

# Coundon Court

Northbrook Road, Coventry, West Midlands CV6 2AJ

## Inspection dates

22–23 November 2016

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership. He has driven forward improvements in all aspects of the education that the school provides with great determination. An effective senior leadership team supports him well.
- Governors are passionate about improving the school. They have a clear understanding of how the school is doing. They have a wide range of skills that make them very effective in supporting leaders and holding them to account.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment keeps on improving. The vast majority of teachers and other adults who work at the school share the ambition of leaders and governors for pupils' high achievement.
- The school has made significant improvements since the last inspection. As a result, all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, make good progress from their starting points. Staff match provision for the most vulnerable pupils well to their specific needs.
- The proportion of most-able pupils who attain the highest grades at key stage 4 is increasing thanks to the school's focus on the attainment of these pupils.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very effective. As a result, pupils have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong and show respect and tolerance for the beliefs of others.
- The vast majority of pupils respond positively to the new behaviour policy, and behaviour in the school is improving rapidly. Most pupils behave well and are appreciative of the many opportunities that the school offers. They feel safe in school and know how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations.
- Attendance is improving thanks to strong actions taken by leaders.
- Learners enrolled in 16–19 study programmes make good progress and are well prepared for the next stage in their education, employment or training.
- In some subjects, middle leaders do not consistently check the use of assessment and feedback to help pupils improve their work.
- A small minority of pupils, especially in key stage 4, find it difficult to adjust to the new standards of behaviour set by senior leaders. In a few cases, these pupils would benefit from firmer interventions from teachers to ensure that they comply with the school's expectations.

## **Full report**

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

- Continue to develop the skills and expertise of middle leaders to embed and share good practice within and across subject areas, so that teaching, learning and assessment are more consistently of a high quality.
- Continue to improve pupils' attitudes towards learning by ensuring that teachers' expectations of pupils in lessons are in line with the high standards set by senior leaders.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The headteacher has played a significant role in bringing about improvement in recent years. He is determined to ensure that every pupil has the opportunity to succeed. He has a very detailed and accurate view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and has demonstrated that he is able to bring about rapid change through carefully planned strategies.
- The headteacher, with the support of the senior leadership team, has worked effectively to target improvements in teaching and behaviour. He has high expectations of leaders and teachers across the school. He has successfully changed the culture of the school in a short period of time. The vast majority of staff and pupils have responded positively to these changes and most share senior leaders' aspirations to improve further.
- Senior leaders and governors have taken effective steps to eliminate inadequate or weak teaching. They have clear strategies in place to ensure long-term improvement. Since the time of the last inspection they have appointed new staff, especially middle leaders, and ensured that the effectiveness of all members of staff is well supported by the school's performance management system.
- The school has a strong focus on the continuing professional development of teachers and leaders. This is bringing about improvements in teaching and helps the school to develop new leaders to take on positions of responsibility.
- Senior leaders pay close attention to the progress of each individual pupil. They have put in place effective systems to hold middle leaders and teachers to account for pupils' performance. These systems allow leaders and teachers to analyse the reasons for any lack of achievement and to intervene effectively. As a result, progress for all groups of pupils in the school is improving.
- The school is actively involved in a local network of schools within Coventry local authority. This has helped leaders and teachers learn from the success of others, and has contributed to successful school improvement.
- Leaders analyse in detail barriers to learning that affect the progress of pupils and are determined to remove them. They use the information provided by primary schools for pupils who join in Year 7 to target the use of additional funding for pupils who need to catch up in English and mathematics at the start of their secondary education. From Year 7, pupils are taught in groups according to their abilities and this continues throughout the years in all main subject areas.
- The leadership of the school's provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is very effective. These pupils have individual learning support plans which identify their needs and the support they require. Leaders regularly monitor the progress of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. As a result, these pupils make good progress across all years, and across the curriculum.
- Senior leaders and governors plan carefully to ensure that the pupil premium funding the school receives is used as effectively as possible to support disadvantaged pupils. Leaders analyse the needs of the pupils supported by the additional funding. They have clear strategies in place to ensure they address barriers to learning that may affect these pupils. They monitor closely the impact that the actions taken have on the

academic progress and personal development of disadvantaged pupils. As a result, differences in progress and achievement between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally keep on reducing.

