

Ernesford Grange Community Academy

Princethorpe Way, Coventry, West Midlands CV3 2QD

Inspection dates

30 April to 1 May 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- This is a good and improving school. Leaders have created a positive, ambitious and inclusive culture.
- Leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They have taken effective action to improve the quality of education that they provide.
- There is a positive climate for learning throughout the school and teaching is now consistently good.
- Leaders have developed an appropriately broad and balanced curriculum. It promotes personal development and positive behaviour very well. However, the curriculum has not helped to secure good published outcomes since the last inspection.
- Over time, pupils have not made sufficient progress in order to attain highly. The most able pupils have not achieved the highest grades in the past.
- Current pupils, particularly those in key stage 3, are now making good progress in a wide range of subjects. However, boys still make slower progress than girls.
- Although improving, pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) still make slower progress and attend less regularly than other pupils in the school.
- Pupil premium funding is now used effectively and outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are improving. However, disadvantaged pupils are still absent more often and achieve less well than other pupils.
- The quality of provision in the sixth form declined after the last inspection but it is now improving. Current students benefit from strong teaching, and they are making good progress.
- The school prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain. Fundamental British values and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development underpin the ethos of the school.
- Pupils behave well in lessons and during social time. Behaviour has improved considerably since the previous inspection.
- High-quality careers education, information, advice and guidance help to prepare pupils well for the next stage of their lives.
- Pupils feel safe and the school has a strong safeguarding culture. Staff are well trained and know what to do if they have a concern.
- Governance is strong, and those who are responsible for governance are highly ambitious for the school. They have a wide range of skills and experience that they use to hold leaders to close account.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and managers should take further action to ensure that:
 - all groups of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and the most able pupils, make substantial and sustained progress in order to attain highly in a wide range of subjects
 - pupils with SEND make strong progress from their different starting points
 - boys make better progress and achieve higher standards
 - the attendance of pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils improves.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The school is well led and managed. The highly effective headteacher, supported by leaders, staff, pupils, parents and the trust, has created a positive, ambitious and inclusive culture that permeates all aspects of the school's work.
- Leaders have high expectations of themselves, pupils and staff. There is a strong team ethos and relationships are positive and productive.
- Leaders and managers have a deep and accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness. They closely monitor the quality of education by thoroughly analysing a range of information. Leaders consistently focus on the impact of their actions on the pupils to develop the school further.
- This is a rapidly improving school. Leaders have taken informed and effective action to improve teaching standards, the accuracy of assessment, pupils' behaviour and attendance and the quality of sixth-form provision.
- Leaders use tailored professional development opportunities to encourage, challenge and support staff to continue to improve their practice. Staff value the training that they receive and enjoy working at the school. They correctly believe that the school is well led and managed.
- Leadership is developing at all levels. Pastoral and subject leadership has improved since the last inspection. Middle leaders closely monitor their areas of responsibility and play an important role in ensuring that the school continues to improve.
- Over time, the curriculum has not helped pupils secure good academic outcomes. Leaders have reviewed and revised it so that it is appropriately broad and balanced and delivered more effectively. It now provides pupils with a range of opportunities to deepen their knowledge. The curriculum promotes personal development and positive behaviour very well. It is designed to help pupils prepare for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils' learning is enriched by a variety of extra-curricular activities. Pupils enjoy residential visits, participate in many sporting activities and have access to a range of clubs, all of which help to develop their skills and interests. Visits to the theatre, Coventry Cathedral, the Houses of Parliament and universities help to broaden pupils' experiences.
- Staff prepare pupils well for life in modern Britain. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a core part of the school's curriculum. Fundamental British values underpin the ethos of the school. Pupils are taught about cultures that are different to their own so that they are tolerant and respectful of the beliefs of other people. Leaders and staff promote diversity and equality of opportunity exceptionally well.
- Additional funding is used effectively to improve outcomes for pupils. Funding for pupils with SEND, Year 7 catch-up funding and the pupil premium are used to support interventions to improve outcomes for targeted pupils. All of these aspects of the schools' work are well led. As a result, the attendance, behaviour and progress of pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils are improving. Pupil premium funding is also being used well to raise the aspirations of disadvantaged pupils. Year 7 catch-up

funding has been used effectively to improve the standards achieved by targeted pupils in English and mathematics.

