

The Crestwood School

Bromley Lane, Kingswinford, Dudley, West Midlands DY6 8QG

Inspection dates

27–28 February 2018

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The school is well led and managed. Leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and they are using this information to make further improvements.
- The headteacher, supported by leaders and staff, has created a positive and ambitious culture. Leaders have high expectations of themselves, staff and pupils.
- This is an inclusive school where pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Leaders and staff openly promote equality of opportunity and diversity.
- The broad and balanced curriculum helps pupils to make good progress in many subjects. It also contributes well to pupils' outstanding conduct and physical, mental and personal well-being.
- Teaching is improving and there is some very high-quality practice in the school. However, not all teaching matches the quality of the best.
- Most pupils make good progress across a range of subjects, including music, business studies, physical education (PE) and computer science. Rates of progress are improving in mathematics, humanities and modern foreign languages and improvements in English have continued.
- The progress made by the most able pupils has improved markedly but it was too slow in the past.
- Many groups of pupils, including girls, low- and middle-prior-attaining pupils and pupils who speak English as an additional language make strong progress in the school. However, the progress made by boys, disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is slower than other groups.
- Middle leadership is effective and most leaders fully assess the impact of their actions. However, some leaders do not refine their practice to make further improvements.
- Additional funding is used appropriately but its impact is not fully evaluated by leaders.
- The multi-academy trust provides effective support and challenge. Those responsible for governance hold leaders to close account.
- Pupils are keen to learn and they understand how to be successful learners. They are proud of their school and thrive as a result of the various opportunities that they are given to become caring, thoughtful and active citizens.
- Pupils behave very well. They respond positively to high expectations and the vast majority of pupils attend very well. However, a small number of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils are absent too often.
- Safeguarding procedures are robust. There is a strong culture for keeping pupils safe.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Leaders and managers should take further action to improve pupils' outcomes by ensuring that:
 - all teaching matches the quality of the best that can be found in the school
 - improvements in the progress made by the most able pupils are sustained
 - boys make improved progress throughout the school
 - the use of additional funding is evaluated fully to ensure that it has maximum impact on improving the progress, attainment and attendance of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils
 - all middle leaders fully assess the impact of their work in order to inform further action.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, senior leaders, staff, governors, trustees, pupils and parents, has created a positive and ambitious culture within the school. Leaders have high expectations of themselves, staff and pupils and they are raising aspirations throughout the school community.
- Leaders have ensured that an inclusive ethos permeates the school. Pupils from the neighbouring outstanding special school are welcomed into lessons and achieve very well. Similarly, pupils from the 'Listen and Learn' provision play a full part in all aspects of school life. Pupils told inspectors that, 'The school is for anyone and everyone.'
- Senior leadership is very strong and leadership at other levels is developing. There are some very high-quality middle leaders and subject and pastoral leaders are supported to be as effective as possible. However, some middle leaders do not fully evaluate the impact of their work in order to inform and refine further action.
- Quality assurance of the school's work is robust. Leaders know the strengths and weaknesses of the school and take effective action to develop provision. The impact of this can be seen in the improvements in the quality of teaching and the positive effect that this has had on the progress that pupils make.
- Leaders have created a productive climate for staff development. As a result of coaching and training opportunities in the school and the trust, staff are developing their practice. Leaders use performance management and staff training well to improve the quality of education provided by the school. However, some inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and pupils' outcomes remain.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced, and allows pupils to make good progress in many subjects. It promotes personal development very well. Leaders have embedded fundamental British values and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development within the curriculum. It also contributes well to pupils' excellent conduct and physical, mental and personal well-being.
- The school supports learning in the classroom through a wide range of enrichment activities. Pupils have a clear understanding of cultures that are different to their own and leaders and staff openly promote diversity and equality of opportunity. Consequently, pupils accept the beliefs of other people. They are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- Additional funding is used effectively but not fully evaluated by school leaders. For example, the pupil premium funds a range of activities that have helped disadvantaged pupils to make improved progress. Additional staffing, resources and activities are helping this group of pupils to reduce the difference between their attainment and attendance levels with other pupils. However, gaps remain.