- The school provides pupils with a broad and balanced range of subjects in order to raise aspirations. The headteacher and senior colleagues are determined to offer the widest possible range of options to pupils in order to prepare them for the next stage of their education or training. While continuing to improve the provision for the teaching of English and mathematics, leaders have detailed plans for the development of science, languages, history, technology and the arts. Leaders and pastoral staff provide effective guidance to pupils to help them with their subject option choices. As a result, pupils are increasingly able to follow their interests and develop a wide range of skills and knowledge. Pupils also benefit from good careers guidance.
- A wide range of enrichment activities support the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils effectively. These activities, devised to encourage learning outside the classroom, include a range of visits and trips as well as cultural and sporting activities. Pupils can participate in visits abroad to France, Spain or Iceland. There are also residential stays for Year 7 pupils as well as visits to London or to first world war battlefields for all year groups. The school offers a range of sports and musical activities that are very popular with pupils. The range of activities on offer, and the way in which the school encourages participation in them, help pupils to become active and responsible citizens.
- The headteacher and governors are very aware that there are still issues with consistency in the quality of teaching in the very large school they lead. This is why they have appointed new middle leaders whose roles are to ensure that the quality of teaching is of a consistently high standard in their respective areas. However, some of these leaders have only been in post for a short period of time and have not yet fully evaluated and embedded best practice. For example, a few teachers are not using their assessment of pupils' work to consistently identify where pupils are not making as much progress as they should in some subjects.

### **Governance of the school**

- Governors know the school exceptionally well. They accurately identify the school's strengths and weaknesses. They have, between them, a wide range of relevant skills which allow them to bring a high level of expertise to their role.
- Governors have the confidence to develop a clear understanding of issues that they identify through their own monitoring activities and to challenge senior leaders when it is appropriate to do so. This ability to analyse and enquire makes governors particularly effective in driving forward improvements. They closely monitor pupils' achievement and are probing if subjects are not performing as highly as they expect. They keep a check on the quality of teaching and learning through meetings with leaders and teachers, and they closely monitor the impact of additional funding, such as the pupil premium, on disadvantaged pupils.
- Governors reacted swiftly to issues about safeguarding identified in the last inspection report. They take very seriously their responsibility to ensure that pupils are safe. They regularly check that the school's safeguarding procedures are up to date and robust, and know how to deal with safeguarding issues should they arise.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Evidence gathered during the inspection shows that not only are all records and staff training up to date, but also the school is developing a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders make it a high priority to keep pupils safe and to promote safeguarding with all staff. The headteacher and the leadership team share responsibilities for safeguarding and regularly check that the school fulfils its duty to keep pupils safe. Recent changes to safeguarding guidance have been taken into account and both policies and training reflect this. Staff at all levels have a clear understanding of what they must do if they are concerned about pupils. There are clear procedures in place to intervene swiftly to protect vulnerable pupils.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

