

# Inspection of Colne Community School and College (Secondary and 16 to 19 Provision)

Church Road, Brightlingsea, Colchester, Essex CO7 0QL

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Inspection dates: 27 and 28 June 2023

**Overall effectiveness** **Good**

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The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Previous inspection grade Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Colne Community School is a much-improved school. Pupils enjoy their time at school. The majority of pupils develop positive attitudes to learning. They are respectful to each other and to adults. The improved curriculum supports pupils to learn about how everyone is different. It is encouraged to be yourself in this school.

Harmful or prejudicial attitudes are not tolerated by pupils or staff, neither is bullying or unkind behaviour. When these incidents happen, pupils have confidence in staff to resolve the problem. The large pastoral team listens to pupils and helps them to access the support they need. As a result, the school is a positive place for pupils to be.

The number of clubs and trips for pupils continues to grow, returning to pre-pandemic levels. Pupils are proud of the opportunities they experience to become leaders or help others by, for example, acting as peer mentors, mental health champions or supporting others with their reading.

Pupils value the key messages and topics taught to them through the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum, assemblies and tutorial time. A well-planned careers curriculum shows pupils the range of ambitious opportunities available to them. Consequently, pupils are well prepared for their next steps.

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

School and trust leaders have acted with dedication and determination to make this school better than the school it replaced. Their efforts ensure that the school continues to improve so that pupils now get the good school they deserve.

The curriculum is ambitious. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), now have the opportunity to study a wide range of different subjects. The number of pupils who access the English Baccalaureate continues to grow.

Each curriculum area has clear documentation that outlines what should be taught and when. Leaders have outlined the important subject vocabulary that pupils will meet in class. New knowledge is introduced carefully through effective, regular checks by teachers to see if pupils remember what they have learned. Most teachers have good subject knowledge. They create engaging lessons with appropriate activities that support pupils to learn. Many pupils make good progress through the curriculum.

Leaders identify the needs of pupils with SEND accurately. Important information about pupils' needs is shared with teachers. A range of appropriate help is put in place to support pupils with SEND to access the curriculum and be fully included in

school life. Occasionally, some teachers do not deliver the curriculum as well as others. For instance, they do not adapt what they teach to what pupils know or can do, including some pupils with SEND. Pupils do not learn as well when this happens.

There is a robust approach to supporting pupils who find reading difficult. Trained adults help pupils to become confident and fluent readers.

Across the school, most pupils behave well. Leaders' high expectations of behaviour are shared by pupils and most staff. Older pupils say that behaviour is so much better than before. Pupils value the 'ARK' rewards for good behaviour. The new behaviour system is used with growing consistency and fairness. However, some teachers do not use the system as it has been designed. This causes frustration among a small number of pupils when sanctions do not seem fair or consistent.

Leaders reprioritised PSHE education by making it a central part of the school curriculum. As a result, pupils have good knowledge of important issues like consent, online safety and wider British values. Thoughtful trips and experiences complement the careers programme and give pupils clear and independent advice and guidance about options available to them when leaving the school.

The school's pastoral provision is an important part of school life. A range of counselling and mental health support is available for pupils if they find school life challenging. This helps pupils to build their resilience and remain in school.

Staff support leaders' drive to improve the school. Many use what they learn from the training provided by trust leaders in their classrooms to support pupils to learn well. A large number of parents recognise the positive journey the school has been on and are fully behind leaders' actions to make the school better.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

High-quality safeguarding training ensures that staff quickly spot and report any concerns about pupils to the safeguarding team. Detailed safeguarding information supports leaders to build an accurate picture about the risks pupils face. Leaders refer incidents quickly to relevant external agencies to ensure that pupils and their families get the help they need.

The PSHE curriculum supports pupils to learn effectively about risks to themselves and how to report behaviour or incidents that are not acceptable. As a result, pupils feel safe.

Appropriate systems are in place to manage concerns about adults if they were to occur.

## What does the school need to do to improve?

### (Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is not consistently taught well in some areas of the school. For instance, some teachers do not adapt their lessons well enough around the needs of pupils, including those with SEND. This means that pupils sometimes do not learn as well as they could. Leaders should ensure that all staff are trained well to use information about what pupils know and can do to implement the curriculum consistently and support all pupils to make the best possible progress.
- Some teachers do not use the behaviour system well. This means that, on occasion, poor behaviour is not resolved fairly or consistently. When this happens, it causes frustration with pupils. Leaders should ensure that their clear behaviour policy is followed robustly and consistently 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.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	146795
<b>Local authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10268258
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,234
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Nicholas Pavitt
<b>Headteacher</b>	Neil Gallagher (Executive Headteacher), Steven Crane (Head of School)
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.colne.essex.sch.uk">www.colne.essex.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Colne Community School converted to become an academy school in January 2019. When its predecessor school, Colne Community School, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be inadequate overall.
- The school no longer has a sixth form.
- The school uses both registered and unregistered alternative provision for a small number of pupils.
- The school is led by a head of school and an executive headteacher. The executive headteacher oversees another local secondary school. The school shares its local governance committee with the same secondary school.
- 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.

- 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 the following subjects: art, English, geography, history, mathematics and science. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with teachers and pupils about learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with different leaders, including the school's special educational needs coordinator. Inspectors considered a range of documentation related to supporting pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors spoke with a range of pupils over both days of the inspection.
- Inspectors visited lessons in other subject areas of the curriculum.
- The lead inspector met with representatives from the local governing committee and the trust board.
- The lead inspector met with the CEO of the trust.
- The lead inspector held a telephone call with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documentation, including behaviour records, bullying logs and attendance registers.
- To inspect safeguarding, the lead inspector met with the school's safeguarding leaders. Inspectors looked closely at safeguarding systems, processes and records. They spoke with pupils, staff, governors and trustees about safeguarding.
- Inspectors considered email correspondence and held telephone calls with parents.
- Inspectors considered the 262 responses made by parents to Ofsted Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, including 212 free-text responses.
- Inspectors also considered the 104 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff and 126 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for pupils.

## Inspection team

Damian Loneragan, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
David Piercy	Ofsted Inspector
Susan Sutton	Ofsted Inspector

Paul Wilson

His Majesty's Inspector

Adam Dabin

Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

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