

John Flamsteed Community School

Derby Road, Denby, Ripley, Derbyshire DE5 8NP

Inspection dates	20–21 January 2016
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and her team provide strong leadership. They have raised aspirations among pupils and staff and this has led to improvements in teaching and outcomes.
- Examination results are improving quickly and the proportion of pupils obtaining five or more good GCSE grades including English and mathematics is now above average.
- Pupils make good progress from their different starting points. Progress in mathematics is particularly strong with an above-average number of pupils gaining the top A* and A grades in 2015.
- Disadvantaged pupils make good progress and are catching up with their classmates.
- Pupils learn in a calm and supportive environment where their teachers are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about their subjects and plan their lessons well.
- Pupils' behaviour around the school is good. They are proud of their school and show respect to one another and adults.
- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is effective. Pupils and parents agree.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and their attendance is above average.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain and their next stage of education and training.
- The governing body provides strong leadership. They have a good understanding of the work within the school. Governors and leaders have worked well together to plan the future direction of the school.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Older boys' books are sometimes untidy. They do not put enough detail in their written work and this slows down their progress.
- Middle leaders are not yet fully effective in reviewing and improving the work of teachers in their subject areas.
- Marking is not yet of a consistently high quality. Teachers do not always give pupils clear guidance about what they need to do to improve, or check that they have acted on their advice.
- Teachers do not always make sure that pupils have corrected their spelling mistakes.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Continue to secure better outcomes for pupils by ensuring that teachers:
 - check that boys make full use of the opportunities they are given to write at length
 - ensure that all pupils, especially older boys, present their work neatly
 - consistently give clear guidance to pupils on how to improve their work when they mark it, and check that pupils have acted upon their comments and suggestions for improvement
 - routinely check that pupils have corrected their spelling mistakes.
- Further develop the effectiveness of leadership and management by ensuring that middle leaders take full responsibility for evaluating the effectiveness of their subject area and improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment within it.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

is good

- Leadership and management are good because their actions are improving the quality of teaching and improving outcomes for pupils. Leaders and managers have created a very positive ethos in the school in which all pupils are valued and encouraged to behave well and learn.
- The headteacher provides strong and focused leadership with high aspirations for what pupils can achieve. She has created an effective senior team and together they provide good challenge and support for staff. At the same time, she has begun to increase the capacity of leaders and managers in the school by offering experienced middle leaders secondments to the leadership team to drive whole-school improvement projects such as 'raising boys' achievement'.
- Almost all staff who responded to the questionnaire are very supportive of the work of the headteacher and her team to bring about improvements. As one member of staff put it: 'I feel well supported in my role, am listened to and can talk to management about any issues.' Many agree that the school has improved since the previous inspection.
- Systems to track pupils' progress have been simplified and strengthened. Information is collected every term and staff now use this well to identify where and when pupils need additional help and support.
- The leadership of teaching has improved and is now good. There are clear expectations for high-quality teaching based on the new teaching and learning policy and the 'Diamond lesson non-negotiables', which are leaders' expectations for good practice. These expectations have brought greater consistency to teaching. Pupils say the new approach to teaching has made lessons more interesting and enjoyable.
- There are strong systems in place for senior leaders to check the quality of teaching through planned observations, scrutiny of work and analysis of information about pupils' progress. Systems for managing teachers' performance have been overhauled and are now robust. Leaders are ready to take action where necessary to improve teaching, and they set staff challenging targets that are linked to improving pupils' progress and their own teaching skills.
- The headteacher has forged new links with local schools and these have created opportunities for teachers to develop their skills: for example, learning about A-level courses in their subjects through working with colleagues in the new Amber Valley sixth form.
- Newly qualified teachers who are early on in their career are supported well. Those spoken to were full of praise for the support they receive.
- The school's self-evaluation of its effectiveness is open, honest and accurate. Plans for improvement are organised effectively and set out appropriate actions to address the areas for improvement.
- Leaders have thoroughly reviewed the way they spend additional funds from the pupil premium to ensure that it helps disadvantaged pupils make better progress. Spending includes additional help in English and mathematics, revision sessions during the holidays, mentoring and visits to universities to raise aspirations. The school now spends the funding wisely, and the gap between disadvantaged pupils and others is closing.
- The work of the team of middle leaders is becoming more effective. They are becoming increasingly adept at using information about pupils' progress to identify underperformance and put extra support in place. They are increasingly working together to identify good practice and establish consistent approaches to checking the quality of teaching in their subject areas. However, this is not yet strong across all subjects and is still at an early stage of development for some. As a result, much of the work to improve teaching and learning is still led by senior leaders.
- The range of subjects that the school offers is broad and balanced and promotes pupils' academic achievement and personal development well. New initiatives such the opportunity for most-able Year 7 pupils to study German as well as French are proving successful and enriching their experience of languages. Allocation of more time to English and mathematics is helping pupils to improve their literacy and mathematical skills. A wide range of sporting and other activities after school, such as astronomy and pottery, add to the opportunities for pupils and are well attended.
- The promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is good. A well-planned assembly and tutor programme as well as SMSC lessons, which include citizenship, religious education and personal, social, health and economic education, provide opportunities for pupils to reflect and consider a broad range of topics.

