

# Inspection of The Corsham School

The Tynings, Corsham, Wiltshire SN13 9DF

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Inspection dates: 11–12 September 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Sixth-form provision	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Leaders have high expectations for pupils. They want all pupils to do their best and they make this message very clear.

The headteacher is a passionate leader. His desire for pupils to succeed in life, academically and socially, is clear for everyone to see. He has an 'open door' policy so that pupils, parents and staff can discuss any issues that arise. Everyone knows that their voice will be heard, and things will be resolved effectively if there is a problem.

Pupils behave well in and out of lessons. They are respectful of each other. They understand what happens if they are rude or disruptive. As a result, there is a calm and orderly atmosphere in the school. Pupils learn well in a secure, friendly and supportive setting. Older students provide extra help for younger pupils when they need it.

Leaders want pupils to excel beyond their lessons. Pupils are given a wide choice of activities. For example, they take part in silversmithing, mindful meditation, creative history and yoga at lunchtime and after school.

Staff know pupils well and make sure that they feel comfortable and cared for. Consequently, pupils feel safe and are safe. Pupils show tolerance to others. They know that bullying is not allowed. When it does happen, staff deal with it swiftly.

## **What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?**

Pupils learn a rich and broad curriculum from Year 7 onward. Teaching takes place in well-equipped rooms with specialist teachers. Pupils develop knowledge well in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Pupils are given good advice about which GCSE subjects to choose. When pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), need extra help, staff provide this efficiently.

Leaders want as many pupils as possible to succeed in the English Baccalaureate. Pupils of every ability can choose the necessary subjects. At the same time, pupils can continue to study creative and artistic subjects. The proportion of pupils completing the English Baccalaureate is rising because more pupils are choosing to study languages.

Most curriculum leaders have planned skilfully what and how pupils should learn. Pupils' good behaviour makes a strong contribution to their ability to learn. This helps pupils achieve well in their GCSEs and A levels. Each year, pupils are gaining better results. They go on to their new destinations with confidence when they leave school.

Curriculum leaders know what pupils need to achieve by the end of their courses.

However, in a few subjects, such as mathematics and art, leaders have not thought deeply enough about how pupils get there.

Pupils, including those with SEND, listen attentively and are prepared to try, even when work is hard. Sometimes, in English and languages, the work required of pupils does not match leaders' high expectations. This applies to pupils of every ability.

The great majority of pupils come to school regularly. Even so, there are a few disadvantaged pupils who struggle to attend. Leaders have not done enough to understand why this happens.

Pupils learn about healthy relationships and how to keep themselves safe. They know the importance of being fit and eating well. Pupils enjoy debating and discussing issues, such as conservation. One pupil commented that a large statue of Buddha in the school grounds is the 'pride and joy' of the school. This sensitive comment is typical of pupils' respect for other cultures.

Students in the sixth form study mainly A levels. When students need to retake English or mathematics GCSE, they are taught well and achieve success. Students experience employment and receive sensible career guidance. They find suitable places at university, in apprenticeships or other forms of training, as well as jobs, when they leave.

The trustees of the multi-academy trust (MAT) have a clear vision for the school. Governors and school leaders are considerate of teachers' workload. They do not ask for excessive amounts of information. Governors are not afraid to ask tricky questions of school leaders when they are concerned about anything. They, and school leaders, work with parents to improve pupils' education and opportunities.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff are vigilant in looking for any signs that a pupil may be vulnerable. They understand the requirement to inform the safeguarding leaders if they have concerns. When this happens, safeguarding leaders respond quickly and efficiently.

Leaders make sure that pupils' mental health needs are met by employing additional specialist staff. In addition, leaders work well with local authority staff and the police to protect the pupils most at risk of harm.

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

## **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- In art and mathematics, the curriculum content is not organised as well as in other subjects. Curriculum plans do not provide teachers with enough detail about what pupils need to learn and when. Curriculum leaders have not considered carefully enough how pupils gain more knowledge by building on what they have already learned. Leaders need to ensure that the content of all curriculum plans is carefully sequenced and effectively delivered.
- The headteacher has raised teachers' expectations. This has encouraged teachers to increase the sophistication of the work pupils are given. However, teachers should go further and ensure the curriculum in Years 7 and 8 is more demanding, especially in English and languages. Leaders must ensure that teachers raise the bar continuously as pupils gain more confidence in their learning and recall.
- The overall attendance for the school is good but there are a few disadvantaged pupils who do not attend as regularly as others. This stops them from achieving as well as they could. Leaders have not explored systematically the reasons for their non-attendance. As a result, leaders have not dealt with this issue well enough. Governors must review the spending of the pupil premium rigorously and so ensure that it is helping disadvantaged pupils to attend well and achieve more.

## **How can I feed back my views?**

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

## **Further information**

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	136611
<b>Local authority</b>	Wiltshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	10088311
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,101
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	210
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Mike Large
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rodney Bell
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.corsham.wilts.sch.uk">http://www.corsham.wilts.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	21–22 March 2017

## Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in April 2017.
- The school does not use alternative provision.
- The school caters for the following types of SEND: specific learning difficulties (dyslexia), significant learning difficulties, social & communication difficulties, sensory impairment and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

## Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- Inspectors visited lessons jointly with senior leaders and scrutinised samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors talked with groups of pupils from key stages 3, 4 and 5, as well as

with other pupils informally across the site.

- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and curriculum leaders and members of the governing body and trust.
- Documentary and other types of information were evaluated, including evidence relating to safeguarding.
- Inspectors took account of the 221 responses and 181 comments on the online Parent View survey, the 102 responses to the online pupil survey and the 49 responses to the staff online survey.
- English, mathematics, history, languages, art and drama were considered as part of this inspection.

### **Inspection team**

Kathy Maddocks, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Deborah Wring	Ofsted Inspector
Christine Raeside	Ofsted Inspector
Teresa Hill	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Thompson	Ofsted Inspector

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