

Corelli College

Corelli Road, Blackheath, London SE3 8EP

Inspection dates

10–11 May 2016

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The new principal has taken strong, decisive action to improve crucial aspects of college life but this has not had enough time to ensure that teaching and achievement are consistently good.
- Pupils' achievements are inconsistent across subjects and year groups, especially for White British pupils and those who have special educational needs or disability.
- Pupils' performance in science and the humanities requires improvement and too many pupils struggle to make good progress.
- The quality of teaching is too variable. Not enough of the teaching enables pupils to make sufficient progress from their starting points.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are not consistently high across the college. As a result, the most able pupils are not stretched enough to achieve as well as they could.
- Assessment in key stage 3 is not precise enough and the college does not have accurate information about pupils' progress in Years 7 to 9.

The school has the following strengths

- The principal, with determined support from senior and middle leaders, has taken uncompromising action to improve the college. There is an absolute commitment to rapid improvement from all leaders and governors.
- Work to tackle the college's weaknesses is increasingly successful. As a result, pupils' experiences of college are positive and outcomes are on an upward path.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare are strong. Pupils express eloquent support for the college, praising their teachers and the diversity of the community.
- Teaching in English, vocational subjects in the sixth form, physical education, engineering, art, information and communication technology and media studies are effective. As a result, pupils and students achieve well in these subjects.
- Teachers generally have good subject knowledge.
- The progress of Year 11 pupils in English and mathematics is improving and close to national figures.
- The sixth form is good. Teachers have high expectations and a strong commitment to raising students' aspirations. Examination results are improving and nearly all of those taking advanced courses go on to university.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and learning by ensuring that:
 - work to tackle poor teaching continues to be rigorous
 - all teachers have consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve so that work is challenging and enables pupils to make good progress from their starting points
 - examples of successful teaching are used more frequently to raise quality in those areas where teaching requires improvement.
- Improve pupils' outcomes by ensuring that:
 - progress in science and humanities is at least as good as that in English and mathematics
 - the achievements of White British pupils and those who have special educational needs or disability are boosted so that the gap in achievement is narrowed.
- Improve assessment procedures in key stage 3 by:
 - ensuring that information is clear and accurate, so that it can be used to monitor and evaluate the progress of pupils from their starting points
 - providing relevant assessment information for teachers to help them plan work that meets pupils' needs more effectively.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- Despite some significant challenges, senior leaders and governors have tackled the college's weaknesses with determination and a commitment to improve the life chances of pupils. The principal has driven a wide range of ambitious improvements with persistence and resolve. With the committed support of leaders and governors, this is creating the foundations for continuing improvement.
- The principal's reorganisation of the senior team has ensured that responsibilities are well defined. As a consequence, senior leaders play a central part in driving improvement and making the college's vision and cooperative principles a reality. For example, the sixth form has improved well since the last inspection. Much has been done to engage with parents and the local community and their attendance at meetings to discuss their child's progress has improved significantly. Parents' views of the college are positive and the great majority of parents would recommend the college to others.
- Middle leaders, some of whom are new to the role, share the senior leaders' vision for the college. They understand that they are responsible for pupils' outcomes and, as a result, are becoming increasingly effective in holding their teachers to account for achievement.
- While the impact of the college's efforts to improve the quality of its work is bearing fruit, teaching quality remains too variable across the college. In part, this variability is the result of the difficulties in recruiting good-quality staff, especially in science, and the need for temporary teachers. The principal is rightly adamant that new, permanent staff must meet the college's high expectations for performance.
- The systems to monitor the quality of teaching identify accurately strengths and areas for development. Judgements are based on a range of information including observing learning in lessons and work in pupils' books. As a result, leaders have a clear understanding of the priorities for improvement and where to direct specific support and guidance. Many teachers welcome the opportunities for professional development and feel it supports their teaching. The coaching and mentoring programme is starting to have an impact, although leaders recognise that raising teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve is still a priority.
- Procedures for the performance management of teachers are thorough and used effectively. Targets are based specifically on pupils' progress and outcomes, and linked closely to pay increases.
- Pupils' progress is checked regularly. The information is analysed thoroughly to show the progress of pupils from different backgrounds, disadvantaged pupils, the most able and those who have special educational needs or disability. In key stage 4, the information is used to identify those pupils who need extra help or are falling behind with their learning. In key stage 3, the newly introduced assessment procedures do not provide accurate information about pupils' progress over time. The college recognises that the assessment model needs further refinement.
- A range of interventions are used to extend pupils' learning, such as after-school sessions and clubs, the college curriculum entitlement programme (ACE) and the farm academy. These are having a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to college and learning. Behaviour has improved and although pupils' progress requires improvement, it is moving in an upward direction.
- Changes to the curriculum are well conceived and better matched to the needs of pupils than the previous model, especially in key stage 4 where early entry to GCSE resulted in lower performance than expected. This is still the case for the current Year 11 group and has an adverse impact on the grades of lower-achieving pupils. Despite changes to the curriculum, the commitment to the arts subjects has not been sacrificed and pupils achieve well in these areas.
- The curriculum makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The after-school clubs, pupil leadership schemes, the college council and the 'learning communities', all-age tutor groups for Years 7 to 11, all help to ensure that pupils develop their personal and life skills effectively. The farm academy, for example, with its bee-keeping, chickens, and fruit and vegetables, enables pupils to develop a sense of responsibility for living things. The 'Pride Alliance' group, which celebrates lesbian, gay and bisexual people illustrates the college's commitment to diversity and equality.
- Trips and visits, such as the modern language visits to European cities and history visits to trenches of Ypres, contribute to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Visits to Parliament, theatres, art galleries and museums reinforce the college's commitment to democracy and the arts. As a result, pupils develop a good understanding of British values. Pupils are very respectful of others and welcoming to new pupils from different backgrounds.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is used in a wide variety of ways, including to provide counselling, learning mentors, attendance officers, targeted support and extra classes to target those in need. The college evaluates the impact of interventions effectively and uses this to adjust its provision.

- The additional funding for Year 7 pupils is used appropriately to provide extra help for pupils, including the accelerated reading programme and supporting the smaller class sizes in English and mathematics. As a result, there has been an improvement in pupils' achievements, which are close to the national average in English and mathematics.
 - The systems to monitor attendance and punctuality are effective. Staff take swift action when pupils' attendance drops and work closely with families. As a result, attendance has improved.
 - Careers advice enables pupils and students to make relevant choices at the age of 16 and when they leave the college. As a result of this advice, the proportion of pupils who remain in education, training or employment is high.
 - The college currently has eight pupils who attend a range of alternative provision for part of their education. This year, four pupils have successfully rejoined the college which has involved the internal exclusion unit, 'the Gatehouse'. Placements to alternative provision are made in partnership with the local authority and pupils' progress and safeguarding are monitored regularly by the college.
- **The governance of the school**
- Governors are highly ambitious for the college and its pupils. They have a secure knowledge of the college's strengths and weaknesses, and work effectively with leaders to identify and address the improvement priorities. They are very supportive of the principal's determination to improve the college but they also provide challenge when appropriate.
 - Governors visit the college regularly and frequently. They carry out six monitoring visits each year to look at lessons and ensure that all their statutory duties are met, including those for safeguarding. Governors have a good understanding of their duties under the government's 'Prevent' strategy.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The governors and the college meet their statutory responsibilities and all staff have been trained to recognise the signs of pupils who may be at risk. The chair of governors works closely with the college and visits regularly to check that requirements are being met. Staff know whom to contact if they have any concerns, and the college-based police officer provides a visible presence. As a result, safeguarding contributes to the college's positive culture. The Friday 'values' sessions ensure that pupils are aware of the dangers of radicalisation and extremism. A significant proportion of staff have been given training about the government's 'Prevent' strategy.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **requires improvement**

- Teaching requires improvement because it is too variable across subjects and year groups. As a result, not enough pupils make good progress.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are not consistently high. Too often, pupils are given work that does not challenge them to achieve at the highest levels. This is especially the case in science, humanities and music, where undemanding work means that too few pupils make sufficient progress from their starting points. In these cases, teachers provide work that fails to interest pupils or capture their imagination, and accept work that is poor quality. These low expectations mean that pupils make less progress than expected.
- Some teachers do not give pupils clear enough instructions about what to do or what they expect them to achieve by the end of the lesson. This makes it difficult for pupils to produce work at a high enough standard and they fail to consolidate or deepen their knowledge and skills. In other cases, teachers fail to move pupils onto the next task quickly enough. Where this happens, learning is dull and unexciting and pupils lose interest. This limits pupils' progress, especially of the most able. As one pupil noted, 'When the work is challenging, that's when it gets interesting.'
- The best learning happens when teachers use questions to deepen pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. For example, in English lessons in Year 8, teachers ask questions that probe pupils' understanding and enable them to think more deeply about Shakespeare's characters in 'Othello'. In other cases, teachers get pupils to share ideas or assess each other's work, for example in a Year 11 science lesson. This enables pupils to learn from each other and deepen their understanding. In physical education, pupils evaluate each other's work and give advice about how to improve performance by applying their knowledge.
- In a number of lessons, teachers and other adults intervene quickly with individual pupils to ensure that they make progress. For example, many teachers are quick to tackle inattentiveness or misunderstandings and use the college's rewards and sanctions policy effectively. Praise is used well to celebrate success and to encourage pupils to improve their work.

- Teachers' assessment is often used well to provide pupils with feedback about their work and how it can be improved. Teachers provide pupils with time to review their work, using the results to give them pointers about how it could be developed. The college's marking policy is applied well by most teachers and understood by pupils. This helps pupils to improve their work.
- Pupils speak highly of their teachers and say that they give up their own time to help them. Pupils are clear that they can always turn to their teachers for help. Other adults, such as learning mentors and teaching assistants, work cooperatively with teachers to provide timely support for pupils.
- The good relationships between teachers and pupils, and between pupils themselves, help to ensure that in most classrooms there is a positive climate for learning. In the great majority of cases, teachers have good subject knowledge and an in-depth understanding of the demands of external examinations. As a result, pupils trust and respect their teachers, and are prepared well for their GCSE examinations.
- Literacy is taught effectively, especially in English and increasingly in other subjects. The teaching of numeracy is variable and too often is not a feature of teaching in subjects other than in mathematics. For example, in science the development of pupils' numeracy skills is inconsistent.
- Despite inconsistencies, there have been improvements in teaching. This is illustrated by the college's own checks on teaching quality and a rise in attainment and progress in English and mathematics. In science and humanities, there are signs of improvement but this is not yet secure and leaders recognise that more needs to be done to ensure that all pupils achieve good progress from their starting points.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The college's open and tolerant culture promotes its values of democracy, solidarity, equity, equality, self-help and self-responsibility effectively. Learning communities, each named after one of these values, reinforce this commitment and encourage pupils to show respect and tolerance towards others. This fosters a strong climate of mutual trust and understanding. Pupils are very proud of the college's diverse community and say it is one of its strengths.
- The college's positive culture promotes pupils' welfare successfully. Pupils are taught about keeping themselves safe, including on the internet, through tutor time and especially during the Friday morning 'values' sessions. Pupils talk confidently about issues such as sexual exploitation and forced marriage, and about how to keep themselves safe from gang violence and radicalisation.
- Pupils are given a good range of opportunities to take responsibility and involve themselves in the college's development. Developing pupils' leadership skills is a strong focus of the college. Pupils apply for a variety of leadership roles, including arts leaders, peer tutors, student researchers and lead learners. Some 130 pupils are involved as community leaders, tutor representatives, sports captains or members of the activities and events committee. Pupils value these opportunities and say it gives them the chance to influence developments, such as quiet rooms and the design of their uniform.
- The programme for careers education, advice and guidance is effective. As a result, pupils make sensible choices about the next stages in their careers and nearly all progress to education, employment or training.
- Pupils are unequivocal that they feel safe in and around the building. Senior staff are always around the college at break and lunchtimes, and at the college gates in the morning and at the end of the school day. Pupils say that there is very little bullying but are very confident that if it does happen it is dealt with swiftly and successfully by the college. This is confirmed by the college's records. The great majority of parents agree that the college deals effectively with bullying.
- The support for pupils who are vulnerable or have emotional needs is good. The college has a strong focus on pupils' mental health and has a dedicated health centre as part of its 'Teen Talk' initiative. The college works closely with parents, external agencies and its own counsellor to provide support and guidance.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils, staff and parents agree that it has improved significantly. Since the arrival of the current principal, there has been a renewed focus on ensuring high expectations of behaviour.
- Occasionally, where teaching is not good enough, pupils' behaviour suffers and slows learning. However, in the great majority of lessons, pupils are enthusiastic learners who are eager to achieve well. They are

absorbed in their learning and keen to answer, and ask, questions. As a result, behaviour is good.

- Behaviour at break and lunchtime is good and for the most part pupils conduct themselves well. They are polite and courteous and get on well with each other and adults. Occasionally, behaviour in corridors is boisterous but staff are quick to intervene and prevent problems escalating.
- Attendance and punctuality rates are analysed rigorously and the results used to drive improvement. The daily checks on attendance and punctuality, made by the college's attendance officer, are successful in reducing the proportion of pupils who are absent from the college. Attendance is similar to the national average overall.

