

# Castle Donington College

Mount Pleasant, Castle Donington, Derby, Derbyshire DE74 2LN

## Inspection dates

9–10 January 2019

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders have high aspirations for pupils and are committed to ensuring pupils' success.
- Leaders have managed the expansion of the school to include key stage 4 provision very well. They have maintained the good quality of education during this challenging period.
- Leaders and governors know the school's strengths and areas in need of further development. They take effective action and continually strive for improvement. Leaders evaluate the impact of their actions and amend their plans accordingly.
- Leaders have created a culture where all feel valued. Staff understand and support leaders' ambitions for the school and pupils' success.
- Most teachers have high expectations of what pupils are able to achieve. They plan activities which challenge and interest pupils.
- Leaders promote pupils' personal development and well-being in all aspects of school life. Pupils are well cared for and benefit from strong pastoral support and guidance.
- Pupils are polite, confident and courteous. They respect those who have views that differ from their own. Pupils have a strong belief in equality.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Leaders continually review the curriculum to ensure that it meets pupils' interests and helps them to make good progress. A range of extra-curricular and enriching experiences complements the curriculum.
- Heads of department provide strong leadership for their teams.
- Most pupils make good progress in all year groups and subjects. Disadvantaged pupils do not make as much progress as others but the progress of this group of pupils is improving.
- Attendance is consistently above the national average. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are persistently absent from school is higher than average.
- Leaders do not have a strategic overview of the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). These pupils make less progress than others.
- Occasionally, teachers do not use information about what pupils are able to achieve to challenge them. This sometimes leads to low-level disruption and a lack of pupil motivation. Not all staff consistently apply the school's assessment and feedback policies.

## Full report

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

- Improve the progress made by pupils with SEND by developing a strategic approach for overseeing and evaluating the teaching and the curriculum for these pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that all teachers:
  - have high expectations and plan activities to challenge all pupils
  - consistently apply the school’s assessment and feedback policies.
- Reduce the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are persistently absent from school.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The principal provides strong leadership. She is very well supported by an effective senior leadership team. She has high expectations and a clear vision which is understood and shared by all staff. Everyone recognises their role in school improvement. Staff are ambitious and hold pupils' interests and success at the heart of all that they do.
- Leaders and governors have maintained the good quality of education in key stage 3 and ensured that the key stage 4 provision is equally strong. New appointments to leadership and teaching posts have strengthened the school's provision.
- Leaders promote staff development well. They have ensured that teachers have the skills, knowledge and understanding to provide a good quality of education. For example, they have received training to deliver new GCSE courses and staff benefit from support through links with other schools. Staff appreciate the professional development they receive and recognise that it helps improve their practice. Staff feel well supported and morale is high.
- Leaders seek and respond to advice, for example from the school's improvement partner. They evaluate the impact of their actions. They use this information to inform future planning to bring about further improvements.
- Heads of department take charge of leading improvements in their areas of responsibility and are well supported by senior leaders. Heads of department collaborate well and share best practice. This contributes to the continuing improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school.
- The curriculum is inclusive and ambitious for all pupils' success. Leaders regularly review and adapt the curriculum to meet the needs and interests of changing cohorts. For example, all pupils have access to triple science at key stage 4 and new vocational courses are being introduced from September 2019. The key stage 3 curriculum is broad and balanced. Additional activities provide pupils with enriching experiences.
- Leaders have ensured that the pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding is used effectively to improve pupils' progress. They evaluate the impact of the funding and amend their plans accordingly.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. They learn about British values in lessons and through educational visits. For example, pupils have visited law courts to learn about justice and the rule of law. Leaders promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well, particularly through the religious education (RE) curriculum, the tutor programme and the personal, social and health (PSHE) curriculum. Pupils learn about equal rights and the difficulties arising from stereotypes. Pupils in Year 7 have collected items for a local food bank.
- Leaders have not developed a strategic approach to the provision for pupils with SEND. The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) has ensured that the code of practice is implemented across the school. Leaders have ensured that additional funding is used to provide pupils with additional, specialist support. Staff know individual pupils well and recognise their needs. Teachers know how to provide for pupils in their lessons and many do so effectively. However, there is a lack of a

