

# Corelli College

Corelli Road, Blackheath, London, SE3 8EP

**Inspection dates** 9–10 July 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Inadequate	4
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- There is still not enough good or outstanding teaching for students to accelerate their progress further. Consequently, over time, progress across year groups and a range of subjects has not been consistently good.
- Teachers who join the college are not always given enough early support to understand the college's approaches to teaching and learning. This does not ensure that the progress of all groups of pupils, especially those who are of White British heritage, is consistently good.
- Teachers do plan to promote literacy across a range of subjects. However, there is scope for even more support for those who are learning to speak English to develop fluency in speaking, reading and writing.
- Behaviour is not consistently good. There is evidence of some elements of inappropriate behaviour and issues involving a small number of students. The recording of these incidents is not always accurate.
- Leadership and management initiatives have not yet led to consistently good teaching and students' achievement.

### The school has the following strengths:

- The college has made strong recent progress in leadership and management. The established vision of the Principal, senior leaders and governors is guiding action, and key areas for improvement are being tackled.
- College tracking information shows some recent improvement in standards and that this improvement is set to continue. Students do well in a variety of subjects including drama, linked to the college's specialism.
- Frequent checking of students' progress, to plan the next steps in their learning, underpins improvements in achievement this year.
- The sixth form gives students a wide range of courses to gain the necessary qualifications for their future lives.
- A strong sense of college 'family' is shared by students and adults alike. Students typically feel safe. Their personal development is promoted through the very wide range of enrichment activities offered. Students relish opportunities to develop initiative and leadership skills.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 44 lessons, some of which were joint observations with members of the senior leadership team. They visited a number of tutorial sessions.
- Meetings were held with three groups of students, college leaders and staff, and representatives of the governing body and local authority.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work and attended an assembly. They scrutinised students’ work, progress data, evaluation and development documents, information about how the school cares for and protects students and staff, and records relating to behaviour and attendance.
- The inspection took account of questionnaires completed by 94 staff. There were too few responses to the online Parent View survey for this evidence to be considered. However, inspectors took into account parents’ and carers’ responses to college surveys.
- Two of Her Majesty’s Inspectors met with the school’s leadership on 27 September 2013 to clarify the findings of the inspection.

## Inspection team

Helen Hutchings, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Patricia Barford	Additional Inspector
Jalil Shaikh	Additional Inspector
Clifford Walker	Additional Inspector
Gill Walley	Additional Inspector

## Full report

*In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.*

### Information about this school

- Corelli College is an above-average-sized secondary school which holds specialist arts status.
- The college works closely with the network of the national Schools Co-operative Society.
- The large majority of students come from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. The majority of students speak English as an additional language, which is well above average.
- The proportion of students joining or leaving the college part-way through their secondary education is much higher than average. By the time students reach Year 11, around three quarters did not begin their secondary education at Corelli. Of those who join midway, around a quarter are at an early stage of speaking English.
- The proportion of students for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after children and children of service families) has doubled over the last two years, and, at over 80%, is very high. There are no students of service families in the school.
- The college runs specialist provision funded by the local authority for 20 students with autistic spectrum disorder.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported through school action is above average, as is the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- A few students attend off-site provision in a range of alternative placements, mainly in local further education colleges, giving them access to work placements or vocational courses not available at the college. A very small number of students who require additional emotional support attend specialist provision.

