

Inspection of Blue Coat Church of England School and Music College

Terry Road, Coventry, West Midlands CV1 2BA

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 May 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Sixth-form provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Good

What is it like to attend this school?

The Blue Coat vision is for pupils to 'live life in all its fullness'. Leaders and teachers work to realise this vision. Pupils benefit from this and are happy at school. There is a cohesive and vibrant school community. Pupils enjoy memorable and rich experiences. Their positive experience of education means they are proud of their school. Attendance is high. Pupils and staff share strong values of care, hard work, respect, integrity, servanthood and togetherness (CHRIST). They understand the importance of living their lives guided by these values. Leaders have built an inclusive community. Staff are very proud to work at the school.

Pupils' safety has high priority. Pupils know how to keep themselves and others safe. Behaviour is good in lessons. School staff deal well with bullying, which is rare.

There are high expectations for pupils' achievements. Academic outcomes are strong. Pupils all take part in extra-curricular and enrichment activities. There are plentiful opportunities to volunteer and give back to the community. Many pupils relish these. Music and drama are high profile. Many pupils take part in school productions. For instance, all pupils in Year 7 performed in the musical 'Joseph and his Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat' in the past year.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The headteacher leads by example and models the school's values. Staff and pupils respect her. Staff morale is very high. Leaders and teachers share a moral purpose. They work together to provide the best opportunities for pupils. Leaders value academic success equally alongside pupils' personal and spiritual development. These three aims support the curriculum. They also inform the many extra-curricular and enrichment activities offered, and many pupils relish these opportunities. Pupils who are initially reluctant to get involved are successfully encouraged by staff to do so.

The curriculum covers a broad range of subjects in depth. Subject leaders have created ambitious curriculum plans. They are clear about the knowledge and skills that pupils have to learn and practise. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They know how best to share this with pupils. Lessons follow a common structure. This helps pupils as they develop their knowledge over a series of lessons.

The majority of teachers skilfully assess pupils' understanding. Pupils are frequently asked to recall what they have learned before. This helps them to remember more over time. Pupils benefit from this. In a minority of subjects, this practice is less well developed. Occasionally, pupils do not know exactly what they have done well and what they need to improve. This means that, in some instances, new knowledge is not known in detail before moving on. Reading has a high priority across the curriculum. Pupils who have fallen behind in reading improve quickly.

Leaders have worked tirelessly to develop the provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and there has been significant improvement. Effective training means that teachers know how best to support pupils with SEND. Teachers meet their needs securely in lessons. Specialist SEND staff also support pupils effectively on a one-to-one basis.

Pupils' attitudes to learning are very positive. Classrooms are typically calm, orderly and productive. Teachers meet pupils at the door and welcome them. Most pupils respond to this by working hard throughout lessons. Teachers deal well with any off-task behaviour that does arise. However, at times, pupils disrupt lessons by arriving late. This is particularly an issue at the start of the day and after breaktimes. Leaders are working to improve punctuality, but strategies have not yet had the desired impact for some pupils.

School leaders place a high priority on providing personal development opportunities. The CHRIST values inform these opportunities. Pupils value the breadth of activities and events that are available. They know that 'living life in all its fulness' means more than simply attending lessons. There are extensive pupil leadership opportunities. Lots of pupils attend trips and visits related to different subject areas. The programme designed by leaders nurtures pupils' interests and develops their characters. Careers provision is strong. Pupils have useful exposure to the world of work. These experiences inform their ambitious plans for life after school.

Sixth-form students receive an outstanding education. They follow ambitious programmes of study. Students aim high and successfully achieve exciting destinations when they leave school. Students value the many opportunities they have to develop their leadership skills.

Governors are knowledgeable and committed. They check and challenge leaders' work, as well as providing support. Staff feel very well supported by leaders and greatly value the training they receive to continually improve their work.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff at Blue Coat receive in-depth training about safeguarding. A large number of leaders are experts in this aspect. This results in a vigilant culture of safeguarding at the school. Staff know how to identify pupils who need additional support. Pupils receive useful information about how to keep themselves safe. This means they feel safe in school and know how to look after themselves in other situations.

Any concerns are swiftly followed up. School leaders work closely with parents and external agencies. Prompt actions address any concerns. All staff understand their shared responsibility to look after pupils. Situations are not left unresolved.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils are not punctual to lessons. This means they miss valuable learning time, and the start of lessons is sometimes disrupted for others. Leaders need to ensure that their strategies to improve this issue are clear and are implemented consistently by all staff in order to ensure that pupils attend promptly at the start of the day and to every lesson.
- In a small number of subjects, the planned assessment opportunities are not precise enough to enable teachers to check pupils' understanding in lessons and at curriculum end points. This means some teachers do not systematically check that pupils' understanding is secure before they move on to the next stage of the curriculum. Leaders should ensure that assessment across the curriculum accurately enables teachers to check pupils' level of understanding.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	137272
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	10256842
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,692
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	337
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of governing body	Charlotte Marten
Headteacher	Victoria Shelley
Website	www.bluecoatschool.com
Date of previous inspection	3 and 4 March 2020, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is a Church of England secondary school. The last section 48 inspection of the school's religious character was in May 2022, when it was judged to be excellent.
- The school uses four registered alternative providers for a small number of its pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held discussions with the headteacher and other senior and middle leaders, including the special educational needs coordinator.
- Inspectors spoke with the chief executive officer of Inspire Multi-Academy Trust, members of the board of trustees and the local governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, English, art and design, modern foreign languages and history. In each curriculum area, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's extra-curricular activities, enrichment programme and personal development curriculum with leaders.
- Inspectors met with members of staff and spoke to pupils, formally and informally, at various points during the inspection. They also took account of responses to a pupil survey, a staff survey, Ofsted's parent questionnaire, Parent View, as well as surveys that the school had commissioned.
- Inspectors looked at records of attendance, behaviour, bullying and safeguarding. They also discussed these areas with leaders.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding arrangements by checking the school's approach to staff recruitment, scrutinising policy documents and meeting with safeguarding leaders.

Inspection team

Thomas Walton, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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