

Tamworth Enterprise College, an AET Academy

Bird's Bush Road, Belgrave, Tamworth B77 2NE

Inspection dates

24–25 May 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	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Outcomes for pupils across the school are too variable and pupils do not make consistently good progress over time.
- The progress made by pupils in the key subject of science has, historically, been slower than that in English and mathematics. This variation has not yet been successfully addressed, which means that pupils continue to underachieve in this area.
- Leaders and managers at different levels have not evaluated with sufficient rigour the policies and actions they have implemented to try to bring about improvement.
- The additional funding received by the school to support the progress of disadvantaged pupils is not yet being used effectively to ensure that this group of pupils make good progress and close the gaps with other pupils nationally.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school varies too much and this means that pupils do not make consistently good progress in all years and subjects.

The school has the following strengths

- The conduct of pupils is positive. Typically, they enjoy attending the school and their welfare is well supported by their teachers.
- A culture of safeguarding permeates the work of the school. Pupils feel safe and greatly appreciate the consistent care and support provided by school leaders, teachers and other adults.
- Progress made by pupils in mathematics rose markedly in 2015 and inspection evidence shows that, due to consistently good teaching in this subject, the improvement is being sustained for current pupils.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment so that all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make at least good progress by ensuring that:
 - teachers use assessment information well to plan learning that meets all pupils' needs
 - pupils take active steps to respond to their teachers' advice when they are reviewing their marked work, including by correcting errors in their literacy
 - the good practice that exists in the school is shared more systematically and more widely.
- Improve outcomes for pupils in the key subject area of science by ensuring that:
 - all pupils experience high-quality teaching that is closely matched to their needs and which engages pupils of all abilities
 - the science curriculum successfully supports lower-attaining pupils to make at least good progress.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - providing training and guidance for teachers in how best to use assessment information to plan learning that targets underachievement, and then evaluate the impact of that training
 - improving the effectiveness of the local governing body in holding leaders to account for the impact of their work, including rigorously evaluating how well additional funding is used to close the gap between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils at the school and all pupils nationally.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders have not consistently addressed the gaps in achievement that exist in different subjects and across year groups. The focus on raising achievement in Year 11, particularly in mathematics and English, has meant that other areas of the school, especially science, have not received effective action to bring about consistent improvement.
- Senior leadership capacity has improved and developed since the last inspection. Leaders have demonstrated the ability to bring about improvements in some areas, notably in mathematics. However, the impact of their actions has not been consistent in helping pupils in different years, and across the range of subjects, to make good progress.
- Leaders are committed to raising the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and have implemented a range of approaches to help this group of pupils to improve. However, the evaluation of these new initiatives has not been precise enough for leaders to know which of these are most effective in consistently closing gaps in achievement.
- The principal works with commitment to improve the school and shares with the staff a common desire to raise standards. His work, and that of other leaders, is valued by staff and this is beginning to have an impact in boosting the aspirations of the pupils.
- The principal has appreciated the guidance given by the regional director of the Academies Enterprise Trust (AET) and this has successfully secured improvement in some areas, notably in mathematics. However, not enough support has been provided by the trust in evaluating how best to close the gaps in achievement for disadvantaged pupils and in improving outcomes in science.
- Strong leadership has contributed towards the recent improvements in the progress of pupils in mathematics. The subject content that pupils learn has been reviewed and leaders have introduced more regular assessment. This has helped pupils to be more prepared for their GCSE examinations and also contributed to the significant improvements in this subject in 2015.
- Since the last inspection, the school has undertaken significant reform of the subjects and courses that pupils study. This new curriculum is broader and more balanced. Nonetheless, the scale and pace of these reforms mean that the impact of these changes on pupils' outcomes has not yet been fully evaluated.
- The spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of the pupils is effectively planned and implemented across lessons, tutor periods and assemblies. Pupils are also taught about how they can effectively and positively contribute to life in modern Britain, although, when questioned by inspectors, not all pupils were able to discuss why this is important for their future success.
- The leadership of provision for vulnerable pupils, including those who have special educational needs or disability and those who are looked after by the local authority, is a strength. The result of this is that these pupils feel well supported and make good progress over time.
- The school's extra-curricular programme offers a wide range of sporting and artistic opportunities. Pupils reported that they particularly value the house competitions that take place throughout the year.
- Careers guidance is proving effective for pupils in key stage 4 and the vast majority go on to further education, employment or training after they leave the school. The school has also started to target guidance to pupils in key stage 3 to ensure that these pupils have the highest aspirations about what they can achieve when they leave the school.
- **The governance of the school requires improvement**
 - While they are aware of the importance of closing the gaps in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and others nationally, governors' understanding of how pupil premium funding can best be used strategically to support the progress of this group is not fully developed. As a consequence, they have not held the school's leaders fully to account for consistently closing the gaps in achievement that exist. They have not evaluated how, precisely, the additional funding provided should be used most effectively to improve the performance of this group of pupils.
 - The local governing body has changed substantially since the last inspection. Current governors involve themselves actively in the school and are committed to bringing about further improvements. They are taking active steps to recruit new members in order to further improve leadership capacity.