**Good**

- The headteacher took strong action to address weak teaching that, in the past, had had a negative effect on pupils' progress. There is now a clear focus on developing a culture of high expectations across the school.
- There has been a high turnover of staff since the previous inspection. Consequently, the school has placed a strong emphasis on recruiting effective new teachers as well as on providing high-quality training for all staff. As a result, the quality of teaching across the school is improving steadily.
- Teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge and explain new learning clearly. They plan their lessons meticulously. As a result, a large majority of teachers deliver lessons that pupils find interesting and help them to make good progress. Teachers are skilled in asking questions to deepen pupils' understanding and to sustain pupils' attention. As a result, a large majority of pupils, and especially the most able, can develop their knowledge and skills effectively during lessons.
- In core subjects, and in other subjects where it is appropriate, pupils are set in groups according to their ability. Teachers also have detailed information about pupils' individual characteristics, learning needs and rates of progress. Teachers use these arrangements and this information effectively to adapt their teaching to the needs and ability of pupils. Pupils are thus given work that allows them to reach the standards of which they are capable. They know how to get help if they find the work too difficult and feel confident that they will be supported by their teachers to improve their work.
- Strong relationships between teachers and pupils in many subjects are fostering positive attitudes to learning. For example in English, pupils studying war poems were encouraged to discuss the notion of conflict and the discussion turned into a sophisticated debate during which pupils had the confidence to express very contrasting views. In religious education, pupils also have frequent opportunities to debate topical issues related to equal opportunities or diversity. Pupils of all abilities engage willingly in these activities because they take place in well-structured lessons.
- Most teachers have high expectations of pupils and use their questioning skills effectively to move their understanding forward. In computing, for example, pupils were clearly developing the need to analyse, evaluate and reason to improve their skills because of teachers' sustained challenging questioning. This was also the case in mathematics.

- Teachers set homework, on a regular basis, which is relevant and provides opportunities for pupils to expand their understanding and skills. Pupils value the feedback they get to help them improve the quality of their work.
- A large majority of pupils take pride in their work, work together well, participate in lessons and show respect to their teachers. Most of them appreciate the support and encouragement they receive from their teachers. However, a small minority of pupils, mainly older pupils who joined the school before it started to improve, can display challenging behaviour patterns in lessons. Most teachers deal very effectively with these pupils, but a few members of staff tend not to react swiftly enough and need to be better prepared to deal with poor behaviour.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The school has a strong emphasis on the personal development and welfare of pupils. Coundon Court is a very large school that reflects the community it serves, and leaders understand the issues that affect young people in this community. Leaders and staff help pupils to understand how ethnic and religious groups differ. They are made aware of the need to be tolerant towards other people's beliefs and cultures. As a result, pupils have a clear understanding of the multicultural nature of British society. They know about and understand the dangers of extremism and radicalisation.
- The school's progress managers, who are non-teaching pastoral support staff, provide highly effective support to pupils, particularly for those who are vulnerable or who are experiencing difficulties. Pupils know that they can talk to them when they are in need of support and advice. They also know that they can talk to all staff in the school about any concerns.
- School staff work well with external agencies to cater for pupils who have emotional and behavioural issues, those who are experiencing difficulties, or those for whom there are clearly identified barriers to learning.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of the different types of bullying, including homophobic, sexual and cyber bullying, and know why all types of bullying are unacceptable. Bullying was an issue in the school at the time of the previous inspection and some pupils, as well as a small minority of parents, are still concerned that it happens frequently. When questioned further, a large majority of pupils confirm that the school is taking firm action to tackle bullying and that the number of incidents is reducing rapidly because teachers deal well with issues. The detailed records that the school keeps confirm this.
- The school encourages pupils to play a full role in the life of the school and to participate in its improvement. The school council is popular among pupils and senior leaders and governors are keen to listen to and act on the council's recommendations for improvements.
- The vast majority of pupils say that they feel safe at the school. Most parents who responded to parental surveys agreed that their children are safe.
- Pupils are aware of how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations, both within

school and when they are away from school. They recognise the potential dangers that the internet and social media could pose to them because staff provide them with comprehensive information and training on how to avoid unnecessary risks.

