

Inspection of Corby Business Academy

Academy Way, Gretton Road, Corby, Northamptonshire NN17 5EB

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 April 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
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?

This is a good school that serves its community well. Leaders have high aspirations for their pupils and promote the school's values of 'commit, believe and achieve'. Most pupils enjoy coming to school. They know that their teachers want them to do well. Pupils feel well supported.

Pupils and students in the sixth form are polite and respectful. The ethos of the school is inclusive.

In lessons and at social times, pupils behave well. Pupils say that staff apply the behaviour policy consistently. The school is calm and orderly.

Pupils benefit from strong pastoral care. They know who to speak to if they have any concerns. Pupils know that bullying is not acceptable. They say this is rare and teachers would deal with it instantly and effectively if it were to occur. Pupils feel safe in school.

Students in the sixth form enjoy their experience. They appreciate the support and encouragement teachers give them. Students are very well prepared for the next stage of their education or employment.

Parents and carers are positive about the education their children receive. One view shared by many was, 'My child has thrived, been supported, encouraged, cared for and listened to at this school.'

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

Leaders have brought about significant improvement at this school. They focus on providing an ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND).

Pupils' performance in external examinations of some subjects has recently been below national averages at the end of key stage 4. Leaders have taken effective steps to address this. They have worked with determination to develop the curriculum and ensure that pupils know and remember more.

Teachers have secure subject knowledge and are passionate about what they teach. Teachers present information clearly and choose activities that help pupils to learn. However, sometimes teachers do not match the work they set well enough to pupils' ability and their prior knowledge.

Most teachers use assessment well, either to check that pupils remember important knowledge, or to embed knowledge. Teachers use retrieval tasks, questioning and low-stakes testing. Pupils respond well to the clear feedback given to them. Leaders now need to check that pupils' responses to this feedback are enabling them to

make the progress they need. Not all pupils readily participate in discussion and debate. Leaders are aware of this and are developing strategies to promote discussion about what is being taught.

Leaders prioritise reading. Staff encourage pupils to read widely. Leaders have introduced a whole-school approach to developing pupils' reading, writing and vocabulary. Pupils who need help to read more accurately or fluently get support quickly.

Leaders are ambitious for pupils with SEND. They make sure that pupils with SEND can access the same ambitious curriculum as everyone else. They identify these pupils' needs and provide teachers with the detailed information they require to support them in their learning. Pupils who attend the school's specialist provision learn a personalised curriculum and are well supported.

Students in the sixth form appreciate the efforts that teachers take to help them. They are proud of their school and would recommend the sixth form to others. There are opportunities for students in the sixth form to volunteer and help others. For example, they can mentor younger pupils and become reading buddies.

The curriculum goes beyond the academic and is well planned and sequenced. As a result, pupils' personal development is well catered for. Pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of relationships and how to stay safe. Pupils have opportunities to be leaders. For example, the 'student senate' is a key part of the school, and the pupils feel that staff listen to their views.

Leaders have raised their expectations of pupils' behaviour and conduct, which is having a positive impact. Pupils behave very well in lessons. During lesson change-over times and at breaktimes, the school is calm and orderly.

Leaders recognise that there is more work to do to improve the attendance of some groups of pupils. Leaders monitor the attendance of pupils. They use a range of strategies to try to improve pupils' attendance. However, the low attendance of some of the most vulnerable pupils means that learning is too often missed.

Governance is strong. The governors and trustees are knowledgeable and hold leaders to account effectively. Staff are proud and motivated to work at this school. They agree that leaders take their workload and well-being into account.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Teachers receive regular safeguarding training. This reminds them of contextual safeguarding issues and the signs that a pupil might be at risk of harm. All staff know the exact actions to take if they have a concern about a pupil.

Leaders keep accurate records. They are quick to act when they are aware of a concern, involving other agencies when necessary. Those responsible for checking the safeguarding arrangements do so rigorously.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders are aware that some aspects of the curriculum need further refinement, in particular ensuring that feedback is having an impact on learning and checking that the work set deepens pupils' understanding. Leaders must ensure that assessment processes and the delivery of the curriculum in all subjects are of equally high quality so that pupils learn as well as they should.
- Too many pupils are still persistently absent from school. This means that they are missing out on their education. Leaders must ensure that all pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, attend school more regularly so that they benefit from the good-quality education that the school is providing.

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

Unique reference number	135306
Local authority	North Northamptonshire
Inspection number	10254863
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	1,152
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	126
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Richard Morrison
Principal	Simon Underwood
Website	www.corbybusinessacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	9 February 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Brooke Weston Multi-Academy Trust.
- The school uses two registered alternative provisions.
- The school includes a unit offering specialist resource-based provision for 77 pupils with SEND.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships

Information about this inspection

- The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.
- The inspectors carried out deep dives in English, geography, mathematics, science, music and art. 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 that pupils had produced in lessons and spoke to pupils in the class.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for behaviour, personal development, the provision for pupils with SEND and leaders in the specialist provision.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from key stages 3 and 4.
- 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 break and lunchtime. An inspector held telephone conversations with staff who work with pupils at an alternative provision.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and considered the results of the Ofsted staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Dawn Ashbolt, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Javier Sanchez-Garcia	Ofsted Inspector
Jane Burton	Ofsted Inspector
John Harrison	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Mitchley	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 2023