- Leaders and staff work well with parents. Regular contact, attendance at events and close working relationships between parents and staff are helping to improve the school. A very large majority of parents who made their views known during the inspection believe that the school is well led and managed. Almost all would recommend the school to another parent.
- Sidney Stringer Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) provides effective support and challenge to school leaders. The MAT has added capacity to the school and provided additional financial support and a range of services. Leaders and staff particularly value the professional development opportunities that are provided through the MAT.

Governance of the school

- Directors of the MAT and members of the interim executive board (IEB) provide strong governance. They use their knowledge, skills and experience to hold leaders to close account. They ask challenging questions and follow-up concerns. Those responsible for governance have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and work well with leaders to strive for further improvement.
- Those responsible for governance are highly ambitious for the school. Their meetings concentrate on the school's priorities and consistently focus on improving outcomes for all pupils.
- Those responsible for governance carry out their statutory duties efficiently. They ensure that staff and resources are used well to secure improvements, that additional funding has a positive impact, and that safeguarding procedures are robust.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Keeping children safe is seen as everyone's responsibility as part of the school's strong safeguarding culture.
- The designated safeguarding lead has ensured that staff are well trained and know what to do if they have a concern. Staff have an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding issues, including those that are pertinent to the local area. They know how to recognise signs that a pupil may be at risk.
- Staff work well with parents and outside agencies to help to protect pupils. Incidents are dealt with swiftly and robust procedures are followed closely.
- Pupils feel safe and they learn how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. For example, pupils are taught about the dangers of drugs and alcohol, gang culture, knife crime, grooming and misuse of the internet. They also learn about healthy relationships, child sexual exploitation, and the exploitation of children to sell drugs in 'county lines' activity.
- Appropriate checks are made on staff and visitors. Record-keeping is thorough, and information is stored securely. The school's single central record meets requirements.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- There is a positive climate for learning throughout the school. Staff consistently use clear and established strategies to help pupils to acquire knowledge. Consequently, teaching is good in every key stage.
- Staff have high expectations of all pupils and pupils are keen to learn. Pupils behave well in lessons. They listen attentively and work productively with each other and with staff. However, at times, pupils are not given regular opportunities to further develop their research, reasoning and leadership skills.
- Teachers plan sequences of lessons that build on prior learning. Activities are usually designed to help pupils with different starting points make good progress. Staff work well together and learning support assistants are well deployed. However, occasionally, pupils with SEND are not given the necessary guidance to help them to structure their learning and the most able pupils are not challenged to make substantial progress.
- Pupils take many opportunities to develop their communication, reading, writing and mathematical skills across the curriculum. Pupils are challenged to regularly use academic language and subject-specific terms. They are encouraged to read widely and often, they frequently write at length and they use their mathematical skills in a range of subjects.
- Teachers utilise their strong subject knowledge to support pupils' learning. Staff use questioning very well to check pupils' understanding and help them think carefully about the subjects that they are studying.
- Learning time is maximised and pupils are encouraged to complete activities thoroughly, accurately and at pace. Staff use a wide range of different resources to enhance pupils' learning experiences.
- Staff regularly give pupils thoughtful and developmental verbal and written feedback. Pupils use this, and self-assessment and peer-assessment, to help them to improve their work.
- The quality of work in pupils' books is good. Standards are improving, and work is usually very well presented. Pupils are proud of what they achieve.
- Teachers set homework in line with the school policy. It is used to consolidate learning and prepare pupils for work to come.
- Assessment is accurate. The school gives parents clear information about how their children are progressing, how well they are doing in relation to the expected standards and what they need to do to improve.
- The quality of teaching in tutor time is good. Activities are well planned and build on each other in a logically sequenced manner. They help to develop pupils' understanding of fundamental British values, promote literacy and numeracy and support learning in other subjects.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. As a result of high expectations, pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They are proud of their achievements and of their school.
- Pupils understand how their learning equips them for the next stage of their education and adult life. High-quality careers education, information, advice and guidance is rightly recognised as strong practice in the local area.
- Pupils are helped to develop their self-confidence. They consider issues in a thoughtful way and they are accepting of others. Pupils are respectful and caring and keen to treat everyone equally.
- Staff actively nurture all aspects of pupils' welfare. Physical health is promoted through opportunities for all pupils to take regular exercise and staff also support pupils' emotional well-being appropriately. Pupils make informed choices about maintaining their mental health and they can explain clearly how to keep themselves healthy.
- Pupils are well cared for and every pupil who made their views known during the inspection stated that there is an adult that they can talk to in the school if they have a concern. Pupils believe that staff will listen to them and that they can influence developments in the school. The 'student parliament', inclusion ambassadors, prefects, and pupils who lead activities in assemblies and tutor time make a substantial contribution to the school's positive ethos.
- Pupils feel safe. They have a clear understanding of the potential dangers in the local area and they know how to stay safe online.
- Staff and pupils deal effectively with the rare instances of bullying that take place. Pupils challenge unkindness and anti-bullying ambassadors work well with staff to prevent any forms of bullying. Pupils are confident that staff would help them to resolve any issues when they arise.
- School staff work well with alternative providers to ensure that personal development, behaviour and welfare are promoted effectively in off-site settings. Clear systems, close monitoring and regular communication help to ensure that pupils' needs are met in alternative provision.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good and improving. Expectations are high, and staff consistently apply the school's strategies to promote exemplary standards of behaviour. Consequently, the school is calm and orderly, and most pupils always behave very well in lessons and during social time.
- Leaders closely analyse information about behaviour in order to determine further actions to help pupils to improve their conduct. As a result, instances of inappropriate behaviour have reduced significantly since the previous inspection.