- The careers provision for pupils is effective and appreciated by pupils and learners. Individual interviews are provided which help inform individuals of the range of opportunities available for future study and employment. The school supports pupils in organising appropriate work experience so that they are well prepared for the next stage of their lives, including employment.
- Senior leaders closely monitor the welfare of pupils who are educated by a local external provider. A discussion between the external provider and one of the inspectors confirmed that communication with the school is effective and that the progress and well-being of pupils who are educated there are good and closely monitored.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Senior leaders have made behaviour a key area for improvement because of the issues that affected the school at the time of the previous inspection. They make clear their expectations of how everyone should behave. These expectations are part of all staff's practice in the school and pupils understand them. Pupils appreciate the incentives they get for positive behaviour and understand that there are consequences for unacceptable behaviour.
- Behaviour around the school is good. Movement between lessons is orderly and safe. Pupils' conduct during breaktimes, at lunchtime, as well as when they arrive and leave, is good because the very large site is well supervised and pupils respond positively to staff's friendly but firm supervision. Pupils' appearance is generally smart and most wear their uniform with pride.
- The vast majority of pupils display positive attitudes to learning, are attentive in lessons, and listen when other pupils or teachers are talking. They work well together and are keen to do well in lessons. They also show respect to their teachers and other adults in the school.
- Attendance has improved. The proportion of pupils who attend school regularly is now in line with national levels. This is due to the actions of senior leaders and progress managers, who have been relentless in making sure that all parents are fully aware of the consequences of their children missing school.
- The proportion of exclusions has reduced because of the actions that leaders, teachers and other adults involved in the school are taking to ensure that pupils who have challenging behaviour receive appropriate support.
- Inspectors observed that, on a few occasions when teaching is less effective, pupils lose focus and become distracted from their learning. Leaders are aware of this and are taking appropriate action so that this does not happen any more. School records and a large majority of lessons observed indicate that teaching over time has improved and this feature of lessons is becoming less frequent.

## Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Outcomes for pupils have shown steady improvement since 2013. GCSE results have improved in each of the last three years and provisional results for 2016 confirm this upward trend. Inspection evidence from the school's own assessment information, pupils' written work and observations in lessons indicate that pupils continue to make good progress. As a result, pupils are now better prepared for the next stage of their education or training than they were at the time of the previous inspection.
- Historically, attainment and progress made by pupils in English have been stronger than in mathematics. While differences do still exist with current pupils, improved teaching of mathematics is delivering strong progress for both key stage 4 and key stage 3 pupils.
- The performance information for current pupils indicates that pupils at key stage 4 are achieving well and are making good progress, not only in English and mathematics, but also across a wide range of subjects. The marked improvement in attainment and progress in science, languages and humanities that took place in 2015 is confirmed by current school assessment information.
- Current information for key stage 3 is also positive in terms of pupils' progress. The school's performance information indicates that a large majority of pupils are making good progress from their starting points across the curriculum. Inspectors' reviews of work in pupils' books and assessment information confirm the accuracy of the information leaders provided indicating that pupils are currently making good progress.
- Progress made by disadvantaged pupils is improving over time and differences have diminished between these pupils and others in the school. Currently, in key stage 3, differences between the attainment of disadvantaged pupils and others are smaller than in key stage 4. The school forecasts that differences will continue to diminish over the coming years. Inspection evidence supports the view that disadvantaged pupils are now making good and improving progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities across all year groups make good progress across the curriculum. Historically, these pupils have made as much progress as others from their starting point. Current assessment information shows that this is still the case. The accurate evaluation of the needs of these pupils and the support that they receive through their individual learning plans are proving to be very effective.
- Senior leaders and governors have identified that the most able pupils needed to make better progress, as not enough of them were gaining top grades in their GCSE examinations. Leaders are focusing as well on the most able pupils who are also disadvantaged, as part of their drive to raise aspirations. They are closely monitoring the progress of these pupils. It is clear from lessons observed and work in pupils' books that staff are implementing plans to ensure that the most able pupils fulfil their potential. As a result, according to the school's information on the progress of current Year 11 pupils, the proportion of the most able pupils who are working towards achieving the higher grades at GCSE is increasing. The school's performance information also indicates that the attainment of the most able pupils, including the most able who are disadvantaged, is improving at key stage 3.



