

Foxford School and Community Arts College

Grange Road, Longford, Coventry CV6 6BB

Inspection dates

17–18 May 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

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| Effectiveness of leadership and management | Good |
| 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 | Require improvement |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Requires improvement |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes in all key stages are not consistently good. Although achievement is improving, particularly in English, too few pupils make good progress in mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- The proportion of pupils achieving five or more good GCSE grades, including English and mathematics, although improved, remains below average.
- Teaching is not consistently good. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are sometimes too low. Work set lacks challenge, especially for the most able.
- Not all teachers adhere to the school's marking policy. This means that some pupils are unclear how to improve their work
- Sometimes in lessons pupils lack motivation and a few misbehave. The school's high expectations of pupils' behaviour are still not understood and applied by all.
- Learners in the sixth form do not achieve as well as they should. Sixth form leaders do not ensure that information about learners' learning is used systematically in order to check that 16–19 study programmes meets learners' needs.
- Although attendance is improving, the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent is too high.

The school has the following strengths

- Senior leaders are ambitious. They have raised expectations of staff and pupils. Teaching and pupils' outcomes, behaviour and attendance are all improving as a result.
- The governing body is rigorous in its support and challenge of the headteacher and other leaders.
- Pupils who enter the school with low levels of literacy and numeracy are supported effectively in Years 7 and 8.
- Additional funds to support disadvantaged pupils are used effectively. Their progress is now improving quickly as a result.
- The school's actions to keep pupils safe and secure are effective. Pupils feel safe and well cared for in school. The support given to vulnerable pupils is very effective.
- Partnerships forged beyond school have been effective in supporting school improvement.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, including in the sixth form, so that it is consistently good in order to improve pupils' outcomes, particularly in mathematics by the end of Year 11 by:
 - making consistently good use of assessment information to set work at the right level to challenge pupils of varying abilities, particularly the most-able pupils.
 - making sure that high expectations of pupils' behaviour in lessons are understood and applied by all
 - ensuring that all teachers adhere to the school's marking policy so that all pupils know how to improve their work in all subjects.
 - ensuring that information about learners' learning is used systematically by leaders in the sixth form in order to check that 16–19 study programmes meet learners' needs.
- Further improve pupils' attendance, particularly of those pupils who are persistently absent, especially in key stage 4.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Senior leaders have a clear determination and relentless focus on improving progress for all pupils. Their strong leadership, along with effective governance, is resulting in school improvement. They have instilled a culture of higher expectations in school. As a result, the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes, their behaviour and attendance, are all improving. School data and inspection evidence shows that the pace of improvement is gathering momentum.
- Since the last inspection, the quality of leadership and management has been strengthened. In doing so, the school has drawn on the support of a partner secondary school as well as external consultants within the local authority. Leaders have been given the opportunity to experience best practice in effective schools in order to develop their skills effectively.
- Senior leaders have improved the systems for tracking pupils' progress, including that of groups of pupils, and for assessing the impact of teaching on pupils' learning. This information is being used systematically and effectively to identify any pupils who are falling behind and to put strategies in place to support and help pupils to improve. In the sixth form however, this information is not, as yet, used well enough to ensure that study programmes meet learners' needs.
- Leaders also use information about how well pupils are learning to identify the training and development needs of teachers and support staff in order to ensure that teaching improves. Underperforming staff are challenged strongly and teachers' pay awards and the responsibilities they are given are linked well to pupils' progress.
- The leaders of English and mathematics have successfully improved pupils' outcomes since the last inspection. The large majority of pupils are now making at least expected progress in these subjects and more pupils than previously are now making better than expected progress, particularly in English.
- Subject leaders check the quality of teaching and learning in their areas. They are keen to support the senior leaders' determination to bring about school improvement. However, some inconsistencies in teaching remain. For example, they have not challenged their teams well enough to make sure that the school's policy for marking pupils' work is consistently applied. Pupils are sometimes unclear how to improve their work as a result.
- Good use is made of additional funds to support the improvement in pupils' outcomes. Pupils who enter the school with low levels of literacy and numeracy skills are given good support to catch up to the expected levels. The school makes increasingly good use of the pupil premium funding to support disadvantaged pupils. The progress of disadvantaged pupils is now improving quickly as a result.
- A broad and balanced curriculum develops pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils receive impartial careers guidance from Year 8 onwards, which helps to prepare them well for the choices they have to make at the end of Year 9, Year 11 and in the sixth form. Pupils in Year 10 have access to work experience. A high proportion of pupils go on to further education or training and employment at the end of Year 11.
- Pupils enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular opportunities, including sport, music, creative arts and personal study activities. This enriches formal learning experiences and extends pupils' individual talents so they enjoy a balance of work and recreation.
- The school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development effectively through subject lessons, religious education and assemblies. A programme of PSHE (personal, social and health education) delivered during form time supports their personal development well. This programme, along with opportunities to work with partners from the Foundation Trust, enables pupils to experience cultural diversity and appreciate the values of respect, tolerance and equality of opportunity and helps them to prepare for adult life in modern Britain.
- Although staff and governors have been trained in the 'Prevent' duty, which focuses on helping pupils to recognise and avoid extreme behaviour, discrimination and radicalisation, some pupils do not have a good enough understanding of the importance of this. Plans to develop this are already in place.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governors are highly skilled and experienced and provide effective oversight of the school's work. As a result, they hold leaders to account rigorously for pupils' performance. They do not accept leaders' evaluations of the school's progress without question; they make regular and focused visits to the school and check the accuracy of information for themselves.

