

# The Coventry Blue Coat Church of England School and Music College

Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	103745
<b>Local Authority</b>	Coventry
<b>Inspection number</b>	336147
<b>Inspection dates</b>	3–4 February 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Rashida Sharif HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1424
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	369
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Reverend Tim Pullen
<b>Headteacher</b>	Dr Julie Roberts
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Terry Road Coventry West Midlands
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## **Introduction**

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The majority of the time was spent looking at learning, including observation of 47 lessons, with 40 teachers observed, including registration and tutor periods. The inspectors held meetings with the Chair of the Governing Body, members of the senior leadership team including heads of departments, staff and groups of students, and spoke on the telephone with a small number of parents. Inspectors looked at the school's data on students' performance, records of the support provided to them and their progress. Inspectors also scrutinised the school's improvement plan, policies and procedures, including health and safety and risk assessments. The questionnaires received from 155 parents and carers were scrutinised.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how well the school has responded to the key issues raised in the last inspection report and the music subject inspection
- the contribution of middle managers in monitoring of teaching and learning; how accurately they track students' progress and whether this information is used effectively to drive up overall achievement and standards
- whether the sixth form has improved since the last inspection
- the impact of the school's specialist music status on whole school improvement.

## **Information about the school**

The Coventry Blue Coat Church of England School and Music College is larger than most secondary schools. The proportion of students with special educational and/or disabilities is broadly average. The proportion of students from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds is above average, as is the proportion of students for whom English is an additional language. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is significantly below the national average. The school has specialist music status. It has a Healthy Schools award and the Financial Management Standard in Schools. Music was separately inspected in December 2007.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?****1****The school's capacity for sustained improvement****1**

## Main findings

The Coventry Blue Coat Church of England School and Music College is an outstanding and harmonious school that cares very well for all its students. There is a strong culture of continuous improvement, driven by the headteacher, the school's senior leadership team and the governing body.

Students' attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 is outstanding. Students join the school with average levels of prior attainment and make good progress. Standards have continued to improve and are now well above the national average. In 2009, 100% of the students gained A\* to G grade at GCSE, with over 78% gaining A\* to C grades including English and mathematics. Students make good progress as a result of mostly good teaching and excellent monitoring by the senior leadership team. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities follow a programme of personalised learning and consequently make outstanding progress in relation to their starting points. However, assessment information to plan lessons that meet students' individual needs is not used consistently across subjects and departments. There are also inconsistencies in marking; not all gives students clear guidance on how to improve their work.

The extent to which the students contribute to the school and wider community and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. Students enjoy school, as demonstrated by their outstanding attendance. As one student said, 'I enjoy coming to school because it's like a one big happy family.' Another explained, 'The school listens to you and teachers are very helpful.' The extent to which students adopt healthy lifestyles is good. Safeguarding procedures are strong and the quality of support for the most vulnerable students is very good. The highly inclusive nature of the school owes much to the contribution students make. One example amongst many is the quality and extent of peer mentoring. For example, older students act as prefects and mentors offering extra care, guidance and support to students during registration, break and lunchtime. Behaviour is good and often outstanding. The school has low tolerance of poor behaviour and there are effective systems for dealing with incidents if they arise. The extent to which students develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being is outstanding. The school has made very good efforts to develop students' key skills in literacy, numeracy and the use of information and communication technology. This is further reflected in the students being confident in expressing their views and working independently.

An outstanding curriculum ensures that individual needs are met exceptionally well. The impact of this is evident in the students' overall attainment and their preparedness to enter the next stage of their learning. The quality of the care, guidance and support given to all students is exceptional. The school has a number of students who present

significant challenges, but they are integrated exceedingly well because of the way their moves are managed and the level of support they receive. There are many examples of how the school has dramatically improved the life chances of some of its most vulnerable students. This work is supported by the excellent partnership arrangements that the school has developed with a range of outside agencies. Diversity is valued highly and the school is extremely successful in ensuring equality of opportunity. The overall effectiveness of the sixth form is outstanding as are the outcomes. A significant majority of the students progress to higher education.