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

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching so that students make faster progress in pursuit of at least good achievement, by:
  - raising expectations to ensure that work set closely matches the prior attainment and abilities of students, especially those of White British backgrounds
  - developing a wider range of approaches in lessons to give students who are at an early stage of learning English more support to improve their literacy levels to those appropriate for their age
  - using best practice to make sure that staff who are new to the college have earlier support in understanding the college's expectations for high-quality teaching.
- Build on recent improvements in the effectiveness of leadership and management to ensure:
  - the quality of teaching continues to improve and the college's aspirations for good and better achievement are fully realised
  - all incidences of inappropriate behaviour are properly recorded.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Students' achievement over a period of years in a range of subjects and year groups has not been consistently good.
- Recent improvements in progress rates are narrowing the gap between college and national performance levels at the end of Key Stage 3 and in GCSE examinations. The college addressed the weakness in mathematics identified in the last inspection. Last year, mathematics results matched those in English and both, although below average, show improvement. Students currently in Year 11 have already achieved higher results than last year. However, the progress of some groups of students, particularly some from White British backgrounds, is still not good enough and a target for improvement.
- When students join Year 7 their overall attainment is significantly below average. Some students joining the college after Year 7 are newly arrived in the country and speak little English. This has had a restricting effect on the college's performance which has been below average; but, recently, gaps between these students and their peers show signs of closing.
- Improvements in ways in which teachers make checks on students' progress are proving successful in raising attainment and achievement. Until last year this was not always the case. However, there is evidence of the college moving in the right direction with initiatives in better leadership, management and teaching, and improving progress rates.
- The sixth form has no minimum entry requirements. Students choose from a broad range of courses meeting a very wide variety of needs. Some use their time in the sixth form to bring their qualifications to GCSE level in terms of success between A\* and C. Others follow higher-level vocational or academic programmes. The college success rate is broadly average across the programmes followed. About 90% of students complete courses and gain qualifications relevant for their future lives. The proportion gaining university places is increasing steadily.
- There have been some variations in achievement across subjects in the past but, although not eliminated, these are being ironed out. Students do well in a variety of subjects including drama which is one of the college's specialisms. Opportunities for involvement in enrichment activities, such as the college Kidbrooke Theatre Company, enable students to take initiative and develop personal skills.
- Opportunities are provided for students to enjoy reading. Students learn to use the library for independent study. The college encourages students to read widely and often.
- Progress for different groups of students, including those who have special educational needs, those who speak English as an additional language and those with autism in the specialist unit, reflects the same profile as the progress of others in the school.
- The gap between the GCSE results of students eligible for pupil premium and others is narrowing. In 2012, English results showed a difference of two thirds of a grade. In mathematics, the difference was around a grade, closer to the national gap. School tracking indicates that the gap is likely to be reduced in the 2013 results. Targeted activities to remove individual barriers to learning have had a positive impact. Many students supported through pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding make faster progress than others.
- The progress of students who attend provision outside the college is monitored closely. They make good progress to achieve specialist work-related qualifications alongside those in English, mathematics and science gained through the college.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- Despite recent improvements, over time the quality of teaching has not been sufficiently good to ensure that students' achievement has been consistently good.
- Teachers' expectations of what students are capable of have not always been high enough.

There are still inconsistencies, but recent improvements are having positive effects. These are reflected in better progress rates. Where teaching is good or better it results in good progress. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. This has been enhanced by training opportunities Corelli has provided.

- In lessons where teaching requires improvement, learning is not well developed. This is often because the teacher has not refined the tasks sufficiently well to meet students' needs. Work is not always set at the right level. The best teaching makes good use of a variety of tasks closely matched to students' earlier learning. Here, challenging questioning helps teachers to evaluate how well students are doing and to plan future activities.
- In the best lessons teachers make appropriate use of real-life situations to make sure that learning has relevance for students and engages them well. As a result, in such cases, learning takes place at a brisk pace.
- Typically good relationships mean that students work together effectively, listen carefully to the opinions of others and build their confidence in what they can achieve. In the best lessons teachers plan appropriately for students to develop subject-specific and personal skills. This approach was seen to develop students' independence well, a weakness identified in the previous inspection. However, incidences of inappropriate behaviour in a minority of lessons sometimes negatively affect learning.
- Teachers are developing students' literacy skills effectively in their subject teaching, for example by exploring the difference between subject-specific and everyday use of words and terminology. However, they do not always ensure that language is reinforced sufficiently for students who speak English as an additional language. Written materials are not always modified so that they can be read and understood by these students. Although staff actively seek to encourage reading, this is more successful with younger students.
- Frequent opportunities for self- and peer-assessment help students to understand the quality of their work and how it relates to examination criteria. Marking is completed and up to date. Teachers identify what has been successful and what can be improved. There are good examples of students responding directly to this advice, helping them to move forward quickly in their learning. Improvements to the way students' progress is tracked and how work is then subsequently adjusted are forming a secure basis for the recent rise in progress rates.
- Students are guided towards extra help if they begin to fall behind their expected targets. Recent close monitoring of students' progress and a very wide range of additional classes and programmes are effective in bringing students back on track. Many such activities show the contribution to teaching made by skilled teaching assistants, for example in supporting students new to the college and those with particular learning difficulties.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** require improvement