- The Year 7 catch-up premium has led to slightly improved outcomes in English and mathematics for targeted pupils and additional money to support pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is helping this group of pupils make improved progress. Leaders are aware that closer analysis of the impact of additional funding will help them to improve outcomes further.
- Communication with parents and carers is highly effective. Staff utilise the school's user-friendly website, which includes regular updates, and the school's magazine to convey important messages to parents. Staff communicate with parents on a regular basis and attendance at school events, such as productions and parents' evenings, is now very high. Family groups are invited into school to take part in joint learning activities, and the school has a recently formed parents' group who are consulted about developments. As a result of increased parental engagement and satisfaction with the quality of education provided, the vast majority of parents would recommend the school.
- The school receives a wide range of effective support from the Invictus Education Trust. This includes training and development opportunities for staff at all levels, sharing of good practice, assessment moderation and quality assurance.

Governance of the school

- The local governing body and the multi-academy trust provide effective governance. Those responsible for governance have a wide range of skills and experience that they use well to hold leaders to account and support further improvement.
- Governors receive detailed information about the quality of provision in the school. Consequently, they have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. They use this to offer appropriate support and challenge.
- Those responsible for governance carry out their statutory duties effectively. They ensure that resources are well managed, that additional funding is used appropriately and that safeguarding is effective.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. This aspect of the school's work is well led, and staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and duties. Child protection and 'Prevent' duty requirements are met.
- All staff are well trained and kept up to date about safeguarding issues. Leaders and staff have a clear understanding of the processes for reporting concerns, and use systems well. Referrals are timely and staff use outside agencies appropriately. Leaders follow up concerns thoroughly.
- The school's single central record is compliant, and records are stored securely. Pupils, staff and parents correctly believe that pupils are safe in school. Pupils are taught to stay safe in an age-appropriate way.
- Robust procedures are in place to ensure that pupils who attend alternative provision are safe.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- There is some very high-quality teaching in the school that has led to good outcomes over time. As a result of support and training and the recruitment of some new staff, the overall quality of teaching continues to improve. There is good teaching in every subject area and there is now some very strong practice in English, mathematics, history, music, design and technology, PE, computer science and art.
- Where teaching is most effective, it is carefully planned to provide challenge for pupils with different starting points. Staff have high expectations and use questions and their subject knowledge well to deepen pupils' understanding. They use lesson time productively to develop pupils' skills and knowledge.
- Pupils enjoy positive relationships with staff and work well together. Teaching assistants usually help pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities to make good progress in lessons. Deaf pupils and pupils who are visually impaired are very well supported.
- Over time, there have been inconsistencies in the quality of teaching within and between departments. Where teaching is less effective, staff do not plan or resource activities that allow pupils to make strong progress from their different starting points. This restricts the progress made by the most able pupils in particular. Where aspirations are not high enough, pupils make slower progress.
- All staff follow the school's marking and assessment policy but this is not used consistently well. Leaders believe that it is most effective when it helps pupils to have a clear understanding of what they have done well and what they need to do next.
- Staff take opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy in a range of subjects. Pupils are encouraged to read, write for a particular purpose and use their mathematical skills across the curriculum. Communication skills are also developed throughout the school.
- Teachers set homework in line with the school's policy. It is used effectively to embed learning and develop new skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Assessment is accurate and many teachers use this information well to help their planning. However, a new trust-wide system for collecting information is being developed and will be fully implemented in September 2018. Leaders plan to use this to help to ensure that information is used consistently well to inform teachers' planning and predictions.
- The school gives parents clear information about how their child is progressing and what they need to do to improve. Meetings with parents give them opportunities to discuss their children's progress with staff in more depth.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils are polite, happy and enjoy school. They thrive as a result of the various opportunities that they are given to develop their social skills and resilience.

For example they take part in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, they join the army cadets and they act as 'buddies' for other pupils.