## 16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- Achievement in the sixth form is good. Learners make good progress from their starting points on both academic and vocational courses. Consequently, the school's sixth form is very popular with pupils and an increasing number of Year 11 pupils are opting to continue their education at Coundon Court.
- Leadership in the sixth form is strong. Key priorities are clearly summarised by the motto 'exceeding expectations and raising aspirations'. Work is focused on ensuring that learners meet or exceed their target grades. Learners' progress towards these grades is carefully monitored and suitable interventions put in place where they are in danger of underachieving.
- The sixth form curriculum offers a wide range of academic courses as well as vocational courses, such as applied science. All who join the sixth form are provided with the full 16–19 study programme, including relevant work experience opportunities. Learners receive effective guidance to make the choice of courses that best fit their abilities, aspirations and interests. As a result, the vast majority of learners complete the courses they started in Year 12 and achieve the qualifications they study for.
- Learners who did not manage to get C grades in English and mathematics at GCSE receive effective support to reach these standards during their time in the sixth form. Consequently, they all achieve these grades while continuing with their sixth form studies.
- Teaching in the sixth form is appropriately matched to the needs of learners and supports them to make good progress. The small minority of learners whose progress and attendance cause concern receive additional support from teachers as well as mentoring.
- Learners' conduct in lessons and around the school is good. They enjoy the time they spend at the school, appreciate the learning environment the school provides, value the fact that they are treated like adults and feel safe.
- Learners are particularly appreciative of the strong support given to them in preparing for their future in higher education, training or employment. In discussions with an inspector, sixth form learners shared their satisfaction with their education at the school and their appreciation of the improvements that have taken place over the last two years.
- A wide range of enrichment opportunities are provided to complement the academic and vocational programmes that learners are following. For example, learners are given opportunities to visit universities and to listen to guest speakers representing a wide range of business and industry. The personal, social and health education programme that learners follow also helps them develop their employability and social skills.
- Strategies to raise learners' aspirations are now having an impact and, as a result, a large proportion of learners are applying successfully to university courses. All learners who left the school in 2016 successfully gained a university place or an apprenticeship or found employment.

## School details

Unique reference number	138023
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	10020038

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,624
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	276
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mark Payne
Headteacher	Andrew Clay
Telephone number	02476 335 121
Website	<a href="http://www.coundoncourt.org">http://www.coundoncourt.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:Headteacher@coundoncourt.org">Headteacher@coundoncourt.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	23-24 September 2014

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- Coundon Court is a much larger than average secondary school and has a sixth form. It has held academy status since 2012.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is average. The proportion who speak English as an additional language is slightly above average.

- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is average.
- The proportion of pupils who are eligible for support through the pupil premium is below the national average.
- In 2015, the school met the government's floor standards, which set out the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school places pupils who may require additional support on alternative provision at Wyken Extended Learning Centre ran by Coventry local authority.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in 55 lessons, some of which were jointly observed with senior leaders.
- Inspectors looked at a range of pupils' work from a range of subjects, in key stages 3 and 4 as well as in the sixth form.
- Meetings took place with the headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders and groups of pupils from across all years. The lead inspector met with six members of the governing body. An inspector also had a telephone conversation with a representative of Wyken Extended Learning Centre.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime, between lessons and after school.
- Inspectors took into account 149 parental responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Parent View.
- Inspectors took into account the views of 82 members of staff who responded to the questionnaire.
- Inspectors looked at a variety of documentation, including the school's own self-evaluation of its provision and its development plan. Inspectors also considered information relating to achievement, teaching and learning, behaviour and attendance, safeguarding and governance.

## Inspection team

Patrick Amieli, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Alan Johnson	Ofsted Inspector
Nicola Walters	Ofsted Inspector
Andrew Fisher	Ofsted Inspector
Gwendoline Onyon	Ofsted Inspector

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