The school has gone from strength to strength since the last inspection. The senior leadership team's monitoring of the work of departments, the quality of teaching and assessment and the effectiveness of the curriculum are systematic and regular. These reviews are fully integrated with monitoring of students' progress to ensure that the leadership and management of teaching and learning are outstanding. The whole school, departments, individual teacher and students are all fully engaged in setting high, challenging targets. These are clearly understood by all involved and contribute to the improvements that the school has made. Consequently, the school has outstanding capacity to sustain further improvement.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching and the progress students make so that these are consistently good and outstanding by:
  - sharing the best practice that exists across the school
  - making sure that all teachers apply the school's assessment procedures consistently and use assessment to plan lessons that meet the need of individual students
  - making sure that all work is regularly and consistently marked so that students know what they need to do to further improve their work

## **Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils**

**1**

The school has been successful in securing improvements in attainment by the end of Key Stage 4 consistently since the last inspection, particularly in the proportion of students achieving top grades in GCSE examinations. Some of these outstanding results are in music, art and drama. It was clearly evident from the lessons seen by inspectors that the students enjoy their learning. They are highly motivated, resulting in outstanding achievement. There are no significant differences in the performance between boys and girls and the groups of students from different ethnic backgrounds.

The great majority of students say they feel very safe and measures are used consistently to ensure that any bullying, if it were to occur, is reported and responded to immediately. Inspectors witnessed students' behaviour to be at least good, both in the classrooms and around the school. However, a significant minority of students and their parents who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire felt that behaviour of some students

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

could be better. Students are happy, confident and have a positive attitude to their learning. They enjoy playing an active part in the life of the school, as demonstrated by the numerous roles they play, for example as mentors to younger students. All students demonstrate consideration and respect for each other and their teachers. The school actively promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through its inclusive approach and Christian values in recognising that every student matters. Students have a good understanding of what it means to be healthy and what they need to do to maintain a healthy lifestyle, although some do not always put this into practice all the time; a view endorsed by some parents. Students are actively involved in a range of charitable activities throughout the year to support groups both in the local and international community. Workplace skills are highly developed, and students' literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology skills are developed very effectively across the curriculum.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	1
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective is the provision?

In almost all lessons, students are highly motivated and make good progress. Teachers

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

have access to a wide range of information about their students and most use this to plan their lessons well. Teachers set high expectations and use a range of activities to engage all students, including those with special education need and/or disabilities. Teachers are specialists in their subjects and demonstrate good subject knowledge. Where teaching is most effective, teachers use a range of questioning techniques to assess learning. Where this is most effective, it challenges students to think, reflect and come up with their own ideas, and to value those of others. This also helps to develop students' independent learning skills, and skills that help them work with others. However, these skills are not evident routinely in all lessons. Teachers mark students' work regularly, but marking is inconsistent across subjects and departments and their comments do not always help students know what they need to do to further improve their work.

The school has continued to review and expand the curriculum to meet the changing needs and interests of its students. Specialist status has enabled the school to both enhance and extend the curriculum both for its own students and those from other local schools. The highly relevant curriculum leads to outstanding achievement and outcomes. The foundation and pathways in Key Stage 4 is exemplary in meeting the needs of individuals and groups of students. Progression routes through 14 to 19 are clear and meet students' needs extremely well. The school has successfully forged many links with other organisations, including local primary schools. All students are given the opportunity to learn a musical instrument. The students' performance in music was highlighted in their Ofsted inspection visit in December 2007. It reported that this was an example of exemplary practice'. Music continues to be a notable strength of the school. Students with special education needs and/or disabilities are very well supported by support staff who ensure that these students participate fully in all activities. The curriculum successfully promotes the students' moral, social and cultural development through a well planned programme of personal, social and health education. Their experiences are further enriched by the range of extra-curricular activities, for example in sports, drama and music.

The transition arrangements for students joining and leaving the school are outstanding. All aspects of students' development and progress are carefully monitored to ensure that interventions are swift and effective, making very good use of other agencies when required. Gifted and talented students are supported well through a growing range of opportunities to enable them to 'fast track' qualifications and increase the number of GCSE and other qualifications they take. The school provides exemplary support for its most vulnerable students, which is much appreciated by parents and carers. Teachers, students, and parents and carers describe examples of how the school has dramatically improved the life chances of many individuals. Students commented on how sensitively and effectively the school responded to their needs when they recently tragically lost one of their friends.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

The strength of the leadership provided by the headteacher, supported by the school's senior leadership team and governors, is a key element in the school's improvement and its outstanding features. She has a clear vision for the school with a passionate belief in inclusion. The school's strong Christian ethos values the different religious, cultural and linguistic diversity that exists within the school. Challenging targets are set for the whole school, for each aspect of the curriculum, for teachers and for students. All concerned are clear about these targets and how to achieve them, and about the priorities for further improvement. One excellent example is the combination of exemplary monitoring of student progress with systematic and thorough departmental reviews. This leads to complete clarity about where and what interventions are required. Self-evaluation is, therefore, comprehensive, accurate and perceptive, and leads directly to improvements. The school is supported extremely well by the governing body. Governors undertake their critical friend role extremely rigorously. They challenge the headteacher and senior staff and hold them to account. The active involvement of parents and carers is a core value of the school which it is continuing to develop even further to ensure that all parents feel they have an important role to play in the life of the school and their children's education.