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The culture of safeguarding is a strength of the school. Leaders and teachers show considerable concern and care for all pupils' welfare, including those from vulnerable groups. A number of leaders and governors have taken training on safer recruitment and all the correct checks are undertaken on those who work at the school. Staff are effectively trained in protecting children, including understanding the dangers of radicalisation and extremism.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment require improvement as there is too much variability in their quality between, and within, subjects. As a result, pupils do not make consistently good progress.
- Information which tracks how well individual pupils are progressing is not used consistently by all teachers when they are planning lessons. This means they do not always effectively target those who need additional support. The result is that some groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and middle-ability pupils, are not making consistently good progress over time.
- In science, inspectors observed inconsistencies in teaching and in the progress of pupils over time. For example, lower-attaining pupils were observed to be struggling with the demands of the curriculum and, as a consequence, demonstrated very limited understanding about how to progress in the subject.
- Inspectors found that in some cases pupils' books had incomplete or missing work. Teachers had typically noticed and commented on this when assessing their work, but there was little evidence of pupils catching up or completing the work.
- The school's new assessment system is understood by both teachers and pupils. When used effectively, this helps pupils at different stages in their learning to know how they are currently performing and also the steps they need to take to make even better progress.
- Inspectors' scrutiny of the work in pupils' books demonstrates that teachers consistently follow the school's assessment policy to help pupils develop their literacy. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on the corrections that teachers make to their work, but pupils' inconsistent response to this means that some continue to repeatedly make the same errors in their work.
- Pupils' work in mathematics and English demonstrates that they can make good progress. This is because effective teaching over time has supported pupils to develop their subject knowledge and has also prepared them with the skills necessary to do well in public examinations.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is strong across a range of different subjects. In the most effective lessons, particularly in English and mathematics, this means that teachers are able to successfully stretch and challenge pupils.
- Teaching assistants provide valuable support in lessons and they play an important role in helping to aid the progress of those pupils who need additional help.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils show a well-developed understanding of different forms of bullying and how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. They reported to inspectors that bullying is rare and, when it does occur, it is always dealt with quickly and effectively by teachers.
- Pupils feel well supported by their teachers and other adults in the school and told inspectors that they appreciate the consistent care and guidance they are offered.
- The tutor system allows pupils from different year groups to learn together during form periods. This makes a positive contribution to their well-being and helps pupils to feel part of a strong community.
- Pupils are given valuable advice about different courses that are available for them to study when they make decisions for key stage 4.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils has improved since the last inspection and is now consistently good.
- Pupils wear their uniform smartly throughout the day and say they enjoy being at the school. They attend regularly and are punctual at the start of the day and also when moving between lessons.