- The school prepares pupils for life in modern Britain well. Leaders foster good relations and tackle discrimination by ensuring that pupils learn about the different lifestyles and beliefs of others and the need to respect them. In Year 7, pupils have learned about Islam and the important role of the mosque in the life of a Muslim. Classroom displays remind pupils of the importance of British values such as respect, tolerance and democracy.
- **The governance of the school**
 - Governance has improved. After the previous inspection, governors had a review of their work and took prompt action to implement the recommendations from the report. They regularly evaluate their skills and have attended training events which have helped them to improve their effectiveness. They have ensured that they now have sufficient and timely information from school leaders to enable them to carry out their duties. As a result, governors now provide a good level of challenge and support for the school's leaders.
 - They are committed to the school, have a clear vision for its future development and are fully involved in the strategic planning around the proposals to become an academy with the East Midlands Education Trust (EMET).
 - Governors know the school well. They monitor the work of the school by visiting lessons, scrutinising progress, attendance and behaviour information, and meeting with school leaders such as the staff responsible for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Governors now regularly check on progress with the school improvement plan at meetings and during visits to school. These activities enable them to have an accurate view of the strengths and areas for improvement in the school.
 - Governors are well informed about the quality of teaching and make sure that there are robust arrangements to monitor the performance of staff. They check that decisions about teachers' pay are appropriately linked to their performance and responsibilities.
 - Governors track finances well and support leaders in deciding how additional funding, such as pupil premium funding, should be spent. Regular updates on the progress of disadvantaged pupils enables governors to check that spending is having an impact on improving outcomes.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders create a safe environment where pupils feel supported and safe. Parents and carers are well informed, through the school's website, about arrangements for safeguarding. Staff and governor training is up to date and covers the most recent requirements. Staff members know the actions they should take when concerned about a pupil's welfare.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

is good

- Teaching is improving quickly as a result of the strong drive by leaders to ensure that all teaching is at least good. The regular monitoring of the quality of learning within lessons means that good teaching is evident across most subjects taught in the school. As a result of improvements in teaching, pupils are making better progress and standards are rising.
- Teachers plan pupils' learning well. They make good use of the information they have about what their classes already know, understand and can do, to plan what they will learn next. They make the 'big picture' for learning clear so pupils understand what they are expected to do. Regular progress checks during the lessons ensure that misconceptions are addressed quickly. In a history class, during some work on 'Kristallnacht', a timely check on work covered so far ensured that pupils were able to see if they were interpreting the sources of information about the event in enough detail in order to move on to the next task.
- Teachers use questioning well to push pupils to deepen their understanding and as a result they make good progress. In a mathematics lesson, probing questioning by the teacher helped pupils to improve their understanding of equations and use the correct mathematical vocabulary.
- Teachers know pupils well and have positive relationships with them. They praise pupils when they master new ideas and, as a result, they usually work hard and take a pride in their work.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge and use it to plan creative and imaginative activities that engage and interest pupils. In a German lesson, as a result of the way the teacher skilfully introduced additional vocabulary, younger pupils enjoyed learning the names of countries and were thrilled when, by the end of the lesson, they could conduct a short conversation in German and express an opinion about the country.
- Where learning is most effective, teachers include activities with additional stretch and challenge for most-able pupils to tackle, and deepen their knowledge and understanding. This is particularly effective in mathematics and has led to more pupils gaining the higher GCSE grades.