- Incidences of inappropriate behaviour in some lessons have a negative effect on students' learning. There is evidence of a minority of occasions where a small group of students exhibit inappropriate behaviour towards others. Students say that this is being dealt with consistently. However, these incidents are not always fully recorded.
- Behaviour around the college is typically good, with most students using the grounds in a responsible manner to socialise. The overwhelming majority of students comment particularly on how they enjoy college life because of the extensive range of clubs and activities. Student leaders take strong initiative in organising many events, which give them opportunities to develop leadership skills in addition to helping others develop individual talents and interests.
- Students feel confident to speak to staff if they have problems. Sixth form students say that throughout their college education they have felt safe, and when they have raised concerns senior leaders have dealt with them swiftly and effectively.
- The college mission statement, 'Learning together, enjoying success', extended into a set of principles based on cooperative values, is displayed prominently around the college. This promotes an ethos for learning. An example of students' positive attitudes to learning was seen

in a Year 10 lesson on *The Tempest*, when the sharp focus and concentration of students helped them to achieve well in interpreting and evaluating the drama.

- Most students value the college as a cohesive 'family' community. They say that they feel safe and that bullying is rare. They understand about issues relating to discrimination, such as prejudice-based comments, because matters are usually discussed openly. This approach is a strength of the school.
- Attendance has improved gradually over recent years. It has been below the national average but is now in line with that of similar schools.

## **The leadership and management are good**

- Improvements have been made since the last inspection and their impact has been most obvious over the last year. The Principal, strongly supported by senior leaders and the governing body, has taken decisive and perceptive action to strengthen college systems. While teaching and students' achievement are not yet good, the positive impact of leadership and management can be seen in the way the school has moved from 'inadequate' to 'requiring improvement'.
- Systems for checking the quality of teaching are now effective. Weaknesses are identified clearly and support provided, for example by the coaching and mentoring team. Teachers speak of how they are being encouraged to develop their teaching and management skills and success is seen in continually improving teaching.
- The college has identified that the support offered to staff joining during the year, or to those on short-term contracts, has not always been strong enough for them to understand fully the expectations of what constitutes effective teaching at Corelli College. Initiatives are in hand to address this, but the full impact has yet to be seen.
- Incidences of inappropriate behaviour, including some bullying, are being addressed. However, the recording of some of these requires improvement. Nevertheless, the college's promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength. Regular events, such as focus days when students work in mixed-age groups, are valuable experiences.
- The college's commitment to equality of opportunity is exemplified in its inclusive sixth form and the support for those who have found it difficult to cope elsewhere. The sixth form curriculum is flexible so that students, many of whom have had disruption to their education, are able to pursue a range of qualifications at a pace in keeping with their prior attainment.
- The college has strong partnerships and local networks with other schools which benefit students. Occasionally sixth form students attend courses not available within the college in neighbouring colleges. Corelli continues to work closely with the local authority, which provides on-going support. This has been effective in moderating students' outcomes and providing advice for departmental development.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Since the last inspection governors have ensured that they are kept very well informed by the Principal and senior leaders. They know of the college's work from frequent visits. They make increasing use of first-hand information to challenge and support. They are committed and have an astute appreciation of the college's journey of improvement. Governors now have an in-depth understanding of college performance data and how students' achievement compares with the national picture. They visit lessons with senior leaders, and know where teaching is most effective and where it needs to improve. They check that pupil premium funding is having the intended impact to inform planning and allocation. Governors undertake training to ensure an up-to-date knowledge of their responsibilities and duties. Governors ensure that teachers' pay awards are dependent on effective performance over time and that targets are met. Safeguarding and child protection arrangements effectively meet current requirements.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	137473
<b>Local authority</b>	Greenwich
<b>Inspection number</b>	408889

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Academy
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,180
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	230
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Angela Sweeney
<b>Principal</b>	Trisha Jaffe
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19–20 March 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8516 7977
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