strategic oversight of the provision across the school. Pupils with SEND do not make as much progress as they should.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors understand the school's strengths and priorities for further improvement. There is a range of experience and expertise among the governing body and members use this well to provide support and challenge to leaders. The principal provides detailed reports to governors which they use to hold leaders to account.
- Governors are committed to ensuring that the school is successful. Meetings are well attended and focus on the school's key priorities. Each governor is linked to a specific aspect of the school. Link governors visit the school regularly and meet leaders to discuss developments and improvement plans. This helps to ensure that governors are kept up to date with developments.
- Governors receive regular and appropriate training to support them to be effective in their role.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The designated safeguarding lead is well supported by a team of trained staff. They work closely together and ensure that all are kept up to date with safeguarding matters.
- All staff receive regular safeguarding training. They are knowledgeable about safeguarding issues, particularly about those pertinent to the local area. Staff recognise and understand their responsibilities and duties to record and refer safeguarding concerns, including the need to report certain concerns to external agencies.
- Staff take prompt action when they are concerned about a pupil's safety or well-being. They monitor pupils closely to ensure that their needs are met.
- Positive relationships between staff and pupils strengthen the safeguarding arrangements across the school and ensure that pupils' well-being is promoted. The learning development department provides nurturing support to pupils in need.
- Leaders involve external agencies when necessary. They take prompt action when concerns are raised so that pupils get the help they need quickly.
- Leaders ensure that checks are made on staff's suitability to work with children. Safer recruitment practices are followed, and records are detailed and well maintained.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Relationships between staff and pupils are extremely positive. Teachers care about their pupils and want them to do well. Pupils feel well supported, which contributes to them making good progress.
- Teachers have very good subject knowledge which they use to interest and enthuse pupils in their learning. Teachers use clear explanation and demonstration to help pupils to understand.

- Most teachers have high expectations of what pupils are able to achieve. They use assessment information to plan challenging activities that interest pupils and that help them to make good progress.
- Teachers create a productive learning atmosphere. They expect pupils to work with positive attitudes. Pupils are keen to participate in lessons. Teachers promote equality of opportunity through their attitudes and approaches, and through the content of their subject. For example, in English, pupils were learning to challenge gender inequalities.
- Teachers use questioning skilfully to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding. They encourage pupils to enhance their reasoning skills and further their thinking. For example, inspectors observed teachers using questioning to extend pupils' learning in science and to access highly demanding concepts.
- There are occasional inconsistencies in teaching. In these cases, teachers do not use assessment information to plan activities which challenge or interest pupils. They do not ensure that pupils' needs are met. Sometimes pupils lose focus and participate in low-level disruption.
- Not all teachers consistently apply the school's assessment and feedback policies, so pupils are not always taught how to improve their work.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are confident and self-assured. The positive relationships between teachers and pupils support pupils to develop as independent and successful learners. Most pupils develop resilience well.
- Pupils' physical and emotional well-being is promoted throughout the school. The PSHE curriculum is effective in developing pupils' understanding of how to develop a healthy lifestyle. For example, pupils learn about healthy relationships and how to manage anxiety.
- Pupils understand how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations. For instance, they know how to protect themselves from the potential dangers of the internet. Pupils know what constitutes bullying and recognise that all forms of bullying, including cyber bullying, are unacceptable. Pupils say that bullying is rare but are confident that staff would deal with any instances that did occur, swiftly and effectively. Pupils feel safe in school.
- Pupils say they know who they can speak to if they have concerns. Tutors provide strong pastoral care and guidance.
- Pupils understand diversity. They recognise that others may have values and beliefs that differ from their own and respect these. They believe strongly in equality.
- Effective monitoring is in place for pupils who attend off-site alternative provision. Leaders and providers liaise closely to ensure that pupils' needs are met and that their personal development and well-being is promoted.

- Occasionally, when teachers have not communicated high expectations, some pupils do not apply themselves fully to their learning and are content to produce work that does not match their capabilities. This limits the progress of these pupils.

