improved understanding of the consequences of their actions is leading to better behaviour.
- Pupils are polite to visitors, hold open doors and are willing to engage in conversation. The learning environment is attractive, with good-quality displays to celebrate pupils' work. Information about future career choices is prominently displayed. Pupils walk into school at the start of the school day in an orderly way and the brief morning break saw pupils socialising well. However, inspectors did observe poor behaviour at lunchtime. Staff worked well together to de-escalate the situation and all pupils eventually responded to staff requests.
- Attendance has been consistently below the national average. However, it is now improving quickly as a result of the change of ethos within the school and the work of the family resource worker and education welfare officer. They have worked hard to improve the attendance of those pupils who had previously been persistently absent. As a consequence, the large majority of these pupils have improved their attendance as the year has progressed. The attendance of looked after children is high. Disadvantaged pupils attend more often than their classmates.

## Outcomes for pupils require improvement

- Pupils' achievement at the end of Key Stage 4 has been too low, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Pupils have not previously made the progress they should have done from their starting points.
- The most-able pupils have not been challenged well enough to make the progress they should in order to achieve good-quality GCSE grades.
- Current pupils' work shows accelerated progress since the start of the academic year for most pupils, particularly at Key Stage 3. According to the school's tracking records, progress is faster in mathematics than in English or science. Pupils are not missing as many lessons due to poor behaviour, particularly in English. Pupils' progress is more rapid in Year 7 due to consistently high expectations in the quality of pupils' work. Progress is not as rapid in Year 11 due to the legacy of poor behaviour by some pupils.
- Pupils are prepared well for their next stage of education and training. Last year, most Year 11 pupils gained a place at college. Pupils are attending different colleges and studying a range of courses, including horticulture, plumbing, catering, child care, and art and design. Indeed, two pupils came back to school to speak to staff as part of their catering course.

- Pupils with low ability are supported well in classrooms and as a result make good progress.
- Pupils' interests are utilised to inspire them to learn more. For example, one boy plays the piano in assembly in front of the whole school.
- Achievement in English is beginning to improve. Leaders have invested in new books and teachers have developed reading corners in the English classrooms and in Year 7 to promote reading. In addition, pupils are being inspired to think more imaginatively about their writing. In one English lesson, Year 11 pupils were shown a picture of the sea and one boy independently wrote, 'Mystical deep, dark waters with the sun breaking through.'
- There are no gaps between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and their classmates.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	131277
<b>Local authority</b>	Lincolnshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10005504

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.

<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	49
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Gail Brown
<b>Executive Headteacher</b>	Bridget Robson
<b>Telephone number</b>	01522 534559
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.sincilsportscollege.co.uk">www.sincilsportscollege.co.uk</a>
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<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8–9 May 2013

## Information about this school

- Sincil Sports College is a special school for pupils who either have an education, health and care plan or a statement of special educational needs for social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British communities and speak English as their first language. They travel to school from Lincoln and other villages and towns across a wide area of Lincolnshire.
- Two thirds of the pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is above average. This is the additional funding to support pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school funds one member of staff to support local schools in disability sports activities.
- At the time of inspection, the school did not have any pupils attending offsite training.
- Most pupils are boys and join the school in Year 7, with a few joining later on as a result of experiencing difficulties at other schools.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed 15 lessons, some jointly with members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors looked at a range of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with a group of pupils from all year groups as well as meeting all the Year 11 pupils.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders and middle leaders, governors, the family resource worker, school administrator and an adviser working on behalf of the local authority.
- Inspectors met with three parents and carers and considered a text from a parent using the free Ofsted text service to parents. There were too few responses to the Parent View survey to make a meaningful analysis.
- Inspectors considered the 26 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors also looked at a range of documentation, including: the school's self-evaluation; the school development plan, the school's most recent information on pupils' achievement and information relating to teaching, performance management, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Martin Finch, lead inspector

Tracy Ydlib

Her Majesty's Inspector

Ofsted Inspector



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