

Inspection of a good school: New College Leicester

Glenfield Road, Leicester LE3 6DN

Inspection dates:

27 and 28 June 2023

Outcome

New College Leicester continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a school where leaders and staff want the very best for every pupil and student. Leaders are meticulous in making sure that everyone has a range of opportunities to develop their talents and interests. Pupils enjoy school. They know that their teachers have their best interests at heart.

Leaders have put a curriculum in place that is well planned and ambitious. It sets out the skills and knowledge that pupils need in every subject. Leaders have planned the curriculum to expand pupils' horizons and give them access to new opportunities.

In most lessons, pupils work with concentration and focus. They enjoy their studies and understand the purpose of each subject and know where it might lead to. Disruption to learning and off-task behaviour are rare. Leaders and staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, both in lessons and around the school. Pupils say that bullying is rare and dealt with well. The school community is harmonious.

A range of extra-curricular and enrichment activities are provided at the school. This supports the curriculum and enables pupils to learn more about the world beyond school. Pupils appreciate this and enjoy taking part in clubs.

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

Pupils study a broad range of subjects. Leaders value all areas of the curriculum, including the arts and practical subjects. Leaders have promoted academic subjects, and this is having an impact. For example, more pupils are now studying a modern foreign language. There is a consistent structure to how the curriculum is delivered. This supports the high ambition leaders have for pupils to do well in all subjects. Leaders ensure that the curriculum responds to pupils' needs and interests. For example, leaders include a health and safety module in Year 7 to help pupils understand how to keep themselves safe over the summer holidays.

Teachers have good subject knowledge. They use it well when asking questions and giving explanations. Teachers use learning activities well to help pupils progress through the curriculum. They give pupils opportunities for discussion and reflection. Teachers use a variety of ways to check pupils' understanding, and they then correct misconceptions. Pupils know how to improve their work and can see the progress they are making. However, in some subjects, the activities that teachers use do not always build on what pupils know. This means that some pupils do not achieve as well as they could.

Teachers and support staff ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are well supported in class. Leaders have high expectations of pupils with SEND. Teachers adapt their lessons, where necessary, so that pupils with SEND can progress well through the curriculum.

Leaders have a well-considered strategy to support disadvantaged pupils. They identify barriers to pupils' progress and put measures in place to remove them. For example, they support pupils with uniform, provide ingredients for cooking lessons and give free access to trips and visits.

The school has a well-thought-out and systematic approach to the teaching of reading. As a result, pupils read fluently and enjoy reading books. Leaders have introduced the 'Better Reading Partnership'. This gives good support for pupils who enter the school with weaker skills in reading by, for example, supporting them to work with volunteers from the local community.

Leaders have established a comprehensive careers programme. It takes the individual needs of pupils into account. Staff give good advice to pupils about next steps, including the full range of options for post-16 education. The school has achieved the Career Mark.

Attendance has dipped due to disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Some pupils do not attend school regularly enough. This is particularly the case for pupils with SEND or those who are disadvantaged. Leaders track pupil attendance and take action, where necessary. Leaders are aware that raising rates of attendance remains a priority for the school. Pupils are punctual to lessons.

Teachers receive good opportunities for training and development. School leaders and those responsible for governance support teachers to do their job effectively and manage their workload.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders responsible for safeguarding have established rigorous systems for reporting and tracking concerns. They act decisively when necessary. Staff and governors receive regular training and understand their responsibilities well. All necessary employment checks are carried out to ensure that pupils are safe.

Pupils feel safe in school. They know who to go to if they feel worried or upset, and they are confident that they will be looked after. They are taught about dangers and risks, including how to stay safe online.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, the activities teachers implement do not always build on what pupils already know. This means that some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that, in all subjects, teachers implement activities that build on and extend pupils' learning.
- The proportion of pupils who are persistently absent, particularly pupils with SEND or those who are disadvantaged, is too high. This means they miss out on learning. Leaders should ensure that effective strategies are in place to reduce persistent absence and raise levels of attendance for all pupils.

Background

When we have judged a school to be a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually, this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the first ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in November 2017.

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	131945
Local authority	Leicester
Inspection number	10254933
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Maintained
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	977
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	4
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Sue Billington
Principal	Jane Brown
Website	www.newcollege.leicester.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	21 and 22 November 2017, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses the services of five alternative providers.
- 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

- 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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in four subjects: mathematics, science, art and design, and modern foreign languages. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject

leaders to discuss the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- Inspectors met with a wide range of senior leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator and leaders responsible for behaviour and personal development.
- Inspectors met with trust leaders and those responsible for governance.
- Inspectors looked at information about behaviour, attendance and enrichment opportunities.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of staff.
- Inspectors talked to leaders in charge of safeguarding arrangements. They met with staff and pupils and looked at documentation to evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding practices and procedures.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

Paul Heery, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

James Laming

Ofsted Inspector

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