

Inspection of Charnwood College

Thorpe Hill, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE11 4SQ

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 September 2022

Overall effectiveness **Good**

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| The quality of education | Good |
| 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 at Charnwood College experience a culture of respect and positivity. Staff work hard to help pupils fulfil their potential. Leaders have established an inclusive and calm environment in which pupils can learn. Staff know pupils well and use the daily roll call to foster a sense of community and to check on well-being.

Pupils know what to expect in each lesson. Leaders have adopted a lesson routine which teachers use consistently. Reading is a priority. Pupils hear their teachers read regularly, and develop their ability to read over time.

Pupils feel safe and recognise that teachers are available to support them. Pupils are not worried about bullying and know teachers will deal with it on the rare occasions it happens. Pupils respect difference. Sixth-form students say they feel comfortable being themselves in what is a supportive setting.

There are opportunities each Monday afternoon for pupils to take part in a wide range of enrichment activities. Pupils access sporting competitions, music lessons and other events, such as 'Charnfest'. They add to their learning in the classroom through educational visits, such as to Birmingham Symphony Hall. Pupils in the 'Inclusion Hub' enjoy trips to Beacon Hill and Bradgate Park.

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

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They have prioritised how well teachers plan and teach their subjects. School and trust subject leaders work together. They identify the knowledge they want pupils to remember. Most of the school's subject leaders have identified an appropriate order in which pupils will learn that knowledge. Leaders provide teachers with the resources and strategies to teach the curriculum.

Leaders have thought about how pupils learn. They have designed an approach to lessons which all teachers follow. This helps pupils to engage with the learning. Teachers' subject knowledge is strong. They provide clear explanations and model well how pupils should learn.

Teachers regularly use assessment to identify what pupils have learned. However, not all teachers do this well enough before moving learning on. When this is the case, pupils are not always able to connect new knowledge with what they have already learned. This prevents these pupils from building up their understanding over time as well as they should.

Leaders identify pupils with SEND. Teachers use strategies to meet these pupils' needs so that they can build their understanding over time. A number of sixth-form students talk favourably about how teachers cater for their individual needs. Leaders provide support and wider opportunities for pupils with SEND. They

regularly check how well these pupils take advantage of the enrichment activities on offer.

Leaders promote the importance of reading. All pupils regularly listen to their teachers read. Guided reading takes place during form time and in subject lessons. Teachers help pupils at the early stages of reading to become more confident readers so they can access lessons.

Leaders have designed a coherent personal development programme. Pupils learn about how to look after their physical and mental health. They discuss important issues, such as screen time. Pupils learn about different beliefs. They are less secure in their understanding of fundamental British values.

Teachers prepare pupils for life in modern Britain. They provide advice about next steps in education and employment. Pupils learn about managing personal finances and about decision-making. Many pupils achieve places at university or secure sports scholarships. Leaders have rearranged work experience. This means that pupils will not miss out as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Pupils behave in lessons and around the school. Teachers greet pupils each morning at the school gates. Staff are visible throughout the school day. Teachers regularly issue rewards for positive behaviour. Pupils understand the behaviour system and say that disruption to lessons is rare. However, some pupils spend time outside lessons due to poor behaviour.

Students in the sixth form study in focused environments. They have the resources and support to become independent learners. Teachers deliver age-appropriate personal development sessions, including, for example, about healthy relationships. The school provides careers advice. Leaders have not ensured that all sixth-form students take advantage of this.

Leaders have ensured that all staff access high-quality, well-resourced training. However, leaders do not fully check the impact of this training on how well teachers teach their subjects. Teachers feel that workload is manageable and that leaders consider their well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have created a culture of safeguarding. This is underpinned by effective training and clear reporting procedures. All staff contribute to this culture. They know the pupils well and share any concerns they have promptly. Leaders follow safer recruitment practices.

Leaders respond to local safeguarding concerns. They identify and act on any trends they identify that relate to welfare concerns in the school. Leaders are

knowledgeable and passionate about keeping pupils safe. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe, including online.

Leaders work with other agencies when necessary to ensure that pupils receive appropriate help.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all teachers check pupils' understanding well enough before moving learning on. As a result, some pupils can struggle to understand more complex subject knowledge and connect this with what they have already learned. When this is the case, these pupils do not develop the deep and detailed knowledge of their subjects that leaders want them to gain. Leaders should ensure that teachers understand how best to support pupils in connecting their learning and deepening their understanding.
- Some pupils, including those who are most vulnerable, are persistently absent. Some sixth-form students are not always punctual. When this is the case, these pupils and students are not able to benefit from the good education which the school is providing. Leaders have begun to address this. They should ensure that all pupils and students attend well.

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.

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 | 141874 |
| Local authority | Leicestershire |
| Inspection number | 10241641 |
| 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 | 572 |
| Of which, number on roll in the sixth form | 90 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair of trust | David Ross |
| Principal | Alastair O'Connor |
| Website | www.charnwoodcollege.org/ |
| Date of previous inspection | 29 June 2021, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 |

Information about this school

- 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.
- The school makes use of one unregistered alternative provision for a small number of pupils.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspectors discussed any continued impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- The inspection team undertook deep dives in English, mathematics, science, history, physical education and business studies. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors held further meetings with the leaders responsible for: behaviour and attendance; continuing professional development; and the sixth form. Inspectors also met with the coordinator of provision for pupils with SEND and the leader responsible for coordinating personal development education.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the school's arrangements for safeguarding, inspectors read the school's relevant policies, scrutinised the single central record, checked the school's procedures for the safe recruitment of staff and met with the safeguarding team. Inspectors also spoke with staff and pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised documents including the school's self-evaluation and a range of school policies.
- Inspectors met formally and informally with groups of pupils and sixth-form students.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders, staff, members of the local governing body and trustees.
- Inspectors considered responses received on Ofsted Parent View, including free-text responses. They also considered responses to the Ofsted staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

| | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Matthew Fearn-Davies, lead inspector | His Majesty's Inspector |
| John Craig | Ofsted Inspector |
| Lisa Harrison | Ofsted Inspector |

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