

Inspection of John Ferneley College

Scalford Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire LE13 1LH

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 April 2024

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Good

Personal development

Good

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Good

The headteacher of this school is Terry Claridge. This school is part of Mowbray Education Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, Christine Stansfield, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Anne Frost.

What is it like to attend this school?

Over the last few years, John Ferneley College has experienced several changes to its senior leadership. As a result, the school has not ensured that all pupils consistently receive a high-quality education. Some pupils do not achieve as well as they could. Some parents are dissatisfied with the school. New leaders are clear about what needs to be improved. However, their plans are at an early stage and have yet to have an impact on pupils' outcomes.

The school has successfully worked on improving behaviour. Most pupils behave well in lessons. There are positive relationships between staff and pupils. Most pupils are polite and well-mannered. They conduct themselves well during breaks and lunchtimes. However, a few pupils can be boisterous when moving around the school. Pupils feel safe in school. Pupils said that bullying sometimes happens. They are confident that staff would resolve any issues quickly.

Pupils have opportunities to contribute to school life. Some are school ambassadors, and some are student leaders. Some pupils enjoy taking part in the school production. There is also a range of after-school sporting clubs that pupils enjoy attending. