

Inspection of Ashby School

Nottingham Road, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire LE65 1DT

Inspection dates: 22–23 October 2019

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Good

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Sixth-form provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils, including in the sixth form, know that teachers want them to do well. Teachers are fair and consistent. They expect pupils to behave well and lessons run smoothly. Pupils appreciate being able to get on with their work. They understand the consequences if they misbehave. Pupils attend well but they do not always get to class on time.

Most pupils enjoy school. They get on well with each other and with their teachers. Adults resolve any issues with bullying quickly.

Pupils enjoy their work in most subjects but find it too easy in others. They want to achieve well and many of them do, particularly in the sixth form. Some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) told us that some teachers do not understand their needs well enough or know how to help them.

Sixth-form students value their leadership responsibilities, for example as part of the head student team, while Year 11 pupils participate in the National Citizen Service.

Pupils do not have enough opportunities to learn about what it means to be British, or how to stay safe. They feel safe in school but do not understand all the risks they may face in life.

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

Across most curriculum areas, particularly in the sixth form, the quality of education is good. Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. They ensure that all pupils can choose from a wide range of subjects. For example, many pupils are encouraged to follow a language course.

Teaching in almost all subjects supports leaders' ambitions. Curriculum leaders work closely with teachers to plan effective learning. This is particularly the case in English and mathematics. In English, the curriculum is broad and challenging. Teachers have thought carefully about the most important knowledge that pupils need, and ensure that they revisit learning frequently. Teachers use their skills to help pupils make links between different topics. They test pupils' understanding through skilled questioning. When they need to, they change their plans so that pupils' knowledge is secure.

Teachers ensure that pupils can recall their learning. For instance, we saw Year 13 students recalling the order of battles that make up the Wars of the Roses. In French, teachers frequently reinforce key vocabulary. Teachers enthuse pupils for their subjects. Many sixth-form chemistry students, for example, talked to us about wanting to study the subject at university. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. They usually know what they need to do to improve. Some teachers do not encourage pupils to use spelling and grammar accurately. They do not always

correct spelling errors, which pupils then repeat. Teachers do not always think about how to meet the needs of pupils with SEND.

In a few subjects, for example history and chemistry, the curriculum is not demanding enough. When this is the case, pupils do not achieve as well as they should.

Until recently, the curriculum for pupils' personal development was poorly organised. It did not build well enough on pupils' previous learning. Pupils cannot always remember important knowledge. They do not know enough about how to stay safe. Pupils told us that they would like more opportunities to discuss and debate important issues. They feel that lesson time and form time are sometimes wasted because teachers do not plan or deliver these sessions well. They do not have enough opportunities to talk about relevant spiritual and moral issues. Leaders have listened to these concerns and have begun to reorganise this work.

Leaders have devised a new life-skills programme for sixth-form students. Students learn about age-appropriate issues such as leaving home and being safe drivers. There are also opportunities for students to be involved in the local community. However, Year 13 students have gaps in their life-skills learning that are not addressed by the new programme. In both key stages 4 and 5, too few pupils have the chance to take part in work experience.

A small number of pupils receive all or part of their education through other providers. Leaders make sure that these pupils follow appropriate courses. They check these pupils' attendance but do not always record it accurately.

Senior leaders and governors are not complacent about the quality of education they provide. Their plans for improvement are appropriate. New leaders in the sixth form and the coordinator for pupils with SEND have ambitious plans to improve their areas. Senior leaders are considerate of staff well-being and staff feel well supported. However, governors have not ensured that pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils are as successful as they should be.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Senior leaders and governors have not met their legal responsibilities to safeguard children.

Leaders have not used their training to keep pupils safe. They do not always follow up concerns raised about a pupil's welfare or seek timely external advice. Pupils' safeguarding records lack detail and some of leaders' actions are not recorded. Leaders do not complete risk assessments for pupils who are particularly vulnerable.

Leaders do not ensure that attendance registers are coded accurately. For example, some pupils were coded as being educated off site when they were actually on site.

Leaders have not considered well enough the risks posed by the split site. Staff do not always supervise pupils closely when they cross the road between sites. They do not ensure that pupils get to class as quickly as possible. The procedures to check who is on site, for example in the event of a fire, are not tight enough.

Leaders ensure that staff are suitable to work with children.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders and governors have not fulfilled their statutory duties to ensure that the school's safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. They do not check their procedures well enough. They should ensure that all aspects of safeguarding are well managed, checked and reviewed regularly. This includes attendance registers, risk assessments and road, site and fire safety.
- Leaders must ensure that they take timely action in response to concerns and that pupils' records are complete, are detailed and contain all the relevant information.
- Pupils, including those in the sixth form, do not understand all the risks they face or how to manage them. Leaders should ensure that there are more opportunities to teach pupils about safety. They must make sure that pupils know how to protect themselves and reduce the risks they may face.
- Governors should ensure that they have the information, skills and training necessary to be effective in their roles, so that they can check that safeguarding is effective, and that pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils are achieving well.
- Some curriculum plans are not ambitious enough for pupils with SEND. Leaders must ensure that teachers have the training, skills and information necessary to be able to meet these pupils' needs.
- In some subjects, the curriculum is not sufficiently demanding. Leaders must make sure that the curriculum provides all pupils with an appropriate level of challenge, so that they all achieve well.
- The key stage 4 personal development programme does not have enough opportunities for pupils to learn about spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues. Leaders must check that the newly devised programmes in key stages 4 and 5 are implemented well, so that pupils are fully ready for life in modern Britain.
- Pupils in key stage 4 and many students in key stage 5 do not have the opportunity to take part in work experience. Leaders should consider how they can offer all pupils a first-hand experience of a workplace.

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	138833
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10110093
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	14 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,774
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	630
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Elaine Blunt
Headteacher	Geoff Staniforth
Website	www.ashbyschool.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	14 April 2018

Information about this school

- Since the last inspection, a new headteacher and a new deputy headteacher have been appointed. The positions were made permanent in September 2019.
- The school uses seven alternative providers. These are Janus Learning, Chameleon Construction, Cape Cabin, T.E.C.K., Elite Tuition, Melton Learning Hub, and Burton Albion Football Club.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(2) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

- We met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. We met with the coordinator for the provision for pupils with SEND, the leader with oversight of the pupil premium funding and the director of sixth form.
- We met with five members of the governing body, including the chair and the vice-chair.
- We met with teachers and support staff.
- We met with groups of pupils from each year group.
- We did deep dives in six subjects: mathematics, English, chemistry, history, French, and design and technology. We met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, looked at pupils' workbooks, met with pupils, and met with teachers of the lessons we visited.
- We observed the behaviour of pupils during social times and spoke with pupils informally.
- We met with the designated safeguarding lead, to discuss safeguarding. We also spoke with staff and pupils about safeguarding. We looked at documentation relating to safeguarding, the school's system for recruiting staff and the school's single central register.
- We spoke with four of the school's alternative providers.
- We reviewed a range of documentation, including self-evaluation of the school's performance, curriculum plans and information concerning pupils' attendance and behaviour.

Inspection team

Rachel Tordoff, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Laurence Reilly	Ofsted Inspector
Imtiaz Patel	Ofsted Inspector
Alison Davies	Ofsted Inspector
Russell Barr	Ofsted Inspector
Ellenor Beighton	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