- Pupils are proud of their school and they take care of the building and resources. They are keen to take on responsibilities for the benefit of others. The head boy and head girl, sports leaders and the school council are role models and pupils aspire to assume these positions of responsibility. Pupils of all ages are willing and able to contribute to the very positive culture of the school. They are helped to become caring, thoughtful and active citizens.
- Pupils are keen to learn and they understand how to be successful learners. They usually present their work very well and respond positively to high expectations.
- Physical and emotional well-being are promoted very well. Fundamental British values and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are firmly embedded within the ethos of the school. Rights and responsibilities and mutual respect are a core part of the school's culture.
- Bullying is rare and pupils are confident that staff will deal quickly and effectively with any incidents should they happen. Pupils are friendly and welcoming within a very inclusive environment.
- Pupils are taught to stay safe when using the internet and appropriate controls are in place in school. Pupils also learn about how to stay safe in a range of other situations. For example, they are taught about how to protect themselves from the dangers of extremism, drugs and alcohol misuse and child sexual exploitation.
- The small number of pupils who attend alternative provision are very well supported to promote their personal development and well-being. School staff work well with providers to ensure that the needs of these pupils are met.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school. Pupils concentrate on their studies and learning is rarely disturbed.
- Pupils respond positively to high expectations of behaviour. They have a clear understanding of how to behave well and understand the consequences of inappropriate behaviour.
- The few pupils who find it more challenging to manage their own behaviour are effectively supported to behave very well. Incidents of poor behaviour and exclusions are declining.
- Pupils are punctual and attendance is improving. Most pupils are rarely absent but, although improving, the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is still below that of others.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Most groups of pupils currently in the school are making good progress in many subjects, including English and mathematics. Progress in art, design and technology, music and PE is particularly strong. Almost all groups of pupils are making improved progress in a range of subjects.
- Some groups of pupils have made faster progress than the national average over time. For example, pupils who speak English as an additional language have made consistently rapid progress and in 2017, low- and middle-prior-attaining pupils made better progress than pupils with similar starting points. However, boys continue to make slower progress than girls.
- As a result of the whole-school initiative to improve outcomes for the most able pupils, this group of pupils are now making accelerated progress. Improving the attainment and progress of high-prior-attaining pupils is a key focus of the school improvement plan and informed actions are having an impact.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is improving and the differences in levels of attainment between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils are starting to diminish. However, the progress made by disadvantaged pupils is not fast enough to close the attainment gap quickly.
- Many pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make rapid progress and attain well in the school. The most able pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and pupils who attend the 'Listen and Learn' provision have achieved well over time. However, the progress made by some pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is too slow.
- As a result of improved teaching and leadership, outcomes in English and mathematics are improving. The improvements evident in the 2017 outcomes in English have been built upon and weaknesses in mathematics have been addressed. Current pupils are therefore making good progress in both subjects.
- Progress in humanities, particularly history, and modern foreign languages is improving. Where teaching is most effective, pupils are making improved progress in science but this is not consistent.
- Pupils of all abilities are encouraged to read in class and staff actively promote reading throughout the school. Pupils enjoy reading and many read fluently and with confidence.
- As a result of the range of opportunities that pupils are given in school, they are well prepared for the next stage of their education or training. Over time the vast majority of pupils have moved onto suitable and sustained places with colleges, sixth forms or training providers.

School details

Unique reference number	141325
Local authority	Dudley
Inspection number	10042841

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	750
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Geoff Marsh
Headteacher	Tony Bowles
Telephone number	01384 686850
Website	www.crestwoodschool.co.uk
Email address	info@crestwood-s.dudley.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The Crestwood School opened in March 2015. It is part of the Invictus Education Trust. Governance is provided by the trust and a local governing body. The trust also provides a range of support to all aspects of the school's work.
- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school but it is expanding.
- Most pupils are White British. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is below average and the proportion who speak English as an additional language is average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils is well above average.
- An average proportion of pupils have SEN and/or disabilities, including those who have an education, health and care plan.

- A very small number of pupils attend off-site alternative provision at Cherry Tree Home and Hospice on a full-time basis. Small groups of key stage 4 pupils attend Halesowen College to study animal care and Stourbridge College to study construction. Both groups of pupils attend for one afternoon a week.
- Post-16 provision registered to Ellowes Hall, another school in the trust, is delivered on the school site. This is inspected separately.
- The Listen and Learn Centre, which provides Dudley's enhanced provision for deaf pupils with severe or profound hearing loss, is based on the school site. This is inspected separately but pupils attend lessons in the school. Their results are attributed to the Crestwood School.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors made short visits to 49 lessons, some of which were with senior leaders. Inspectors spoke to pupils formally and informally, and observed behaviour in lessons and during social time.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, the deputy headteacher, other leaders and staff.
- The lead inspector spoke to the chair and the vice-chair of the local governing body and the chief executive officer of the trust.
- Inspectors considered 103 responses and 57 free-text comments on Parent View, Ofsted’s online questionnaire. Sixty-four responses to the school’s staff survey were also considered.
- Various school documents were scrutinised, including the school’s self-evaluation and information about pupils’ progress, behaviour, attendance and safety. Documents relating to safeguarding were checked and inspectors looked at published information on the school’s website.

Inspection team

Simon Mosley, lead inspector	Her Majesty’s Inspector
Gwendoline Onyon	Ofsted Inspector
Bernice Astling	Ofsted Inspector
Andy Fisher	Ofsted Inspector

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Manchester
M1 2WD

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