

# Swallow Hill Community College

Whingate Road, Armley, Leeds LS12 3DS

## Inspection dates

8–9 November 2016

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Despite the recent actions taken by senior leaders, pupils do not make consistently good progress across a wide range of subjects.
- Over time, weak teaching and subject leadership in mathematics and science mean that pupils do not make enough progress in these subjects.
- Action plans do not focus sharply enough on the areas of the school's work that require improvement.
- Governors do not challenge senior leaders effectively. Although they receive detailed information on pupils' progress, they do not ask probing questions about its reliability. As a result, they have an overly positive view of the school.
- The curriculum does not enable all groups of pupils to make good progress. However, leaders are taking the action required to address this.
- Teaching does not secure consistently good progress in a wide range of subjects. The most able pupils do not make enough progress because teachers do not set challenging enough work for them.
- Attendance is improving but is well below the national average for secondary schools. The number of pupils who do not attend regularly remains too high.
- Fixed-term exclusions are reducing but they are still too high.

### The school has the following strengths

- Progress in English for most groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, is improving rapidly due to effective subject leadership, teaching and assessment.
- The school provides effective support for pupils whose first language is not English. Therefore, their communication skills are developing well.
- The school's new approach to assessment, marking and feedback is having a positive impact on pupils' progress because pupils know how to improve.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is well delivered and varied in content. Pupils said they value the way the school celebrates diversity.

## Full report

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

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

- Increase the progress made by all pupils, especially in mathematics and science, by ensuring that:
  - teachers help pupils who have gaps in their knowledge and understanding to make faster progress, especially disadvantaged pupils
  - teaching across key subjects is consistently effective and all teachers have the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve
  - the most able pupils are challenged by the work teachers set.
- Improve leadership and management at all levels by:
  - continuing to strengthen middle leadership so that subject leaders can tackle weaknesses quickly and effectively without external support
  - ensuring that improvement plans have clear actions and timelines
  - ensuring that governors have a detailed and accurate picture of the progress of current pupils so that they can hold leaders to account.
- Continue the current trend of improvement in attendance and behaviour by:
  - reducing the proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school
  - ensuring that teachers implement, consistently, the current approach to improving behaviour so that fewer pupils are excluded from lessons and from school.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Requires improvement

- Over time, leaders have not ensured that all groups of pupils achieve as well as they could. They have not responded quickly enough to weaknesses in teaching, particularly in mathematics and science. Therefore, pupils do not make consistently good progress across a wide range of subjects.
- The recently appointed interim principal and her senior team have high expectations of pupils and staff. Pupils are responding well to the increased rigour in teaching and assessment, and pupils' behaviour is improving. Senior leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. However, improvement plans are not focused specifically enough on the next steps needed to improve the school rapidly.
- Senior leaders rigorously check that the school's policy on assessment, marking and feedback is followed consistently across subjects. More reliable information about pupils' progress is now available to teachers and leaders because formal assessments are used more effectively and have been validated externally to check their accuracy.
- More recently, leaders have been successful in strengthening their evaluation of the quality of teaching so that it is accurate. Where necessary, teachers have been provided with support and there is now a range of training in place. Teachers are clear about their responsibility for improving pupils' rates of progress.
- Over the past year, the Academies Enterprise Trust and the Rodillian Multi Academy Trust have supported leaders well. Therefore, subject leadership in mathematics and science is becoming more effective but it is too early to see the full impact.
- Most middle leaders are clearly ambitious for improving performance in their subjects and there is a growing capacity within this team to move the school forward. Subject leaders are now monitoring the quality of teaching more effectively and providing targeted training for staff. Nonetheless, subject leaders have not been equally successful in establishing high standards of teaching and pupils' progress across all subjects.
- Staff feel well supported and are very positive about working in the school. They welcome the recent opportunities for training and professional development, for example the use of 'coaching pairs'. Teachers who are new to the school spoke highly of the quality of their induction and support.
- Leaders have reviewed the curriculum so that it is now more closely matched to pupils' needs and starting points. The curriculum is now broad and balanced. Courses are more challenging for the most able pupils and a range of intervention programmes are available. For example, the speech and communication programme is used effectively to develop the skills of pupils whose first language is not English. Pupils select from a wide range of creative and technology subjects to study in Year 9 and they are well motivated in those subjects.
- The school offers a wide variety of visits and extra-curricular activities, catering for a range of interests, from trampolining to playing the ukulele. High numbers of pupils participate in sport, the arts and community work. Projects such as 'Altogether Armley'

and 'Armley Helping Hands' give pupils an understanding of their role within the local community. The school council gives pupils an opportunity to take on additional responsibility. A homework club is also available every evening and is well attended.

- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is strong. There is a well-coordinated programme of assemblies, tutorials and learning activities designed to promote a cohesive community. An effective citizenship programme places an emphasis on teaching pupils about British values and life in modern society. Pupils spoke highly of the way in which the school celebrates diversity, and relationships within the school are mainly positive. Pupils show a deep understanding of current issues such as preventing radicalisation.
- Pupils across all year groups benefit from a comprehensive programme of careers guidance. This includes visits from a range of local businesses, mock interviews and days which are dedicated to exploring different careers. This helps to guide their choices at key stage 4 and gives pupils a thorough understanding of the range of careers available to them.
- Pupil premium funding is targeted appropriately to support the progress of disadvantaged pupils across the curriculum. Following a review of the school's use of pupil premium funding, the impact of this funding is now carefully evaluated. Leaders have made informed decisions about which approaches are having the most effect and have amended their plans accordingly. The progress of disadvantaged pupils has improved significantly in English but at a slower rate in mathematics. Differences remain between the attendance and progress of this group of pupils and the national averages for other pupils.
- Additional funding to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is used well, and their rates of progress are improving. However, attendance rates for this group remain low and the number of fixed-term exclusions for this group has increased recently.
- Year 7 catch-up funding is used effectively to develop the literacy and numeracy skills of pupils who need additional support. The language development programmes have been more effective than those which aim to develop numeracy skills.
- The school has a well-planned approach to promoting pupils' reading. Teachers work effectively with the librarian to encourage an enjoyment of reading and pupils use a range of reading skills across the curriculum.
- The school's own surveys show that parents and carers are very positive about the school.

### **Governance of the school**

- Following a review of governance, the local governing body is now more effective. They have reorganised their committee structure so that they have clear responsibilities for overseeing the work of the school. Following the poor examination results in 2015, they requested that senior and middle leaders provide more detailed and up-to-date information about pupils' progress, behaviour and attendance. These reports are evident in the minutes of governing body meetings. However, governors have not provided sufficient challenge to leaders about the accuracy and completeness of the information presented. As a result, they have an overly positive view of the

current performance of the school.

- Governors have a good understanding of the use of pupil premium funding and the way in which it is used. They are very aware that the progress of disadvantaged pupils is better in English than in mathematics. They receive regular and accurate reports on all year groups.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Strong procedures for managing behaviour and safeguarding mean that pupils feel safe in school. Safer recruitment practices are given a high profile and staff are very aware of their safeguarding responsibilities.
- Staff are well informed about the current issues affecting young people. All staff complete online training on safeguarding, as well as receiving regular training updates from senior staff. Detailed reporting of concerns show that staff are vigilant and deal with potential risks in a timely and appropriate way.
- The school works well with other agencies to provide support. For example, there is a single point of contact with social services to ensure that cases are referred promptly and the school works effectively with the police liaison officer to reinforce the school's values.
- The school curriculum actively promotes pupils' understanding of key safeguarding issues. Consequently, pupils show a good understanding of potential risks such as online safety and child sexual exploitation.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Requires improvement

- Teaching, learning and assessment are getting better, and pupils' progress is beginning to improve. However, the quality is still too variable between and within subjects.
- In science, the quality of teaching is inconsistent despite recent improvements in the effectiveness of subject leadership. Teaching is most effective when pupils are given adequate time to practise their skills and consolidate their understanding. For example, when pupils are given time to develop their explanations and apply their scientific knowledge, they engage well with the task. In the separate sciences of biology, chemistry and physics, pupils are set tasks which they find challenging but they persevere to find solutions to a given problem and this leads to strong progress. In other areas of science, a lack of challenge leads to off-task behaviour and pupils make slow progress.
- Teaching in mathematics is improving. Sometimes, pupils are given challenging work which develops their reasoning skills. For example, open questions are used to challenge pupils' thinking, such as 'if you divide a number, is it always smaller?' Pupils have some opportunities to develop their problem-solving skills and to put together convincing arguments. At other times, pupils with different starting points are given the same task to do. This leads to some pupils finishing before others and having to wait for further work to complete. In key stage 4, some pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding which prevent them from being able to make good progress. For

example, some Year 11 pupils have experienced weaker teaching in key stage 3 so they are not confident in using their times tables. Numeracy sessions in tutorials have limited effect because they are not delivered consistently well by tutors.