- The few pupils who find it more challenging to manage their own behaviour have been well supported to improve their conduct. Although the number of exclusions has decreased, a higher proportion of disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are excluded than other pupils.
- Pupils value their education, and most are rarely absent. The importance of regular attendance is promoted throughout the school and attendance has improved since the previous inspection. However, pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils are still absent more often than other pupils.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes for Year 11 pupils improved in 2017 but declined in 2018. In the past, most groups of pupils have not made sufficient progress in order to attain well. The most able pupils have not achieved the highest grades in the past.
- Current pupils are making much better progress than previous cohorts. Most groups of pupils are making good progress in a wide range of subjects in key stage 3. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are making better progress than key stage 4 pupils did in the past.
- As a result of improved teaching and targeted interventions, pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils are now making much better progress, particularly in key stage 3. However, the progress of these groups of pupils still does not match that of other pupils in key stage 4. Although diminishing, leaders are predicting that an attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils will remain.
- The most able pupils and middle prior attaining pupils are now making good progress in many subjects in key stage 3 and improved progress in key stage 4. However, boys continue to make slower progress than girls in both key stages.
- Pupils who join the school at the start of Year 7 achieve higher standards than those who join at other points in the school year. As an increasing number of pupils are joining the school at different points in the year, leaders have correctly identified improving the progress of this group of pupils as an area for development.
- Attainment in English and mathematics at the end of key stage 4 has been well below the national average since the last inspection. However, current pupils are making better progress than previous cohorts in these subjects. Standards are rising in English and mathematics.
- Outcomes in modern foreign languages and humanities have been well below the national averages since the last inspection. Current pupils are making better progress because of the better teaching they now receive. However, as a result of poor teaching in the past, leaders are not expecting good outcomes in these subjects in 2019.
- As a result of high-quality careers education, a strong focus on character development and good teaching, current pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education or training. All Year 11 pupils have meaningful destinations in place for when they leave key stage 4. Since the last inspection, almost all Year 11 and Year 13 pupils have moved onto purposeful and sustained destinations.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- The quality of sixth-form provision declined after the previous inspection but it is now improving rapidly. Leaders used their realistic self-evaluation to inform effective action to develop aspects of the 16 to 19 study programmes.
- Leaders are suitably ambitious to continue to improve the quality of the sixth form. It is now well led and managed, and all aspects of the provision are monitored closely to ensure that it is consistently good.
- Teaching has improved considerably. Effective strategies that are used elsewhere in the school are now used as a matter of course in the sixth form.
- Staff have strong subject knowledge and use this to plan engaging activities that interest and motivate students. This is reflected in students' enthusiasm and positive work ethic.
- Students are well supported, and their progress is closely monitored. Interventions are quickly put in place to help to ensure that they all realise their potential. As a result of this, and improved teaching, current Year 13 students are making better progress than last year's cohort.
- Although outcomes declined in 2018, all students gained A* to E passes at A Level for the second successive year. Most pupils made good progress, particularly in vocational courses and in A levels in art, product design and psychology.
- The small number of students who needed to resit GCSE mathematics in 2018 made good progress to achieve a grade 4 or above. No students were required to retake GCSE English, but all students are given opportunities to develop their written and spoken English across the curriculum.
- The school meets the requirements of the 16 to 19 study programmes. Students follow an appropriately tailored curriculum that includes work-related learning. All students undertake work experience, linked to their interests and aspirations.
- Students benefit from impartial careers advice and guidance, which are tailored to needs of individuals. The school works with external providers to ensure that students are well informed about the opportunities that are available to them.
- Retention rates are above the national average and, in recent years, almost all students move on to higher education, employment or training. All current Year 13 students have suitable offers of placements, including higher education or apprenticeships.
- Students' personal development and welfare are promoted very well. Students feel very well supported and they appreciate the additional assistance that staff provide to help them overcome challenges and difficulties. Students are confident and self-assured. They receive thoughtful guidance from staff to help them to prepare for life in modern Britain.
- Students benefit from an extensive range of extra-curricular activities and development opportunities. For example, they take part in the Duke of Edinburgh scheme, support younger pupils and participate in fund-raising activities for charities.

