

City of Norwich School

Eaton Road, Norwich, Norfolk NR4 6PP

Inspection dates

11–12 October 2016

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The excellent leadership of the headteacher, along with the head of school and other senior leaders, has precipitated the school's rapid improvement.
- Teachers in charge of subjects are expert and are leading improvement effectively in their own departmental areas.
- The governing body is highly effective in supporting and challenging school leaders.
- Pupils make good progress in a wide range of subjects, including English and mathematics.
- The school's work to ensure that disadvantaged pupils make rapid progress is having a highly positive impact.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They are highly committed to enhancing their own learning.
- The sixth form is good. Students make good progress and are very well prepared for the next steps in their education or employment.
- The overall quality of teaching is good, and the school's meticulous focus on developing teachers' skills ensures that teaching is improving.
- Over time pupils do not experience enough outstanding teaching. Not all teachers check systematically enough the progress that pupils make within lessons.
- Some teachers do not apply the school's expectations about homework consistently enough to ensure that it coherently consolidates or accelerates learning.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Strengthen teaching, learning and assessment in the school to outstanding, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - systematically check the learning of pupils in every lesson to help sharpen the timeliness of interventions
 - improve the impact of homework so that it consistently deepens and strengthens learning.
- Improve outcomes to outstanding, by:
 - extending the number of subjects in key stages 3 and 4 in which pupils make progress above the national average
 - accelerating the overall progress that students make in the sixth form.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The determined and decisive leadership of the headteacher, the head of school and other senior leaders has ensured that this is a rapidly improving school. The strength of leadership is recognised universally by pupils and staff. Leaders work tirelessly towards fulfilling the school motto of 'excellence in all'.
- School leaders establish and routinely articulate very clear expectations about the conduct of pupils. These are applied routinely throughout the school and this results in the pupils' consistently positive attitudes to their learning, and their excellent behaviour. This in turn promotes effective teaching and learning.
- Self-evaluation at the school is perceptive and thorough. Leaders have an accurate understanding of what the school does well and what needs to be prioritised for further improvement. This knowledge informs clear development planning which is clearly focused on improving outcomes for pupils.
- The school's professional development programme is meticulously tailored to help improve the skills of individual teachers. Performance management systems are used effectively to challenge staff and hold them to account for pupils' progress. As a result the quality of teaching is improving rapidly, and teaching is highly effective in a wide range of subjects.
- Leaders' high-quality support for teachers' professional development ensures that teachers are highly motivated and are very keen to stay at the school. As a result levels of staff retention are high.
- Teachers in charge of curriculum and pastoral teams are highly effective. They are well supported by senior leaders, but they also feel trusted as the leading experts in their own areas. They apply this expertise intelligently to continuously raise standards.
- School leaders are using pupil premium funding successfully to reduce the difference between the performance of disadvantaged pupils at the school and other pupils nationally. They are also effective in using additional funding to accelerate the progress of pupils who need to catch up with their peers when they first arrive at the school.
- Staff and governors carefully plan and regularly evaluate the school's broad and balanced curriculum. The successful transition of pupils to the next stage of their education or employment is well supported by effective, impartial advice and guidance. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities which are well attended and help enhance pupils' positive attitudes.
- Opportunities for developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural knowledge and understanding are successfully threaded throughout lessons, assemblies and tutorial periods. The tolerance and respect that pupils develop for difference and diversity is clear on a daily basis in how they interact with their peers and adults throughout the school.
- School leaders have responded to concerns raised by some parents about the quality of the school's communication by undertaking a thorough review of practice and introducing a coherent policy to enhance future parental communication.
- The Ormiston Academies Trust has been very successful in supporting the school's improvement. The reciprocal sharing of effective practice across trust schools has

contributed significantly to raising standards and motivating staff.