- The conduct of pupils around the school campus is ordered and friendly. This contributes to a safe environment and a positive working atmosphere.
- Attendance has improved in recent years and is now above the national average. There are no significant differences for attendance for groups of pupils. Persistent absence has also declined since the last inspection.
- When given the opportunity, pupils feel confident to contribute their thoughts and ideas to class discussions. In general, positive and warm relationships exist between teachers and pupils.
- Pupils support one another and typically work effectively in lessons, both on their own and in small groups.
- Pupils reported to inspectors that some of their lessons are disturbed by low-level behaviour issues. However, inspectors found that this only happened infrequently and was generally effectively addressed by teachers and school leaders.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Outcomes for pupils require improvement as there has been too much variability in achievement between different subjects over time. This remains the case for current pupils.
- Pupils have made inconsistent progress in recent years. Since the last inspection, the progress made by pupils in their final examinations in 2014 declined unexpectedly and was significantly below national averages for similar pupils. In 2015, overall progress rose and was broadly in line with national averages. School predictions and evidence from the inspection suggests that pupils are likely to continue to make progress broadly in line with national expectations in 2016.
- The progress made by pupils in the key subject area of science has been too slow and shows only limited signs of improvement. Their progress was significantly below expectations in both 2014 and 2015, and is forecast by school leaders to remain low in 2016.
- Observations in lessons, exploration of pupils' books and files, and inspectors' analysis of information provided by school leaders, confirmed that current pupils do not make consistently strong progress across the range of subjects.
- The progress made by disadvantaged pupils is variable across subjects and years. The gaps in achievement that exist between these pupils and their peers in the school, as well as with all pupils nationally, are not closing consistently.
- The progress made by most-able pupils was broadly in line with similar pupils nationally in 2015. However, a much lower proportion of higher-ability pupils than is typical nationally have successfully completed the English Baccalaureate in the last two years. This number is forecast to remain very low again in 2016. Changes in the school's curriculum will provide more opportunities for pupils to achieve these qualifications in the future.
- Progress in mathematics improved markedly in 2015 and has remained strong for current pupils. Gaps in achievement have been narrowed and pupils now make good progress.
- The progress made by different groups of pupils in English has varied over time. The school's data suggest that progress will improve in 2016. Inspection evidence supports the view that pupils are now making better progress in English.
- Pupils who have special educational needs or disability make good progress over time as a result of the effective monitoring and guidance provided by specialist staff.

School details

Unique reference number	138435
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10012428

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	784
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Gurney
Headteacher/Principal/Teacher in charge	Simon Turney
Telephone number	01827 285596
Website	www.tamworthenterprisecollege.co.uk
Email address	reception@tamworthenterprisecollege.org
Date of previous inspection	17–18 June 2014

Information about this school

- Tamworth Enterprise College is an average-sized secondary school. The number on roll has fallen in recent years. It has been part of the AET since 2012.
- The vast majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below the national average. The proportion who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is 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 meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.
- The school does not use any alternative provision for its pupils.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching across 48 lessons in order to evaluate the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Pupils' work was sampled in all lessons.
- A range of school documents were carefully examined, including the school's own self-evaluation, information on the current progress made by pupils, minutes of staff meetings and governing body meetings, records relating to behaviour and attendance, and documents relating to how pupils are supported in keeping safe.
- Meetings were held with five randomly selected groups of pupils from each of Years 7 to 11, and pupils' views were also sought during break and lunchtime as well as during lessons.
- Meetings were held with two members of the local governing body, and a telephone conversation was held with another governor who was unable to attend the school. Inspectors also met with the regional director from the AET who has been supporting the school.
- Discussions took place with senior leaders, subject leaders, newly qualified teachers and those members of staff responsible for the pastoral care and guidance of pupils.
- Inspectors took into account the responses of 21 parents to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View. They also considered the views of 54 members of staff received through questionnaires that they returned.

Inspection team

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