

Inspection of Nicholas Chamberlaine School

Bulkington Road, Bedworth, Warwickshire CV12 9EA

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 November 2021

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

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy at Nicholas Chamberlaine. Adults take the time to get to know pupils and their families really well. Pupils appreciate this and have strong relationships with their teachers. This helps them to feel safe. If bullying happens, pupils know whom to speak to. They are confident that adults will sort it out quickly.

Leaders have created an inclusive culture. Diversity and difference are celebrated. For example, the school's houses were recently renamed after positive historical figures, such as Harriet Tubman. Pupils played an active role in this change.

Pupils enjoy learning lots of different subjects. Most achieve well. However, some teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils' behaviour. This means that occasionally, poor behaviour is unchallenged and is allowed to slow down learning. In addition, some pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) do not get the support they need to do well.

There is an impressive range of opportunities for pupils to develop their interests. These include competitive basketball, dance groups, computing clubs and many more. In addition, leaders make sure that all pupils get to take part in a wide range of activities. In Years 7 to 9, for instance, all pupils learn a musical instrument.

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

Leaders are ambitious for pupils and the community they serve. They have designed a curriculum that aims to prepare all pupils for future success. Leaders, for instance, have recently taken action to ensure that all pupils study a broad range of subjects from Year 7 to Year 9. In addition, leaders make sure, as part of the school's 'Griffin Promise', that subject plans include a rich set of opportunities. These include visits to museums and art galleries. These opportunities support pupils' cultural and social development well.

Curriculum plans in some subjects set out clearly the essential knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. In French and mathematics, for instance, teachers understand the exact content they need to teach, and when to teach it. Where this happens, pupils achieve well. However, this information is not set out precisely enough in all subjects. Because of this, some teachers are unclear about precisely what to teach and when. When this happens, pupils struggle to remember what they have been taught.

Teachers, including those in the sixth form, have good subject knowledge. They explain things clearly. In the sixth form, relationships between students and their teachers are strong. This supports learning well. When students, for example, are unsure of something in lessons, they feel confident to ask their teachers for help. Teachers then provide quick and effective support. This stops students from falling behind. However, some pupils in Years 7 to 11 do not get the help they need in

lessons quickly enough. This is because some teachers do not spot when pupils are stuck.

Leaders have carefully considered how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected pupils. When pupils returned to school, subject leaders made sensible changes to the order of their plans. In addition, leaders extended the school day. These changes are allowing pupils to catch up on the content they missed due to the pandemic. Pupils preparing for examinations told inspectors how much they valued this additional help.

Leaders have appropriate checks in place for identifying pupils who are at the early stages of reading. They ensure that these pupils get the help they need from skilled adults. This supports these pupils to become more confident and fluent readers.

Leaders ensure that teachers have the information they need to support pupils with SEND. This information includes helpful and appropriate strategies on how to best support pupils. Some teachers use this information well, but others do not. This means that while some pupils with SEND, particularly those with an education, health and care plan, achieve well, other pupils with SEND do not do as well as they should.

Most teachers apply the school's behaviour policy well. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and conduct. Pupils respond well to these high expectations. When routines are clear, pupils make sure that they follow them. However, some teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour and conduct are too low. Occasionally, poor behaviour in lessons goes unchallenged. This slows learning.

Sixth-form students are positive role models for younger pupils. They are highly motivated to do well and take responsibility for their learning. Leaders ensure that students are well prepared for the next stages of their education. Recently, for example, pupils attended lectures at a university to find out about a range of different careers.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding. Leaders work closely with families and external agencies to make sure that all staff know and understand the 'lived experiences' of pupils. Staff know pupils well. This means that staff are alert to the signs that a pupil may need help. They pass on concerns quickly.

Leaders are very aware of the potential risks to pupils. They ensure that pupils get the information they need to help them keep safe. For example, as part of the computing curriculum, pupils learn how to keep themselves safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Curriculum plans in some subjects do not set out the essential knowledge that leaders expect pupils to know and remember. This is a barrier to pupils knowing more and remembering more. Leaders should develop curriculum plans to clearly set out the knowledge, vocabulary and skills that pupils are expected to learn in each subject.
- Some teachers do not check pupils' knowledge in lessons well enough. This means that teachers do not always know when pupils are stuck or need additional help. Leaders should ensure that teachers know how to check learning effectively in their subjects, so that teachers are able to give all pupils the help they need.
- The needs of some pupils with SEND are not fully met. This means that some pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that all teachers know how to successfully implement the strategies set out in pupils' individual support plans.
- Some staff do not have high enough expectations of pupils' behaviour and conduct. This means that poor behaviour is not consistently challenged. Leaders should ensure that their expectations of pupils' behaviour and conduct are commonly understood and consistently applied by all staff.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	139936
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10201064
Type of school	Secondary
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	1,209
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	112
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Trevor Edinborough
Headteacher	Alison Ramsay
Website	www.nicholaschamberlaine-gst.org
Date of previous inspection	13 and 14 November 2019, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses two registered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

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

This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders, and have taken that into account in their evaluation.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher, deputy headteacher and other senior leaders. They met with representatives of governance, including a member of the board of trustees and the chair of the local governing body. The chair of the local governing body is also the chief executive officer of the trust.
- Inspectors did deep dives in mathematics, science, geography, French, art and music. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders and teachers, visited a sample of lessons, reviewed pupils' work and spoke with some pupils about their learning.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents. These included: school policies, safeguarding records, curriculum plans, information about pupils' attendance, and behaviour records.
- Through discussions with leaders, pupils and staff, inspectors considered how effectively pupils are safeguarded. An inspector also looked at documents related to safeguarding, including the school's single central record of checks on staff.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in a range of different classes and at different times of the day. They talked to pupils informally about bullying, behaviour and extra-curricular opportunities.
- Inspectors considered responses to the online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. This included free-text comments. Inspectors also looked at responses to Ofsted's online staff survey and responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

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