- Teachers place an emphasis on improving writing skills. During the inspection, examples of high-quality pieces of writing were seen. However, in some lessons, teachers do not do enough to check that all pupils, especially older boys, have completed their writing tasks fully. As a result, the quality, presentation and detail in their written work are not as good as they should be.
- Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and follow the school policy. In the best examples, teachers give pupils clear guidance on what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. However, this is not yet consistent across the school. Some teachers do not make the areas for improvement clear enough for pupils to act on, or make sure that when they have given advice pupils have acted on it. Teachers regularly identify spelling mistakes in pupils' work but do not always make sure they have done their corrections.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils are eager to learn and willingly do as asked by teachers. This helps them make good progress. Pupils are prompt to lessons, bring the necessary equipment and settle down to work quickly. They are keen to answer questions, listen to each other during discussions and work together in pairs or small groups.
- Pupils are very proud of their school. They wear their new uniforms with pride and look extremely smart.
- Most pupils take care with their work and make sure it is completed on time, although a few older pupils do not. For these few, their work is poorly presented and sometimes incomplete.
- There are many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and this contributes to their personal development. The school council was fully involved in the decision about the new uniform, while other pupils coach sports teams as part of their work as sports leaders. Older pupils in Year 11 take on duties as prefects and they enjoy helping out at school events.
- Pupils told inspectors they feel safe. They trust their teachers and know that if they have any worries or want help with their work they can always talk to them.
- Pupils know how to keep themselves safe. Their understanding of the risks associated with using social networks and the internet is good. Pupils have a good awareness of the different types of bullying, such as cyberbullying, racist bullying, homophobic bullying and the use of derogatory language, and say that it is very rare in the school. They are confident that, if it did happen, it would stop if they told an adult. Their views are supported by school records.
- Vulnerable pupils who find school life challenging receive well-judged support and regular sessions, such as the homework club helping them keep up to date with their work.
- Parents overwhelmingly agree that their children are kept safe and are well looked after.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural lessons make a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. In these lessons, they learn about different faiths and the importance of respect towards others as well as how to stay safe and keep healthy. Assemblies are also thought-provoking events where pupils are able to reflect on their own attitudes to life. During the inspection, Year 11 pupils were encouraged to think about the statement: 'A healthy outside starts from the inside' and what it might mean for them.
- Older pupils appreciate the guidance they receive from the school about the wide range of courses and training they can follow when they leave at the end of Year 11. They all have an interview with a careers adviser and are kept well informed about college and sixth form open days. This prepares them well for the future.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Behaviour has improved since the previous inspection. Pupils are courteous and respectful towards one another, adults and visitors. They treat the school environment with respect and there is very little litter around the site.
- Pupils behave well around the school and move between lessons in an orderly and purposeful manner. At break and lunchtimes, they queue sensibly for their food and pupils of all ages get on well together.
- In the vast majority of lessons, pupils are well behaved. They understand the school's expectations for good behaviour, and lessons usually flow smoothly without interruption. Very occasionally, a few pupils lose concentration in lessons and, as a result, do not get on with their work as well as they should.