School details

Unique reference number	140366
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	10058457

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
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	663
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	17
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Julie Sullivan
Headteacher	Denise Burrows
Telephone number	024 7645 3121
Website	www.egacademy.org.uk
Email address	admin@egacademy.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 to 7 December 2016

Information about this school

- Ernesford Grange Community Academy is a smaller-than-average secondary school with a small sixth form. There are currently no students in Year 12, but leaders plan to recruit Year 12 students for the next academic year.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and who speak English as an additional language are below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above average.
- The proportion of pupils with SEND, including those who have an education, health and care plan, is well above average.

- The school has a specially resourced provision that caters for a very small number of pupils who have autism spectrum disorders.
- A small number of Year 11 pupils attend alternative provision at Coventry College or Educ8 Academy Coventry on a part-time basis. A very small number of pupils are educated at home by staff from Coventry's Hospital Education Service.
- The school is part of the Sidney Stringer MAT. Aspects of governance are provided by the trust and the school's IEB. The IEB is accountable to the MAT board of directors. The chair of the IEB is a director on the MAT board and the chair of the MAT board is a member of the IEB.
- There are five schools within the MAT and each school has its own headteacher. Senior leaders and those responsible for governance work in close partnership across the MAT. The executive principal is also the chief executive officer of the trust.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors made short visits to 46 lessons. Most of these observations took place with school leaders.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils formally and informally and considered the 19 responses to the pupil questionnaire.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteachers, other leaders and members of staff. The lead inspector analysed the 42 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- The lead inspector met with two directors of the Sidney Stringer MAT, and three members of the IEB, two of whom are also directors of the MAT.
- The lead inspector considered the 39 responses and the 18 free-text comments to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View. The views of a small number of parents who contacted the inspection team or Ofsted directly were also considered.
- Various documents were scrutinised, including the school’s self-evaluation, and information about pupils’ progress, behaviour and attendance. Documents relating to safeguarding were checked and inspectors looked at published information on the school’s website.

Inspection team

Simon Mosley, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Peter Kent	Ofsted Inspector
Sara Arkle	Ofsted Inspector
Clare Considine	Ofsted Inspector

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