

Inspection of Cox Green School

Highfield Lane, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 3AX

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 March 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Sixth-form provision

Good

Previous inspection grade

Good

The headteacher is Daniel Edwards. The school is a single-academy trust, which means other people in the trust have responsibility for running the school. The trust is overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Peter Thorn.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are happy and safe. Pastoral support is a strong focus. The school has a clear antibullying policy. Staff address bullying when it is reported. Despite this, some pupils and parents do not have confidence in how the school deals with bullying. Recent efforts to improve communication to parents and pupils about precisely what constitutes bullying and the consequences of it are ongoing.

The school is calm and orderly. Staff and pupils know routines well. Relationships tend to be positive. However, low-level disruption in lessons is common, predominantly in key stage 3. Here, teachers' expectations are not high enough and pupils' learning is frequently interrupted. This is not the case in key stages 4 and 5 where pupils' focus is strong and their learning is improving.

Pupils and staff are rightly proud of the large range of clubs provided at lunchtime and after school. Sports clubs are plentiful, such as climbing, handball and basketball. Many pupils take on positions of responsibility, such as becoming prefects or joining the school council. Sixth-form students relish the opportunities to be sports leaders and many take part in the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme. This teaches them vital organisation and leadership skills.

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

The curriculum is ambitious and, in some subjects, provides pupils with the knowledge and skills they need. However, there is variation within and across subjects. In some subjects, such as history and art, the curriculum is sequenced precisely. Teachers support pupils to learn crucial knowledge and skills effectively. As a result, pupils achieve well in these subjects. In other subjects, the curriculum is not implemented as intended, particularly during key stage 3. Not all teachers have the knowledge and skills they need to ensure that pupils learn as effectively as they should. Here pupils' misconceptions are not addressed and teachers do not systematically check that pupils have remembered key knowledge before they move on.

Recent changes to the structure of key stage 4 means that more pupils have access to a broad suite of subjects in the English Baccalaureate. The school has increased the range of alternative, appropriate options in key stage 4 and the growing sixth form. Students choose from a variety of vocational and academic subjects that prepare them well for future study, apprenticeships or work.

The school provides strong support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff know pupils' needs and provide appropriate adaptations to help them learn well. Support for those who have fallen behind in reading is effective. Pupils receive targeted help from expert staff. This means they catch up quickly. All staff receive training to promote successful reading skills. However, the school's expectations of disadvantaged pupils are not high enough. For these pupils, systems to help those who have fallen behind are not rigorous enough. This means that

these pupils do not remember crucial knowledge and skills to help them to be successful.

The school's focus on improving behaviour has reduced suspensions. While incidents of pupils being removed from lessons has increased, pupils receive appropriate support to modify their behaviour and refocus on learning. The school provides valuable support in the 'Hub'. Expert staff get to know pupils well and this creates positive relationships between staff and pupils. Families appreciate the support they receive. The school has a strong focus on improving pupils' attendance. Attendance is good in the sixth form, particularly in Year 12. Students are highly engaged in their learning and take pride in belonging to the improving sixth form.

Personal development is a strength of the school. The well-designed personal, social and health education programme ensures that pupils know how to keep themselves healthy and safe. Pupils learn vital age-appropriate knowledge about relationships, citizenship, protected characteristics and what it is like to grow up in modern Britain. The school actively promotes equality and diversity. Pupils told inspectors proudly that, difference is accepted. 'Wednesday well-being' in tutor time encourages pupils to view mental health positively. Careers information, education, advice and guidance is strong and led by knowledgeable staff. All pupils receive support to plan for their next steps in education, employment or training.

Staff, including early career teachers, feel that leaders support them well and consider their workload carefully. Trustees know the school well. They offer appropriate support and commitment to the school. However, the trust does not hold the school to account with sufficient rigour. The school and the trust do not keep a precise enough check on the effectiveness of the school's own policies and procedures in practice. The school's evaluation of some aspects of its provision is too positive. The monitoring processes require sharpening, therefore.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Not all teachers check what pupils know or remember effectively. As a result, gaps or misconceptions in pupils' knowledge and understanding are not addressed as well as they should be. The school needs to ensure that all teachers accurately identify gaps and misconceptions and adapt their delivery of lessons to rectify these.
- The school has not ensured that their ambition for pupils who are disadvantaged, particularly pupils who are eligible for free school meals, is being enacted robustly enough. This means that the achievement gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils is not being narrowed. The school must ensure that

sufficient support is given to disadvantaged pupils to enable them to catch up and keep up with their peers.

- Some staff do not address low level disruption in lessons, particularly in key stage 3. This means that pupils often experience disruption to their learning. The school must ensure that all staff are trained to recognise and address low level disruption and that there is consistent application of the school's own behaviour management policies.
- While there are processes in place to address bullying effectively, some pupils and parents are not confident that bullying is dealt with effectively. The precise identification and accurate recording of incidents is not as robust as it should be. This means that some pupils and parents do not have faith in the school to deal with bullying effectively enough. The school needs to ensure that parents and pupils understand and trust that bullying is dealt with effectively and improve how records are maintained to reflect this.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	137695
Local authority	Windsor and Maidenhead
Inspection number	10296368
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
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	1162
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	206
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Peter Thorn
Headteacher	Daniel Edwards
Website	www.coxgreen.com
Dates of previous inspection	20 September 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The current headteacher took up his post in January 2022.
- The school currently uses one registered and four unregistered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 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.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders of the school. The lead inspector held a meeting with the chair of the board of trustees and another trustee.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, mathematics, science, history, art and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered a range of documentation provided by the school. This included the school's self-evaluation, published information about pupils' performance and minutes of trustees' meetings.
- Inspectors spoke to a wide range of pupils and observed their behaviour in lessons and at social times.
- Inspectors considered responses to Ofsted Parent View questionnaire, including free-text responses. They also took account of the responses to the staff and pupil surveys and gathered the views of parents, staff and pupils throughout the inspection.

Inspection team

Linda Culling, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Lucy Hillyard	Ofsted Inspector
Julia Mortimore	Ofsted Inspector
Jason Philipsz	Ofsted Inspector
Mike Serridge	Ofsted Inspector

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