Outcomes for pupils

require improvement

- Pupils start at the college with below-average levels of attainment in the basic skills of English and mathematics. Over the past few years, the proportion of pupils making expected progress at the end of key stage 4 has been below the national average.
- While pupils' attainment and achievement in GCSE examinations has met the government's minimum targets over the past two years, outcomes have not been consistently good across all subjects. In 2015, there was a dip in performance and the proportion of pupils achieving at least five GCSEs at grades A* to C, including English and mathematics, was below average. The college's assessment information shows that pupils currently in Years 10 and 11 are making better progress and the dip in performance has been reversed. However, too few pupils still do not reach the highest levels.
- Progress in science and the humanities subjects requires improvement. The quality of teaching is not consistently good and expectations are not high enough. However, there are exceptions in both these areas. Progress in triple science is at least in line with expectations because teaching is good. In history, recent improvements are leading to better outcomes.
- Progress is good in English, art, media studies, physical education and information and communication technology, and improving in mathematics. In these subjects, pupils are encouraged successfully to reach challenging targets and learning is interesting and motivating. Pupils mostly achieve well in modern languages because the work set is demanding and lessons are well planned.
- Progress in Years 7 to 9 is also improving but remains inconsistent across and within subjects. The college's new assessment system is not yet secure and, as a result, does not provide enough information about pupils' progress from their different starting points.
- Pupils from White British backgrounds and those who have special educational needs do less well than others. The gap between these pupils, others in the college and pupils nationally has failed to narrow significantly since the last inspection. Leaders recognise that this remains a priority for the college.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language make swift progress with their reading and writing skills and learn to speak English with confidence.
- The achievements of disadvantaged pupils are improving. In English and mathematics, disadvantaged pupils are now making expected progress and the fall in achievement in 2015 has been reversed.

16 to 19 study programmes

are good

- The sixth form is led and managed effectively. Leaders have a strong vision and high expectations with an emphasis on raising aspirations. Students agree that their teachers are aspirational for them. They especially welcome the very positive atmosphere in the sixth form which they describe as calm and friendly with a sense of purpose.
- There is a clear emphasis on making sure that students are on appropriate programmes of study. Leaders monitor each of the courses carefully and take robust action to cut those that are unsuccessful or do not provide value for money. Students say they chose to stay on in the college's sixth form because of 'the knowledge of the teachers' and being 'well supported' at key stages 3 and 4.
- Provision for careers information, advice and guidance is independent and effective, encouraging students to be aspirational. For example, there are numerous links with universities that provide students with an insight into life in higher education and encourage them to aim high. Students feel they are given clear advice about further study after college and are encouraged to choose the path that is right for them.
- Teaching is good because it challenges students effectively and results in some good outcomes, especially in vocational courses where success rates are especially high. In many lessons, teachers ask questions that stretch each student's thinking and students are encouraged to use appropriate language to explain their ideas. These factors, and the range of activities in lessons, ensure that students are confident learners who are engaged in their learning and who make good progress.
- Students study a range of academic and vocational AS-level, A-level and BTEC courses that meet their

needs well. In addition, the sixth form provides English and mathematics for those who did not achieve at least a C grade in Year 11. They are able to retake the examinations when they are ready.

- Students' outcomes are improving. Assessment information for students currently in the sixth form shows that the drop in the 2015 results is being tackled successfully. Achievement in vocational subjects continues to remain a strength and although performance in AS-level programmes is not quite as good, it is improving to match those at A level. Nearly all students currently studying A level have been offered conditional places at universities. In addition, the proportion of students who do not progress to further or higher education, employment or training is low and the destinations of all are known to staff.

School details

Unique reference number	137473
Local authority	Royal Borough of Greenwich
Inspection number	10001793

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,148
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	207
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ms Angela Sweeney
Principal	Ms Zara Tippey
Telephone number	029 8516 7977
Website	www.corellicollege.org.uk
Email address	ztippey@corellicollege.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	9–10 July 2013

Information about this school

- Corelli College is a larger than average mixed, non-selective academy with a sixth form. It is a cooperative academy founded on the values of the international cooperative movement.
- The school converted to an academy in 2012. When it was inspected in July 2013, it was judged to require improvement.
- One third of the pupils are from White British backgrounds and two thirds from a range of minority ethnic groups including African and Asian.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is very high. The pupil premium is government funding used to support pupils who are eligible for free school meals or who are looked after.
- Over half of pupils speak English as an additional language, which is above average.
- The proportion of pupils who receive special educational needs support is above average. The proportion with a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is average.
- The college meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The college meets the requirements on publication of specified information on its website.
- Eight pupils currently attend alternative provision on other sites.

Information about this inspection

- Learning was observed in 43 lessons or part-lessons across a range of year groups and subjects, including the sixth form. Some of these were jointly observed with college leaders. Inspectors also visited form time and looked at arrangements at break and lunchtime.
- Samples of pupils' work were scrutinised during the observation of lessons.
- Discussions were held with the chair of the governing body and a staff and community governor, the principal, vice principals, senior and middle leaders, a range of staff and groups of pupils, including a group of pupils for whom the college receives extra funding.
- A range of documentation and policies were scrutinised which included records of pupils' behaviour and attendance, and information on the progress made by pupils. Inspectors also scrutinised the college's self-evaluation, records relating to the quality of teaching, evidence of links with the community, the school development plan, and information about extra-curricular activities and the role of governors.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records, policies and procedures.
- Inspectors took account of the 166 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and looked at staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

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