

Inspection of Countesthorpe Academy

Winchester Road, Countesthorpe LE8 5PR

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 July 2022

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Sixth-form provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Most pupils understand and endeavour to demonstrate Countesthorpe Academy's three values to 'show respect, develop resilience and achieve success'. Nonetheless, some pupils do not demonstrate the school's values in their daily behaviour as well as they should.

Staff are ambitious about the behaviours and attitudes that they want pupils to exhibit. Most pupils behave sensibly when they are in lessons. A small number of pupils do not behave well enough. This can lead to some learning being disrupted.

Pupils feel safe. They reported that bullying does not happen often, but if it does, staff sort it out quickly. Pupils told inspectors that there is always an adult they can speak to if they need help and support.

Sixth-form students are enthusiastic learners and act as good role models for younger pupils, for example by supporting them with their reading. Students achieve well, and leaders are ambitious for their future destinations.

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

Leaders have improved this school considerably from when it first joined the multi-academy trust. They have a clear vision and high ambitions for all pupils.

Leaders have begun to put in place an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In most subjects, the curriculum is appropriately structured, and most teachers are clear about the content that they should deliver. However, in some subjects, the curriculum is not clearly structured enough to ensure that pupils can build their knowledge and skills effectively.

Teachers start lessons by revisiting important content from previous learning. For example, in geography, pupils are given checklists to support their revision of key knowledge.

Teachers use assessment effectively in most subjects to check what pupils have learned. Some subject areas are still developing the use of assessment to check learning and misconceptions. In these subjects, teachers do not routinely identify gaps in pupils' knowledge.

Teachers have high expectations in some subject areas. Pupils meet these expectations by producing high-quality work. However, this is not always the case. In some classes, teachers' expectations are not high enough. In some lessons, pupils do not produce work of a high enough quality or take enough pride in their work.

Teachers identify and understand the additional needs of pupils with SEND. Pupils' information records help teachers to support pupils to access the full curriculum. However, these plans do not always contain specific targets to enable the support to be clear and have more impact.

Students enjoy their sixth-form experience. The curriculum in the sixth form allows students to study courses that meet their interests and aspirations. Teachers have good subject knowledge and provide supportive and timely feedback. Students enjoy positive relationships with their teachers.

Leaders promote a love of reading across the school. Ensuring that all pupils can read is a priority. Pupils who have fallen behind in reading are identified quickly. They receive a well-structured programme of support.

Leaders have improved the systems and processes to deal with behaviour, but not all staff use them consistently well. While many pupils are well behaved, a minority disrupt other pupils' learning.

The personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum is well planned and sequenced. However, it is in the early stages of implementation. The curriculum covers all aspects of PSHE, including, for example, what it means to be British and how to become responsible citizens. However, pupils struggle to remember the content of what they have been taught. Pupils do not always display the qualities that the curriculum is advocating about respecting others.

Pupils enjoy enriching experiences. They benefit from a range of activities, including sports, science and art clubs. Pupils have an increasing number of leadership opportunities in school, such as a good citizen action group and Stephen Lawrence ambassadors.

Staff are proud to work at this school. They appreciate the support of the trust and school leaders. They feel well led. Those responsible for governance understand the vision of the school. Staff say that leaders carefully manage their workload and consider their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

All staff have been well trained in safeguarding and understand their responsibility to keep pupils safe. Staff pass on any concerns they have.

Safeguarding leaders understand the local risks to pupils in the school. When concerns are raised, leaders act appropriately to keep pupils safe. However, they do not always record in enough detail the actions they take. Registers are not always kept up to date. The single central record is maintained well. All necessary checks to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children are completed before a member of staff begins working at the school.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The implementation of the curriculum varies in quality between subjects and within subjects. Although strong practice exists, there is weaker practice also. Assessment and feedback are inconsistent. Teachers' expectations of the quality of pupils' work in books also vary greatly. Consequently, in some subjects, pupils do not learn as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is implemented consistently well throughout the school.
- Some of the pupil information records for pupils with SEND do not identify the support that they need to access the full curriculum. Leaders need to ensure that all pupils are supported to access the curriculum.
- Not all staff consistently manage pupils' behaviour well. A small number of pupils are disruptive. This leads to some learning being interrupted. Leaders must ensure that all members of staff follow a consistent approach to managing and improving pupils' behaviour.
- Many aspects of the personal development curriculum, such as fundamental British values; spiritual, moral, social and cultural education; and relationships and sex education, are planned but not well embedded. Some pupils do not develop a secure understanding of these aspects of the curriculum. Leaders must ensure that personal development lessons are valued by pupils and remembered so that the lessons have the intended impact.
- In some cases, the records of actions taken to safeguard pupils are not detailed. Attendance registers are not all up to date and some are not accurate. Leaders need to ensure that safeguarding actions are recorded in sufficient detail and that registers are accurate.

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	147902
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10245806
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,282
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	180
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Liz Warren
Headteacher	Catherine Aitcheson
Website	www.clcc.college
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Life Multi Academy Trust.
- The school uses nine registered alternative provisions.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide students 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 received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspectors carried out deep dives in English, geography, science, physical education and mathematics. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors also visited a range of lessons in other subjects. For these subjects, they checked the work pupils had produced in lessons and spoke to pupils in the class.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for behaviour, personal development and the provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from key stages 3, 4 and 5.
- The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding lead to discuss the actions taken to keep pupils safe. She reviewed a range of documents and the single central record.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plans.
- The lead inspector met with governors and trustees.
- Inspectors observed pupils around the school at breaktime and lunchtime. An inspector held telephone conversations with staff who work with pupils at alternative provisions.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View and considered the results of the Ofsted staff and pupil questionnaires.

Inspection team

Dawn Ashbolt, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Claire Shepherd	Ofsted Inspector
Jon Brown	Ofsted Inspector
Roxanne Fearn-Davies	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lisa Harrison	Ofsted Inspector

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