- Governors challenge leaders when subjects are not performing as well as they would expect.
- Governors have chosen external partnerships and advisory support carefully. This support has been important in securing the improvements made since the last inspection.
- Governors understand arrangements for performance management, including that of the headteacher, and they scrutinise pay awards carefully.
- Governors know how the school's additional funding is spent and they check on the impact this has on improving outcomes for pupils.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Practices in school, including record-keeping, are robust. The school has appropriate procedures to deal with any concerns about pupils' welfare. As a result, pupils feel safe and secure in school and parents agree.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment still varies across the school. Most teachers know about and understand pupils' varying needs and abilities; some teaching, however, does not challenge, motivate or enthuse pupils in their learning. When this is the case, some pupils lose interest; a few sometimes misbehave and, as a result, do not achieve well.
- Although teaching has improved since the last inspection, leaders know that there is still more to do to reduce the inconsistencies that remain in the quality of teaching. In some subjects, for example, pupils are provided with accurate and meaningful feedback and know how to improve their work. This makes a positive difference to their learning. In other subjects however, pupils are unclear how to improve their work. Not all teachers adhere to leaders' expectations set out in the school's marking policy.
- Teachers' training and development is tightly focused on the school's improvement priorities. Professional targets set for teachers are linked carefully to the progress pupils make. Teaching is therefore improving and, as a result, pupils' progress is speeding up.
- Teachers do not always set work which is at the right level for some pupils. Sometimes, information from assessments of what pupils already know and can do is not used to good effect to plan and provide work that successfully challenges pupils. In particular, work is sometimes too easy for the most-able pupils. Expectations for these pupils are still too low. These pupils do not have enough opportunities to demonstrate skills and knowledge appropriate for their age and abilities. Too few pupils reach the highest grades in GCSE examinations as a result, especially in mathematics.
- Teaching for pupils who have special educational needs or disability is improving because school leaders have provided a good level of support for them. In addition to the usual timetabled lessons, some of these pupils benefit from a personalised curriculum and specially targeted support in small groups within a dedicated area.
- The school's work to improve pupils' literacy skills is having a positive impact, particularly in Year 7 and Year 8. The use of a reading programme has improved the reading ages of a number of pupils and this also helps them with extended writing opportunities in lessons. The success of this was seen by inspectors in pupils' written work.
- The quality of relationships between adults and pupils is usually good and helps pupils to learn better. Teaching assistants and other adults are prepared for lessons and they employ effective ways to support pupils. They also contribute to the management of pupils' behaviour in lessons, so that the teacher can focus on the progress of all pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Although pupils are taught about British values and the threats posed by extremism through the PSHE curriculum, some pupils do not have a good enough understanding of their importance in order to make confident and informed choices in their personal lives.
- Pupils who spoke to inspectors were knowledgeable about how to keep safe on the internet and understand the risks associated with social networking.