The promotion of equality of opportunity is at the heart of everything the school does. The school's response to the wide diversity of the student body is excellent. There is no evidence of discrimination. The school has clear systems for identifying and remedying any gaps in provision or achievement. Safeguarding procedures meet all legal requirements. The partnerships with external agencies are in many ways exemplary. The inclusive culture and ethos of the school extend beyond the gates and result in outstanding promotion of community cohesion, so that the school is at the heart of the community. The school also uses its national and international links well to enrich students' experiences and understanding of global issues.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1



<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>1</b>

## Sixth form

There has been a year on year improvement in both attainment and achievement since the last inspection. This is because of the strong culture of ambition. Teaching, pastoral and academic support prepares students well for examinations. Consequently, the vast majority of students gain the qualifications they pursue. The very large majority of students, over 85%, continue onto their choice of course in higher education. Students play a significant role in the life of the school, for example as mentors and prefects. Sixth formers show commendable commitment to supporting younger students, both academically and pastorally. As one sixth former said, 'I enjoy working with the younger students. I find it rewarding to see them grow in their confidence, stay out of trouble and improve their work.' Students' spiritual, moral, social development is impressive, as shown, for example, in their commitment to raising money for a range of charities. They say they thoroughly enjoy attending the sixth form and believe that, because of the excellent range of options, it prepares them well for the future regardless of what they may finally choose to do. The range of vocational opportunities has increased and further expansion is planned. This is further enriched by the wide of range of extra-curricular learning opportunities in which the students participate with enthusiasm.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	1
The quality of provision in the sixth form	1
Leadership and management of the sixth form	1

## Views of parents and carers

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

The large majority of parents and carers who responded are happy with their children's experiences of the school. Many praised specific aspects of the school's work, including the care and support offered to their children. They have confidence in teachers and in the leadership and management of the school. Parents and carers feel that their children enjoy school and are well cared for. A small minority of parents and carers raised issues about low-level bullying, healthy lifestyles and issues regarding communication. Her Majesty's Inspector discussed these few concerns raised by individuals with the school. She was given assurances that appropriate, action will follow.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at The Coventry Blue Coat Church of England School and Music College to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 172 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1360 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	76	44	83	48	10	6	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	70	41	90	52	6	3	2	1
The school informs me about my child's progress	52	30	108	63	9	5	3	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	58	34	96	56	9	5	4	2
The teaching is good at this school	56	33	108	63	1	1	2	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	37	22	105	61	22	13	4	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	27	16	103	60	25	15	4	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	59	34	87	51	12	7	5	3
The school meets my child's particular needs	54	31	91	53	11	6	3	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	45	26	100	58	19	11	4	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	28	16	102	59	23	13	7	4
The school is led and managed effectively	45	26	107	62	6	3	4	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	77	45	80	47	9	5	4	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



5 February 2010

Dear students

Inspection of The Coventry Blue Coat Church of England School and Music College,  
Coventry, CV1 2BA

Thank you all very much for your help during our visit. We found what you had to say very interesting and helpful in making our judgments about your school. We were pleased to hear that so many of you enjoy attending school. Many of you told us how much you appreciate the help and guidance that your teachers give you at all times. You also told us how much you appreciate the range of opportunities that you are given both during and after school. We were impressed to see so many of you willingly take part in the wide range of extra-curricular activities, particularly those linked with your school's music specialism.

We found your school to be outstanding. The curriculum is rich and varied, allowing you to develop well as young people. It provides you with many opportunities to develop a wide range of skills for life. We agree with you that your teachers are helpful and supportive and most make your lessons interesting by involving you in your learning. The care, guidance and support you receive are particularly strong, helping you to feel safe and secure. We were particularly impressed with the contribution you make to the school and wider community. A large number of you act as mentors and prefects, supporting other students with a range of personal and academic needs. We were also impressed with your knowledge and understanding about adopting healthy lifestyles, although we noticed that some of you chose not to always practise them.

We worked very closely with your headteacher and other staff and agreed on what the school should do to make it even better. We have asked the school to improve the quality of teaching and the progress that you all make so that these are consistently good and outstanding by:

- sharing the best practice that exists across the school
- making sure that all teachers apply the school's assessment procedures consistently and use assessment to plan lessons that meet the need of individual students
- making sure that all work is regularly and consistently marked so that students know what they need to do to further improve their work

Yours sincerely

3–4 February 2010

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Rashida Sharif

Her Majesty's Inspector

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