

Inspection of Charnwood College

Thorpe Hill, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE11 4SQ

Inspection dates: 8–9 January 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Good

Sixth-form provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud of their school. They are kind, respectful and supportive of each other. Pupils are happy, confident and polite. The school is a friendly community where all are given a warm welcome. Pupils listen to their teachers and get on with their work. There is a harmonious learning atmosphere throughout the school. Pupils know that their school is improving.

Leaders are committed to getting the best out of every pupil. The school is inclusive. Pupils who join the school part way through their education are supported well.

The curriculum is well planned in some subjects and this is helping pupils to learn more. However, in some subjects, the curriculum does not help pupils to know and remember more. Not all pupils achieve as well as they should in all subjects.

Pupils behave well. They said that bullying is unusual and, if it does happen, adults deal with it quickly. Pupils feel safe.

There is a wide range of clubs and activities, including sports and arts. Pupils appreciate these and all take up the opportunities provided through the weekly Wednesday enrichment sessions.

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

Leaders have improved many aspects of the school. They have introduced 'the Charnwood College way'. This sets out clear expectations of staff to deliver the curriculum. This is creating a positive learning culture across the school. Leaders consider the well-being of staff when thinking of new ways of working.

Leaders have emended the curriculum structure. It now ensures that all pupils experience a broad range of subjects. Some older pupils did not study the full curriculum when they were in Year 9. Leaders have ensured that these pupils have experienced some of the knowledge they previously missed through the extensive personal development programme. Many pupils continue to study either French or Spanish and history or geography to GCSE level.

Leaders have begun to develop curriculum plans that help pupils to learn and remember more. In some subjects, the curriculum is well planned and sequenced. For example, in English, the curriculum builds on what pupils know and provides opportunities for pupils to revisit their knowledge. This helps pupils to remember subject content. However, curriculum planning is at an early stage in too many subject areas, including mathematics and science.

Many teachers have good subject knowledge and are skilled in delivering their subject. Some teachers check that pupils understand what is being taught. However, this is inconsistent. It is not done systematically or frequently enough for teachers to know what pupils have learned. Not all teachers adapt the curriculum when pupils

do not understand. Sometimes, teachers move on to new content before pupils understand what they are learning.

Some teachers encourage pupils to think deeply. For example, in a history lesson, older pupils had to quickly read several sources of information and develop questions. However, not all teachers have high expectations of all pupils. They do not always set work that is demanding enough.

Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) and disadvantaged pupils, have not achieved as well as they could in the past. Improvements to the curriculum and teachers' delivery of their subjects mean that pupils are now achieving better.

Behaviour has improved considerably. Leaders have introduced clear strategies for managing pupils' behaviour. Staff follow these consistently. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Short-term exclusions are reducing but remain high. Attendance has improved, although it remains too low for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND.

Leaders plan well for pupils' personal development. Pupils enjoy developing their wider skills and experiences. Pupils learn about personal, social and health issues. They also consider what it means to be a good citizen and to be tolerant of others. Pupils value the careers guidance they receive.

There is a broad range of academic and vocational courses in the sixth form. Almost all students progress to university or apprenticeships. Some earn a scholarship to an overseas university, for example for basketball. The curriculum is well planned and sequenced so that students gain the knowledge and skills they need. Teachers have strong subject knowledge and present information clearly. They frequently check how well students understand new ideas and skills. Students are given work that is demanding. Students achieve particularly well in vocational subjects. Students attend well.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

A positive culture of safeguarding is very well established throughout the school. Safeguarding leaders are knowledgeable and effective. Staff are well trained and know how to spot the signs that a pupil might be at risk of harm. Leaders are swift to seek advice from external agencies when a pupil or family needs extra help.

Pupils are taught how to stay safe through the personal development programme.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Subject leaders are at different stages of planning and sequencing pupils' learning. This means that, in some subjects, such as science and mathematics, the planning is not yet coherent. Pupils are not encouraged to connect knowledge. Rather, pupils often see new ideas as a series of disconnected facts. Leaders should ensure that all subjects are well planned and sequenced so that pupils know and remember more.
- Some teachers do not check what pupils know and can do quickly or often enough. This means that they are not aware if pupils have acquired or mastered the knowledge being taught. Leaders should ensure that teachers systematically check what pupils know and can do so that pupils learn new knowledge and develop their understanding effectively.
- Some pupils find their work too straightforward. This means that they do not achieve as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that teachers have the highest expectations of what pupils can achieve by embedding appropriately demanding work in their planning.

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 are the school and you are 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

Unique reference number	141874
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10121221
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	469
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	83
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	David Ross
Principal	Alastair O'Connor
Website	www.charnwoodcollege.org/
Date of previous inspection	26–27 September 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The principal joined the school shortly after the previous inspection. Many of the senior and subject leaders are new as well.
- The school makes use of the following alternative provider for a small number of pupils: Loughborough Inclusion Partnership.

Information about this inspection

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

- We undertook deep dives into mathematics, English, science and modern foreign languages. This involved meeting with subject leaders, visits to a sample of lessons, a scrutiny of books and other work produced by pupils and discussions

with teachers and with groups of pupils from the lessons visited. Most of the lesson visits were carried out jointly with senior or subject leaders.

- We held meetings with senior and subject leaders, teachers, support staff, trustees and officers of the trust, and members of the local governing body.
- We held informal and formal discussions with pupils and observed pupils' interactions during social times.
- We observed the work of the school and scrutinised a wide range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, action plans and evaluations, attendance and behaviour records, safeguarding files, recruitment checks and minutes of meetings of the governing body.
- We considered the 71 responses from parents and carers who completed Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, and the 58 free-text responses. Thirty-five members of staff completed Ofsted's online staff survey. There were no responses to Ofsted's pupil survey. However, we did consider a pupil survey that the school recently conducted.

Inspection team

Jamie Clarke, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Ian Colling

Ofsted Inspector

Vanessa Stanley

Ofsted Inspector

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.

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/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2020