- Pupils understand the dangers of substance misuse and the importance of sexual health.
- Pupils feel safe and cared for in the school. Parents who responded to the school's own year group surveys agree. Pupils from different backgrounds and diverse communities are supported well to think positively, deal with difficulties in their lives and make progress in school.
- Pupils say that incidents of bullying, including racist and homophobic bullying, are infrequent. Older pupils support younger pupils. Such incidents are dealt with seriously and quickly by staff when they happen. Pupils say they can identify an appropriate adult they could go to if they need help.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Some low-level disruption is evident in some lessons.
- Behaviour around the school, including at breaktime and lunchtime, is usually orderly. A strong presence by staff, with well-established relationships, encourages positive attitudes from most pupils.
- Leaders' actions to improve behaviour since the last inspection are having a positive impact on behaviour. The number of fixed-term exclusions has fallen as a consequence. Pupils welcome the new reward system in place to acknowledge their good behaviour.
- Work to support the small minority of pupils who disregard school rules is valued and effective because these pupils are given specific help to get back on track.
- Strategies to improve pupils' attendance are paying off. The school now monitors the attendance of various groups of pupils carefully. As a result, attendance is improving and is now in line with national averages. Punctuality has also improved. Even so, a minority of pupils are still absent too often, especially in key stage 4, and this continues to have an impact on their achievement.
- The attendance of those pupils who attend alternative off-site provision is monitored by the school and is also improving.
- The support given to vulnerable pupils is very effective. Also, support for pupils with particular emotional or health needs leads to better attitudes and behaviour by pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Pupils' progress in mathematics, although improving, still needs to get better. By the end of Year 11, the proportions making expected and better progress in mathematics have been too low. Too few have made the rapid progress necessary to reach higher grades in GCSE examinations.
- Pupils' attainment has risen steadily since the previous inspection. GCSE results, particularly for A* to C grades including English and mathematics, although better, were still below the national average in 2015. Even so, this represented at least expected progress from pupils' well-below-average starting points in Year 7, and for some, progress was good.
- Pupils studying design technology, geography and history achieve well. Outcomes in these subjects also improved in 2015.
- While the achievement of the most-able pupils was broadly in line with national averages in Year 11 in 2015, across the school this group is still not challenged to think deeply enough to ensure that they achieve the higher grades they are capable of. This is particularly the case for current pupils in languages and in mathematics for the most-able disadvantaged pupils.
- Pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or disability make better progress because they are supported in lessons and are also given individual support. However, the achievement of other pupils who have special educational needs or disability requires improvement. For some, weaker attendance hampers their achievement.
- The school's information shows that outcomes for pupils currently in school have improved across all year groups and in most subjects. Their progress is stronger in English and mathematics, humanities and languages. Leaders are taking effective steps to improve teaching so that this good progress continues and the overall improving picture of progress supports pupils increasingly well in preparing them for the next steps in education and training.
- While the progress of disadvantaged pupils is improving overall, it is not yet good because the gap between them and their peers in school and nationally has not closed enough in English and mathematics. Leaders recognise that there is further to go to close the gaps fully against national figures and the school uses a range of strategies, including a dedicated learning mentor and specific resources to help these pupils.

- Pupils attending placements at the alternative provision make progress in line with their abilities and are on track to reach their targets because their individual interests and learning needs are being met. The school monitors their progress carefully.

