

Inspection of a good school: The Coleshill School

Coventry Road, Coleshill, Birmingham, Warwickshire B46 3EX

Inspection dates:

3–4 March 2020

Outcome

The Coleshill School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff have high expectations of pupils at this school. They expect pupils to behave appropriately, work hard and achieve well. The school places as much emphasis on pupils' personal development as on their academic success. There are many activities, visits and leadership opportunities beyond the classroom. Most pupils take part.

The school has grown considerably since its last inspection. It is now oversubscribed. This growth has brought challenges, for example the need to recruit extra teachers each year and a major building project in the centre of the school. Leaders have managed this growth well, maintaining a good quality of education throughout this time.

Most pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. The school is calm and orderly throughout the day. Pupils typically behave well in lessons. They are keen to do well. They are articulate, polite and courteous.

Pupils trust staff to help them when they experience problems. Pupil 'hope mentors' raise awareness of, and support other pupils with, bullying. Staff deal with issues such as bullying effectively. All pupils who spoke to us agreed this was the case, as did the overwhelming majority of parents and carers who completed Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire.

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

The school is led well. The headteacher and senior leaders provide a clear vision for a school where all are equally valued. The staff form a united team, committed to seeing pupils grow as individuals and succeed academically.

Pupils' learning is effective and organised well in almost all subjects. Teachers use their strong subject knowledge to explain new ideas and concepts. Whole-school approaches such as 'do it now tasks' and 'red zone work' are encouraging pupils to remember what they have been taught. Staff support pupils with special educational needs and/or

disabilities well. Leaders provide teachers with helpful information about pupils' needs. Teachers usually use this information well when planning activities.

Leaders are making changes to the curriculum in Year 9. They want pupils to continue to study a broad range of subjects throughout key stage 3. When this change takes effect, all pupils will study an appropriately wide range of subjects in all years. In the sixth form, students choose from a good range of academic and vocational courses. The sixth form is now popular, and students achieve well.

The curriculum does have some weaknesses. In some subjects, pupils do not always develop a deep understanding of the work studied. Factors contributing to this include insufficient time being allocated to a topic and links between different topics not being clearly spelled out. As a result, in recent years, the most able pupils have not achieved as many high GCSE grades as they should. Other pupils have achieved well, though. Teachers' use of assessment, although improving, is not always effective. For example, in science, teachers spend too much time assessing what pupils know and too little time teaching them new knowledge.

Promoting pupils' wider development is a strength of the school. There are many clubs and activities for pupils to attend. Sport and the performing arts are particularly popular. Staff encourage pupils to take advantage of the opportunities provided. They check that no pupils are missing out. The focus on developing character and leadership skills continues successfully into the sixth form. Pupils, students and parents value this aspect of school life.

The school has a strong careers education programme. It has recently achieved national recognition. It ensures that pupils and sixth-form students are well informed when making decisions about subject choices, future study and career options.

Pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning. In lessons, they work hard and behave well. Disruption to learning is rare. At breaktime, lunchtime and between lessons, pupils behave in a sensible, mature manner. The building works on the site reduce the amount of social space available to pupils. Despite this, we observed calm and pleasant breaktimes and lunchtimes. Pupils told us that these were typical.

Staff work hard to support pupils with particular behavioural needs. Strong pastoral support is provided in school. Some pupils study for all or part of the week away from the school, at an alternative provider. Leaders choose these placements carefully and then keep a close check on how pupils are getting on. This strategy helps to keep these pupils engaged in learning.

Governance is strong. Improved effectiveness of the local governing body (LGB) has been one of the many ways the school has benefited from its membership of the Arthur Terry Learning Partnership (ATLP).

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The school has strong culture of keeping pupils safe. Leaders train staff well. Staff are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. They report to leaders any concerns they have about pupils. Leaders deal with these concerns quickly, involving outside agencies when necessary.

The ALTP provides good support to ensure that all policies and procedures are fit for purpose. Leaders keep well-organised, detailed records relating to child protection. They are careful to use correct procedures when recruiting staff.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school's curriculum is fit for purpose. It is appropriately ambitious and sequenced. However, it currently does not always encourage pupils to develop a deep understanding of topics covered or to remember what they have been taught as well as it could. Senior and curriculum leaders are aware of this and are revising the curriculum in all subjects. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum in all subjects successfully builds a deep and lasting understanding of key subject knowledge for pupils of all abilities, and especially for the most able.
- The effectiveness of the school's use of assessment varies between subjects. For example, it is used helpfully in mathematics so that pupils and their teachers understand how well pupils are doing and where they need extra support. In science, however, staff are not clear about the purpose of assessment. They spend too much time assessing pupils' knowledge and this means that they do not spend enough time teaching pupils new concepts. Leaders should ensure that, in all subjects including science, assessment is used effectively and does not detract from the teaching of subject content.

Background

When we have judged 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 a section 8 inspection of a good or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good, or standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 4–5 May 2016.

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 Ofsted Parent View information 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.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

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	136986
Local authority	Warwickshire
Inspection number	10122547
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
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	1220
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	180
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	John Vickers
Headteacher	Ian Smith-Childs
Website	www.thecoleshillschool.org
Date of previous inspection	4–5 May 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The number of pupils in the school has increased by more than 50% since the last inspection. The sixth form has more than doubled in size.
- Approximately 15 pupils study for part or all of the week, away from the school, at one of the following alternative providers: EBN Academy 1, EBN Academy 2, Shaftesbury School, Silver Birch School, Orion, Aim Educational, Nulogic training, Rightrax and U-Neek Learning.

Information about this inspection

- We met with the headteacher, the designated safeguarding lead, other senior leaders and with the chief executive officer and the director of education of the ATLP. The lead inspector held a meeting with a group comprising the chair of the board of trustees and four members of the LGB including its chair.

- We talked to pupils about their learning and their attitudes to, and opinions about, school. We observed pupils at breaktime and lunchtime and as they moved around the school. An inspector visited several morning tutor times.
- We scrutinised several documents, including those relating to safeguarding and child protection. We checked that the single central record contained all required information.
- We took account of parents' views by considering the 291 responses to Parent View, the Ofsted online questionnaire, including the 110 free-text comments.
- We took account of 100 responses received to Ofsted's staff inspection questionnaire.
- As part of this inspection, we paid particular attention to mathematics, history and science. In these subjects, we met with curriculum leaders, visited lessons, scrutinised pupils' work and spoke with teachers and pupils.

Inspection team

Alun Williams, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Natasha Rancins

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