## **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Leaders have communicated clear expectations and pupils are keen to meet these.
- Pupils approach school life with a sense of purpose. They are punctual in the mornings and move promptly to lessons after break and lunchtime. They respond to staff requests and instructions quickly and willingly.
- Conduct around school is good. Pupils are polite and well mannered. For example, many pupils greeted inspectors around the school site and held open doors for them.
- Very few pupils receive fixed-term exclusions. Pupils who have been temporarily excluded from school are well supported to improve their behaviour. For example, they meet regularly with mentors who help them to develop positive attitudes and modify their behaviour. This has a positive impact and pupils appreciate the help they receive.
- Occasionally, when teaching does not meet pupils' needs, some pupils lose concentration and cause low-level disruption.
- Attendance is consistently above the national average. However, some pupils' attendance declines as they get older.
- Pupils with SEND do not attend as well as other pupils. However, recent action to emphasise the importance of attending school every day is beginning to have a positive impact.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are persistently absent from school has increased in recent years, although it remains below the national average. Ensuring that disadvantaged pupils attend school regularly is a key priority to maintain the improvement in their progress.

## **Outcomes for pupils**

**Good**

- The school does not yet have published outcomes for key stage 4 pupils. The first Year 11 pupils will take their GCSE examinations in the summer of 2019. Leaders' tracking information, and work in pupils' books, indicates that most Year 11 pupils are making good progress. They are well prepared for the next stage in their education, employment or training.
- Leaders expect that the proportion of pupils achieving a higher pass in both English and mathematics in 2019 will be similar to that achieved by all pupils nationally in 2018. Work in pupils' books corroborates this view.
- Pupils in all year groups are making good progress. Progress in Years 9 and 10 is particularly strong.
- Pupils who join the school with attainment below that typical for their age in reading and mathematics make good progress to catch up with their peers. Current Year 7 pupils are making good progress in these areas.

- Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND enter the school with attainment below that of their peers. They do not make as much progress as other pupils.
- The small number of pupils who attend off-site alternative provision make good progress in all aspects of their development and learning.
- Leaders promote reading across the school. Pupils are expected to read widely and regularly as part of the morning tutor programme and pupils in key stage 3 have a weekly reading lesson as part of their English curriculum. Pupils are encouraged to read around their subjects in their spare time and they spoke knowledgeably and enthusiastically about the texts they are reading in English. The library is welcoming and well used. Pupils appreciate the wide variety of texts from which they can choose. Pupils say that their use of the library broadens their experiences of texts.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils are provided with the guidance that they need to take the next steps in their education, employment or training. Pupils receive valuable information about the available options and are supported to prepare for suitable future pathways.

## School details

Unique reference number	138820
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10057639

This inspection of the school 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 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	541
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Robert Mitchell
Principal	Julie Sheppard
Telephone number	01332 810528
Website	<a href="http://www.castledonington.leics.sch.uk">www.castledonington.leics.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:postroom@castledonington.leics.sch.uk">postroom@castledonington.leics.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	24–25 March 2015

## Information about this school

- The school expanded to include pupils in Year 10 in September 2017 and Year 11 in September 2018.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is considerably below the national average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is average.
- A very small number of pupils attend alternative, off-site provision at Derby College.



## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 45 lessons, some jointly with senior leaders. They also visited six morning tutorial periods.
- Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, other staff and members of the governing body. The lead inspector spoke by telephone with the school's improvement partner.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in lessons and a large sample of pupils' books. Inspectors also read a sample of Year 11 pupils' recent trial GCSE papers.
- Pupils' behaviour was observed during lessons, at breaktime and at lunchtime.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils in discussion groups, in their lessons and informally around the school.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents including the school's self-evaluation, minutes of governors' visits and meetings of the governing body, information about the attainment and progress of all pupils, records relating to behaviour and safeguarding, and information on the school's website. They evaluated the school's pupil premium and Year 7 catch-up funding strategies.
- Inspectors considered the 78 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, and the 69 free-text responses from parents. They also looked at questionnaires completed by parents at parents' evenings. They considered 43 responses to the staff survey.

## Inspection team

Deborah Mosley, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Dick Vasey	Ofsted Inspector
Helen Williams	Her Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
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Manchester  
M1 2WD

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E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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