16 to 19 study programmes

require improvement

- In 2015, outcomes for learners in Year 12 and Year 13 were variable, although the 16–19 minimum standards were met for vocational and academic qualifications. However, attainment in many subjects was below national averages and some learners did not make enough progress.
- Leadership of the sixth form is helping to bring about improvement in learners' outcomes and the quality of provision. However, although this has now begun to be addressed, leaders have yet to ensure that the information about learners' learning is used systematically to make sure that all of the study programmes are sufficiently challenging and that teaching meets the learning needs of all learners.
- Teaching in the sixth form is improving and study programmes are usually managed well, but there is variation across subjects. As a result, learners do not always make good or better progress in all subjects. The most-able learners are not fully stretched and successful in attaining the highest grades of which they are capable.
- Learners who fall behind with their work are helped to catch up. The few learners without GCSE grades A* to C in English or mathematics follow relevant courses and make progress. The number of learners who completed their study programmes in the sixth form declined significantly in 2015. However, those learners who remained in school achieved qualifications relevant to their career aspirations and were successful in moving on to further or higher education, training or employment. The number of learners gaining university places is also increasing.
- Opportunities for all learners to develop fully their personal, social and employability skills are planned systematically. External programmes such as Nuffield Bursaries, Roots to Professions and Realising Opportunities are being used to raise aspirations and increase the progress of the most-able learners. Some learners undertake work experience that is relevant to their study programmes and impartial careers guidance enables most learners to develop realistic plans for the future. The overall range of enrichment activities, visits and visitors is further extended through city-wide partnership networks, including the provision offered through the City Consortium.
- Learners behave well and show confidence, maturity and independence. Learners say they feel safe and well supported. Their attendance at school is monitored, although inspectors did see some lateness to lessons during the inspection. Learners value their education in the sixth form and act as positive role models for younger pupils.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 103732 |
| Local authority | Coventry |
| Inspection number | 10012388 |

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

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| Type of school | Secondary comprehensive |
| School category | Foundation |
| 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 | 998 |
| Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes | 118 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Linda Bigham |
| Headteacher | Ruth Williamson |
| Telephone number | 024 7636 9200 |
| Website | www.foxford.coventry.sch.uk |
| Email address | mail@foxford.coventry.sch.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | 3–4 July 2014 |

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized community secondary school and has a sixth form. The level of pupil mobility is high, with an increasing number of pupils being admitted after the normal school starting date, many of whom speak little or no English.
- Less than one half of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is above average. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is also above average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium is above the national average. The pupil premium is extra funding given to schools to support pupils who are eligible for free school meals, or who are looked after by the local authority.
- The school is supported through partnership with a local Foundation Trust board involving Coventry City Council, the University of Coventry, NHS Trust, Ricoh Arena, Henley College and CREATE.
- A number of pupils attend placements at an alternative provision at Learnfit, Henley College, Brakes, Coombe Abbey, Moor Farm, CWT (Coventry Warwickshire Training) and City College.
- The school's sixth form provides a range of academic and some vocational courses, all of which are taught on-site or at the City Consortium.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching across a range of lessons in order to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Many of these lessons were conducted jointly with senior leaders.
- Pupils' work was sampled in lessons and through formal reviews of work in various subjects at key stage 3, key stage 4 and the sixth form.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's own information on the progress of current pupils, planning and monitoring documentation, records relating to behaviour and attendance and documents relating to keeping pupils safe.
- Meetings were held with pupils across Years 7 to 11 and with learners in the sixth form, as well as contact at breaktime and lunchtime. An inspector also met with members of the governing body and the school's improvement partner.
- Discussions took place with senior leaders, subject leaders and staff responsible for the pastoral care and guidance of pupils.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading as part of their lessons and an inspector listened particularly to pupils reading in Years 7 and 8.
- Inspectors evaluated the very small number of parental responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View, and the free-text facility. Inspectors also evaluated the responses of parents to the school's own questionnaires completed during year group review meetings. They took account of the views of pupils and members of the school's staff through informal conversations.

Inspection team

| | |
|----------------------------|------------------|
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| Nardeep Sharma | Ofsted Inspector |
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