- Across other curriculum areas, teaching is variable. When teaching is well structured and teachers use their subject knowledge and effective questioning to enthuse pupils, they make good progress. On occasions, when the work is too easy or pupils are given too much time to complete an activity, they lose concentration.
- In English, pupils benefit from their teachers' high expectations and well-structured learning activities. Relationships are very positive and pupils are engaged in their learning. Teachers use effective questioning to encourage pupils to develop their ideas and to make links between the texts they are studying. However, the subject leader agrees that the most able pupils need further challenge. She has plans to increase pupils' vocabulary and to provide more opportunities for pupils to express and justify their own opinions so that they can achieve the higher grades.
- The school's policy for marking and feedback, the 'PINS' system, is used consistently across subjects. Consequently, pupils understand what they have learned and how they can improve. Sometimes pupils are given insufficient time to respond to their teachers' feedback and to make the suggested improvements in their work.
- The teaching of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is improving, particularly at key stage 3. Teachers and teaching assistants are increasingly able to identify pupils' needs and to help pupils to make similar progress to their peers.
- Very effective teaching, underpinned by strong relationships between teachers and pupils, is provided for pupils whose first language is not English. This includes the use of the 'sound training' intervention and small-group teaching closely linked to the mainstream curriculum. High-quality feedback is used effectively to improve communication and comprehension.
- Lower-attaining pupils enjoy reading and use their phonics knowledge well to read unfamiliar words. The most able pupils read confidently and expressively, and they understand what they are reading. On occasions, the most able pupils could be encouraged to read more challenging books.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Requires improvement**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils are beginning to develop higher aspirations for themselves but some pupils lack the motivation to succeed. Younger pupils show mainly positive attitudes to learning. For example, the 'resilience programme' at key stage 3 is encouraging pupils to reflect on their own learning, to accept challenge and to work towards aspirational targets.
- Pupils said that bullying is rare and incidents are usually managed well. However, they also said that some pupils do not follow the school's expectations. Assemblies promote

powerful messages about the consequences of bullying and pupils show a good understanding of different types of bullying. Pupils said that discriminatory language is not used very often and that they are taught to treat others as they would like to be treated themselves.

- Leaders monitor closely the behaviour, attendance and progress of pupils studying off-site so that pupils are safe, but their attendance remains low and their behaviour is challenging.
- 'The Bridge' resource is well used for pupils who need short-term support for personal, social and emotional well-being before being reintegrated back into mainstream lessons.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement. Although the new system of 'positive discipline' has been successful in engaging most pupils in their learning, pupils and some staff said that it is not yet used consistently well across the school. Pupils said that, at times, when teachers do not follow the agreed stages, poor behaviour is allowed to escalate and some pupils are removed from lessons on a regular basis.
- When learning is challenging and engaging, pupils respond well and make strong progress. When the work set is not well matched to pupils' abilities, pupils do not try their best and off-task behaviour prevents them from making good progress.
- Exclusions are reducing but they remain high. They are higher for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities.
- Attendance is improving but it is still well below average. The proportion of pupils who regularly miss school is reducing for all groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, but it is still high. The attendance of pupils attending alternative provision is low.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school is calm and orderly, with a few examples of boisterous behaviour at breaktimes. Social areas are well supervised by staff and most pupils behave respectfully towards each other.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- Outcomes require improvement because, over time, levels of attainment and rates of progress have been well below national averages and have not improved rapidly. Attainment and progress in English and mathematics improved in 2016. However, pupils did not make appropriate progress from their starting points across a wide range of subjects.
- The most able pupils do not make enough progress across a range of subjects. This is also true of the most able disadvantaged pupils. Not enough pupils are challenged to aim for the highest grades and the proportions making expected and better-than-expected progress, in both English and mathematics, remain below average. Evidence in pupils' books suggests that the current pupils in key stage 4 are not on track to achieve their targets. In key stage 3, there is evidence in pupils' books of higher expectations and these pupils are making much stronger progress across a range of

subjects.