- Pupils enjoy coming to school. Attendance is above the national average. The school carefully monitors the attendance of all groups of pupils and promptly follows up absence. As a result, the number of pupils who are frequently absent continues to reduce and is very low.
- The school makes regular checks to ensure that the personal welfare, safety and academic progress of the very small number of pupils educated off-site are all of a good standard.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils make good progress from their starting points. There has been a strong increase in GCSE examination results since the previous inspection, together with improvements to progress across years and for different groups.
- Published GCSE results for the school do not include the results of the pupils who took work-related qualifications and iGCSE courses in English. When these results are taken into account, the proportion of Year 11 pupils obtaining five or more GCSE grades at A* to C including English and mathematics in 2015 increased markedly compared with 2014. The proportion is now above the national average. The improvement in English results was particularly strong.
- In English in 2014, the proportion of pupils making expected progress was below average. The proportion rose sharply in 2015 and is now similar to the national average. The proportion of pupils making more than expected progress also rose but was still below the national average.
- In mathematics in 2015, results at GCSE grades A* to C were above the national average. In 2015, the proportion of pupils making expected progress was higher than in 2014 and was above average. Similarly, the proportion making more than expected progress was above average.
- Improvements in results are also evident in other subjects at GCSE, such as science, although results in some optional subjects, such as drama and physical education, remain low.
- School information shows that rates of progress are improving for pupils in other year groups and the school is expecting GCSE results to rise again in 2016. Scrutiny of work and lesson observations undertaken during the inspection showed that pupils currently in the school are on track to make the progress that the school is predicting.
- The gap between boys and girls is closing. In 2014, the proportion of boys obtaining five or more GCSE grades at A* to C including English and mathematics was well below the girls. In 2015, the boys' results improved and the gap between their results and those of the girls narrowed to similar to that seen nationally. Boys do as well as girls in mathematics but not as well as them in English because their written answers often lack detail.
- Disadvantaged pupils are now making better progress and this is closing the gap with others nationally. In 2014, disadvantaged pupils were half a grade behind in English and over a grade behind in mathematics compared with others nationally. In 2015, disadvantaged pupils were less than a quarter of a grade behind in English and less than three quarters of a grade behind in mathematics. The school's progress tracking system suggests that this gap will narrow further in 2016. Effective interventions and teachers' focus on those falling behind are helping to make this happen.
- Teachers are challenging higher-ability pupils in lessons by encouraging them to undertake 'stretch' tasks, and work seen in books suggests that they are making the progress expected of them. In mathematics in 2015, the proportion of A* and A grades increased and was above national averages.
- In 2015, pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs did not do as well as their classmates because they did not study as many subjects. Arrangements to support pupils with disabilities and those with special educational needs have recently been adjusted to ensure that they study the full range of subjects and work more independently in lessons. Observations indicate that this approach is working and school information shows that outcomes for these pupils in all year groups are on track to improve.
- Individual records confirm that the very small number of pupils educated off-site make good progress in the specialist provision they attend.
- Reading is strongly promoted in the school. Regular silent reading sessions during tutor time encourage pupils to read more widely. Small-group interventions for pupils who find reading difficult help them to gain confidence and improve their reading skills.
- Pupils are well prepared for progression in their next stage of life in work or education. All pupils who left the school in 2015 were enrolled on education or training courses or obtained jobs with training for September 2015.

School details

Unique reference number	112948
Local authority	Derbyshire
Inspection number	10001860

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	564
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	Mr Philip Harding
Headteacher	Mrs Lisa Walton
Telephone number	01332 880260
Website	www.jfcs.org.uk
Email address	office@jfcs.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	21–22 November 2013

Information about this school

- This is a smaller than average-sized secondary school.
- The school is currently consulting on proposals to become an academy within the East Midlands Education Trust (EMET).
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is below average. This funding is for pupils looked after by the local authority and those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Almost all pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs is above average.
- A very small number of pupils currently receive education off-site. They follow a programme of learning provided by ACORN and OOST set up by the local authority.
- Since the previous inspection, the school has had an external review of both governance and its use of pupil premium funding.
- In 2015, the school met the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.
- The headteacher took up her post in September 2014.
- The school has established a partnership with a local school, Ripley Academy, to develop sixth form provision. The Amber Valley Sixth Form, based at Ripley Academy, is opening in September 2016.
- The school has received support from the West Bridgford School, a member of EMET.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 22 lessons across all year groups. Six observations were made jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors reviewed the work in pupils' books, talked to pupils about their work and checked on their progress over time.
- Inspectors attended two assemblies and two tutor periods. Inspectors also visited a small-group reading session held at the beginning of the day and heard some pupils in Year 8 read.
- The inspection team observed the behaviour of pupils in lessons, during lesson changeovers and at break and lunchtimes.
- Discussions were held with a representative of the local authority, staff, governors, the headteacher and other school leaders, including heads of subject and year leaders.
- Inspectors met formally with three groups of pupils of different ages and abilities. They also had a number of informal discussions with pupils around the school at break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors took account of the 61 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. They also took account of the 23 responses to staff questionnaires.
- The inspection team looked at a number of documents, including analyses of recent examination results and the school's own records of pupils' progress. They scrutinised the school's policies and procedures for safeguarding and child protection. Inspectors examined records of pupils' attendance and behaviour, the school's plans for improvement, and documents used by leaders to check the quality of the work of staff at the school.

Inspection team

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