Governance of the school

- Governance is highly effective. Governors make a very positive contribution to determining the strategic direction of the school. They successfully analyse and evaluate information about the school's performance and ensure that effective plans are in place to promote further improvement.
- Governors undertake their responsibilities rigorously. They fulfil all their duties, such as ensuring that safeguarding procedures, including those concerned with dealing with the threat of radicalisation, are rigorous and thorough.
- Governors ask challenging questions of the school's leadership to discover whether targets are being met. They maintain a careful oversight of how additional funding is spent, including funding for those who qualify for support through the pupil premium.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective, including a meticulous approach to safer recruitment, maintaining central records and risk assessments. Procedures to identify and respond to any concerns are robust. Information shared with parents and carers on these occasions is regular and clear, and working relationships with other agencies to keep children safe are effective. The school successfully coordinates the care and welfare of children looked after who attend the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Effective teaching has a positive impact on learning and pupils make strong progress in a wide range of subjects as a result.
- There is a purposeful and productive atmosphere in almost all lessons. Teachers create very positive, trusting relationships. Pupils listen attentively to teachers' explanations and feel safe to ask and answer questions about their learning, even where they risk making mistakes.
- Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve in lessons. This means that in most subjects pupils routinely expect to receive tasks which challenge and stretch them.
- Pupils read widely, for example during identified times in tutorial sessions. The library is popular and busy. Pupils' numeracy is developed through a range of innovative cross-curricular initiatives.
- Writing at length across subjects is also now developing well, and pupils regularly practise and produce a wide range of written styles in subjects other than English.
- Pupils consistently present their work carefully and thoughtfully. As a result they maintain effective written records of their learning which help them master relevant content through revision.
- The school's distinctive 'disadvantaged first' policy has a notably positive impact on the teaching of disadvantaged pupils. Teachers ensure that planning in all aspects of their teaching (including, for example, learning objectives, feedback strategies, questioning and seating plans) is firmly based around the needs of any pupils in the class who have a learning disadvantage.
- The school has recently reviewed how it supports the learning of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The work that teachers plan for these

pupils is now carefully tailored to their individual needs, and their progress is accelerating as a result.

- Teachers use their secure subject knowledge to plan lessons which build coherently on what pupils already know and can do. However, some teachers do not sufficiently monitor the progress that pupils are making within lessons, and as a result they do not know when to adapt or adjust their original plans if necessary. This means that sometimes the progress pupils make is not as rapid as it could be.
- Some teachers do not plan homework which coherently builds upon or embeds what pupils have learned in lessons to the extent the school expects. This means that homework does not always maintain the same level of challenge that pupils have experienced within their lessons.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- School leaders have adopted a range of successful strategies to encourage very positive pupil attitudes. The school's positive rewards system, coherent programme of pupil leadership roles within the school, and personal development curriculum, are successful in encouraging pupils to reflect on their own attributes as learners. As a result pupils are confident and self-assured and they can eloquently explain how the school has supported them in their learning.
- Pupils feel safe and are well looked after in the school. They are appropriately supervised at break and lunchtimes and they are confident that staff will help and support them should they experience any problems, for example if there was any bullying. They know how to keep themselves safe, for example when using computers.
- The school develops the physical and emotional well-being of pupils through a range of subjects across the curriculum including drama, physical education, philosophy and ethics, and food technology. A large number of pupils benefit from the range of extra-curricular activities available, including sport, music and the arts.
- The full-time school nurse not only provides direct medical assistance when needed, but she also helps pupils learn about healthy lifestyles. The school benefits from involvement in a number of local partnership initiatives which promote positive mental health.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Teachers apply the school's behaviour policy consistently and effectively. As a result, behaviour in lessons rarely impedes learning.
- Pupils look after the school site very well and are unfailingly polite and courteous to adults and each other. Pupils move around the school in a measured, calm and orderly fashion.
- The school has worked very effectively to improve attendance. Levels of absence and persistent absence have both declined over the last two years, and over the past year they have both been in line with the national average.
- The number of fixed-term and permanent exclusions at the school has declined

significantly. Detailed records show that the number of other behaviour-related sanctions have also reduced year-on-year. The school has dealt effectively with the very small number of bullying incidents that have occurred. Pupils say they have confidence in the systems that are in place to deter, and respond to, bullying.

- The school effectively monitors the behaviour and attendance of pupils who are taught off-site. The impact of educating some pupils in this way is highly positive in terms of improving their attitudes, punctuality and attendance.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- The achievement of pupils at the school is improving rapidly. The overall progress made on average by pupils at key stage 4 in 2016 was above that made by pupils on average nationally.
- Pupils currently in the school make good progress in a wide range of subjects. Progress is particularly strong in mathematics, English, modern foreign languages, science and humanities. Outside of these English Baccalaureate subject areas progress is not so rapid and remains broadly in line with that made by pupils nationally.
- In 2016 the progress made by students at key stage 5 was in line with that made by other pupils nationally, and students currently in the sixth form continue to make good progress.
- The school's highly effective provision for disadvantaged pupils is helping to accelerate their progress significantly. In 2016 the progress that disadvantaged pupils at the school made at key stage 4 was similar to that made by other pupils nationally. However, the impact of this has not been entirely consistent across all subjects, and disadvantaged pupils did not perform so strongly in certain important areas, such as English.
- From their different starting points, all the differing ability groups in the school make strong progress. The most able pupils consistently make the greatest progress. Inspectors listened to a group of the most able Year 8 pupils read and discuss their choices of text. They did this with maturity and sophistication.
- The school pursues a range of strategies to promote the achievement of the most able pupils. They are motivated by highly aspirational enrichment activities, including trips to Russell Group universities and opportunities to participate in cultural activities such as the Guildhall School of Music and Drama programme. School leaders are careful to remove any barriers that might prevent the most able disadvantaged pupils from participating in such opportunities, and this helps to ensure that they make the same progress as those with similar prior attainment.
- The school's focus on literacy across the curriculum is having a positive impact on developing pupils' skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening. The skills that pupils develop equip them effectively for the next stage of their education or employment.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities did not on average make the progress they should have done at key stage 4 in 2016. The progress of similar pupils currently in the school is accelerating because teachers are carefully planning how to meet their needs more effectively, including through the effective use of teaching assistants.
- The school closely monitors the progress of the small number of pupils who are

