

Inspection of Nicholas Chamberlaine School

Bulkington Road, Bedworth, Warwickshire CV12 9EA

Inspection dates: 13–14 November 2019

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Sixth-form provision

Good

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

A new headteacher and leadership team have brought many changes to Nicholas Chamberlaine. Pupils told us how the school was improving. Behaviour is getting better and we saw pupils behaving sensibly and respectfully in their brand-new building.

Leaders want the school to feel like a family. Kindness and gratitude are part of everyday expectations. Pupils feel safe and, although bullying does happen, pupils are confident that someone will deal with it. Pupils told us that teachers care about them and want to help them do their best.

In lessons, pupils behave responsibly. They follow teachers' instructions. On occasions, pupils work too slowly on their activities.

Pupils have not achieved well enough in the past. Leaders are tackling this.

Leaders and teachers are very ambitious for pupils' wider development, offering lots of clubs and activities. Year 7 pupils are part of an exciting and innovative music project. Everyone is learning to play an instrument and will take part in performances later in the year. Parents and carers of Year 7 pupils tell us that their children love the opportunities they have been given.

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

In recent years, pupils have not made enough progress in a wide range of subjects, including English, mathematics and science. Leaders recognise this and are leading changes to the curriculum, teaching and the management of behaviour. Staff and pupils told us that the school was getting better. The school's ethos of proud traditions, wide horizons and high achievement lies at the heart of all leadership decisions.

All leaders are excited and engaged by their work on developing the curriculum. They are passionate about their subjects and want the pupils to learn and achieve well. Subject leaders were able to clearly explain their vision for learning in their subject. They have planned learning where topics are carefully ordered so that pupils build up their knowledge and skills.

However, these new curriculum plans are often at an early stage of development. For example, in English, the new more-challenging curriculum will not begin until January.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They are good at explaining new ideas to pupils. There are some excellent examples, for example in French, of teachers helping pupils to remember things over the long term. But this was not consistent across all subjects and links to leaders' work on planning the curriculum. In mathematics, pupils could remember broad topic areas but not the detail they need

to answer examination questions.

There is considerable variation between departments in how they assess, identify and act on gaps in pupils' knowledge. Senior leaders recognise this and have planned improvements but for later in the year.

There is also variation in the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In many subjects, good levels of challenge for pupils with SEND are planned. However, teachers are not consistently effective in helping these pupils to be successful.

Leaders plan well for pupils' personal development. The curriculum extends beyond the academic. It aims to build strength of character, with the focus on wide horizons and proud traditions. For example, all pupils participated in recent Remembrance Day activities. Pupils made and sold ceramic poppies in the local community. Pupils get good careers advice to help them decide what sort of course or apprenticeship will suit them best.

Pupils do not attend school as regularly as they should. The school introduced a number of strategies to try to improve attendance last year. These helped the very poorest attenders come to school more. However, overall attendance is still low.

The school currently places 25 students in alternative provision for part or all of the week. This means that a large number of pupils will not have access to the broadest curriculum that would be available to them at the school. Leaders recognise this and are reviewing how best to support these pupils and keep them in school.

The sixth form is good. It is well led and educational outcomes are improving. There is a broad curriculum offer, allowing students to study both academic and vocational courses. Teachers have expert knowledge of the courses they teach. At times, students do not have enough opportunities to apply the skills they are learning. Students are happy at school. They are supported, cared for and treated with respect. There are a growing number of extra-curricular opportunities. Students receive effective and impartial careers advice. Students are increasingly ambitious in their choice of where they go after leaving the sixth form.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

A positive culture of safeguarding is very well established at the school. There is a coordinated approach to all safeguarding activities. Safeguarding leaders are confident and hold a detailed professional overview. They rigidly follow guidelines when recruiting new staff. Safeguarding policies are regularly updated, based on the trust's policy. Training is well planned and delivered regularly. Staff know what to do if they have a concern. Governors have a good understanding of local safeguarding concerns, including the 'Prevent' duty and county lines. Pupils are taught how to keep themselves safe. For example, they learn about cyber bullying and good mental health. Pupils

know who to speak to if they have any worries or concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all subjects have a well-planned, challenging and coherent curriculum. Teaching is sometimes not helping pupils to remember what they have learned. This means that pupils are not learning as well as they could do. Senior leaders are planning a series of training activities to help teachers with this, while also supporting staff workload.
- Pupils with SEND are not achieving as well as they should. This is because what is being planned for them is not sufficiently challenging and, even when there is challenge planned, some teachers are not able to support pupils well. Some teachers and subjects have effective strategies and these should be shared more widely across the school.
- Teachers do not have a clear enough view of how well pupils are understanding what is planned and taught. Therefore, teachers are not able to use this information to help inform their teaching to help pupils embed and use their knowledge fluently. Leaders have plans in place to provide teachers with this support.
- Pupils do not attend school regularly enough, particularly those pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils. Leaders know that if pupils do not regularly attend, they will not make the progress that is expected of them. Leaders need to continue to develop strategies to improve attendance, particularly for pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, and embed those protocols that are already having an impact.
- Too many pupils, including pupils with SEND, do not currently complete their education at Nicholas Chamberlaine. Instead, they attend alternative provision at other institutions. This limits the breadth of curriculum available for these pupils. Leaders have begun to explore strategies to make the school's curriculum more inclusive and reduce the number of pupils who require alternative provision.

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

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| Unique reference number | 139936 |
| Local authority | Warwickshire |
| Inspection number | 10111818 |
| Type of school | Secondary comprehensive |
| School category | Academy sponsor-led |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 18 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 1,107 |
| Of which, number on roll in the sixth form | 103 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | Trevor Edinborough |
| Headteacher | Louise Newman |
| Website | www.nicholaschamberlaine-gst.org/ |
| Date of previous inspection | 17–18 June 2015 |

Information about this school

- The school currently uses full-time and part-time alternative provision at Flexible Learning, Positive About Young People, Dare to Dream, Academy 21, Virtual Schools Tutor Coventry Social Services, Orion and Values Academy.

Information about this inspection

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

- We met with the headteacher and members of the school leadership team. We spoke with pupils, both formally and informally, about their work and school life. We met with the chair of the improvement board and three other governors, and held a telephone conversation with the chair of the trust.
- We evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding at the school. The school's single central record was reviewed. We met with the designated safeguarding lead,

scrutinised safeguarding documentation and spoke to pupils and staff.

- No pupils or staff responded to the Ofsted online surveys but we considered the views of 79 parents who responded to the Ofsted Parent View survey.
- We looked in detail at English, mathematics, science, history, French and computing. In these subjects, we held meetings with subject leaders and with small groups of teachers, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and spoke to pupils.

Inspection team

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|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Deborah James, lead inspector | Ofsted Inspector |
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| David Hermit | Ofsted Inspector |
| Nicola Walters | Ofsted Inspector |
| Marie McMahon | Ofsted Inspector |

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