- The school's own progress information for 2016 suggests that there has been strong improvement in English for most groups of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils. This is due to effective leadership and consistently high levels of expectation in this subject area. Progress in mathematics and science has been much slower due to frequent changes in staffing and ineffective leadership in the past.
- The percentage of pupils attaining A\* to C grades in modern languages and humanities in 2016 has also increased. This is partly due to fewer pupils being entered for the English Baccalaureate but also because of increased rigour in the teaching and assessment of these subjects.
- In 2016, the school's own progress information shows that pupils with low and average starting points made better progress across a range of subjects compared to previous years. This is due to the use of additional staffing and well-directed support.
- The differences between the progress of disadvantaged pupils and other pupils nationally are diminishing rapidly in English. This is because teachers are aware of their pupils' needs and they plan well-targeted interventions which are improving their literacy skills. Although the difference is diminishing in mathematics, it remains wide compared to other pupils nationally. Across a range of subjects, the attainment of disadvantaged pupils is increasing over time.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make different rates of progress depending on their learning needs. For example, pupils whose primary need is speech and communication make stronger progress than other groups due to the high-quality support provided. Pupils in younger year groups are now making faster progress because their needs are identified quickly and they receive appropriate support.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language made much better progress in 2016 across a range of subjects compared with 2015, due to effective teaching and support.
- Most pupils who need to catch up in English are making accelerated progress in Year 7 and some pupils are making accelerated progress in mathematics. This is largely due to the school's specific programmes for intervention but also because of the school's successful approach to improving literacy across the curriculum.
- Current pupils in the school are making better progress from their starting points than previous cohorts. Leaders view the data to be reliable now and believe that pupils in the current Year 11 will make better progress than previous year groups. It also shows that pupils in Years 8, 9 and 10 will make good progress. The school's self-evaluation is supported by the quality of work seen in pupils' books during the inspection.
- For the very small number of key stage 4 pupils who access off-site provision, there is regular communication with the school about their progress, but low rates of attendance hamper their progress across the curriculum.
- Increasing levels of attainment mean that more pupils now have the qualifications they need to progress onto appropriate further education or work-based training.



## School details

Unique reference number	139054
Local authority	Leeds
Inspection number	10011689

This inspection of the school 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 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	667
Appropriate authority	Academies Enterprise Trust
Chair	John Cripps
Interim Principal	Jill Atkins-Mackley
Telephone number	01132 630 110
Website	<a href="http://www.swallowhillcommunitycollege.org">www.swallowhillcommunitycollege.org</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:contactus@swallowhillcommunitycollege.org">contactus@swallowhillcommunitycollege.org</a>
Date of previous inspection	3–4 February 2015

## Information about this school

- Swallow Hill Community College is smaller than the average secondary school.
- The interim principal took up post in September 2016. The school is part of the Academies Enterprise Trust and is also supported by the Rodillian Multi Academy Trust.
- The majority of pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic groups is above average, the largest group being Pakistani. The proportion of pupils whose first language is not English is well above average, with 32 different languages being spoken.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average.
- 'The Bridge' is a school resource where pupils can access support for social and emotional well-being.

- In 2014 and 2015, the school did not meet the government's floor standards that set minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- A small number of pupils attend off-site provision. The providers are 'West 14', 'AIM', 'Southways', 'Educ 8' and 'West 11'.
- 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.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 30 lessons across all key stages and subjects. Some were observed jointly with members of the senior leadership team. In addition, inspectors visited assemblies and tutorial sessions.
- In addition to an examination of books in lessons, three inspectors undertook an examination of books with subject leaders.
- Meetings were held with the interim principal, senior and middle leaders, a member of the governing body, a representative from the Academies Enterprise Trust and a representative of the Rodillian Multi Academy Trust. Inspectors also met with pupils from all year groups.
- Inspectors reviewed the school’s self-evaluation, the school improvement plan, the school’s records of quality assurance, monitoring and assessment, minutes of governors’ meetings and case studies of vulnerable pupils receiving additional support. Inspectors scrutinised school policies including safeguarding procedures.
- Inspectors considered two responses recorded on Parent View and surveys of parents’ views carries out by the school. They also considered 54 responses to Ofsted’s survey received from staff.

## Inspection team

Lynn Kenworthy, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Steve Rogers	Ofsted Inspector
Steven Beverley	Ofsted Inspector
Michael Cook	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. [www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings](http://www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings).

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2016