educated off-site through programmes of alternative provision, ensuring that they attend regularly and follow appropriate courses. Consequently, both the attitudes of these pupils and the progress that they make is, on average, better than it was before they started attending such provision.

- The pupils who join the school needing to catch up in English and mathematics benefit greatly from the structured programme provided by the school, which is supported by the additional funding that the school receives for this purpose. This ensures that the difference between their attainment and the national average has diminished by the end of Year 7. Inspectors heard pupils who had just completed their accelerated literacy programme read with confidence and fluency.
- Leaders use regular testing and internal and external moderation of work effectively in order to monitor how much progress pupils are making, and provide support if they fall behind. The school's own performance information, including estimates of future achievement, is largely reliable as a result.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- The leadership of the sixth form is very effective. Leaders have a clear vision for the development of the sixth form which they communicate clearly. Leaders responded quickly and decisively to disappointing outcomes in 2015, and consequently results improved to be in line with national averages in 2016.
- The progress of students currently in the sixth form is accelerating and they are making good progress in a wide range of subject areas. Disadvantaged students make particularly strong progress.
- A small number of students join the sixth form without GCSE passes at grade C or above in English or mathematics. The proportion of these students who improved their grade and achieved a good pass in these subjects increased notably in 2016.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment in the sixth form is good. Subject departments have initiated a programme of sharing effective practice and this has contributed to improved standards of teaching in most subject areas. A focus on effective developmental assessment in post-16 teaching has had a very positive impact on student learning.
- The work of the sixth form to promote the personal development, behaviour and welfare of students is highly effective. Sixth form students make a very positive contribution to the ethos of the wider school. They respond positively to the expectations of additional responsibility through undertaking leadership roles and being constructive role models for younger pupils. Inspectors observed sixth form students working as effective sports leaders in key stage 3 physical education lessons. Students have a very good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.
- The behaviour of students in the sixth form is excellent. Students take pride in their school and in their work and are committed to doing well. They conduct themselves in a mature and responsible way. High expectations for attendance and punctuality have resulted in improved attendance.
- Sixth form leaders are successful in guiding students onto appropriate courses. This contributes to extremely high retention rates across Years 12 and 13. Careers advice and guidance for students once they are in the sixth form is highly effective. This

enables students to make informed decisions about the next steps in their education. As a result, a very large majority of students move on to appropriate higher education courses; a significant proportion are accepted at Russell Group universities.

- The school successfully meets the requirements for the provision of 16 to 19 study programmes. Leaders effectively monitor all elements of the study programmes, including non-qualification activities. Although students follow academic courses they take up the many opportunities offered to them to enhance their understanding of the world of work; almost all post-16 students undertake work experience of some kind.

School details

Unique reference number	141269
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	10021796

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,570
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	374
Appropriate authority	The academy trust
Chair	Paul Fisher
Headteacher	Jim Nixon
Telephone number	01603 274 000
Website	http://www.cns-school.org/
Email address	head@cns-school.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with DfE guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is larger than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding is in line with the national average.

- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of minority ethnic pupils and pupils who speak English as an additional language is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is slightly lower than the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at key stages 4 and 5.
- A proportion of Year 10 and 11 pupils take part-time or full-time vocational courses at Easton College, St Edmund's Society, the Junction at Eaton Hall Specialist Academy and the Red Balloon Learner Centre, which are all located in Norwich.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 45 lessons, in order to contribute to their evaluation of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Some of these observations were conducted jointly with members of the school's leadership team. Inspectors also observed tutorial periods and assemblies.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and head of school, senior and middle leaders, teachers, members of the governing body, a representative of the trust and groups of pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of school documentation including policies, the school's self-evaluation, the school's improvement plan and information about pupils' achievement, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors considered the views expressed in 127 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, including 101 free text responses from parents, one additional written communication from a parent and 67 questionnaires returned by school staff.
- An inspector held telephone conversations with representatives from alternative providers used by the school to educate some of its pupils.

Inspection team

Paul Lawrence, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Diana Osagie	Ofsted Inspector
Kathryn Herlock	Ofsted Inspector
Donna Young	Ofsted Inspector
Phillip Barr	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2016

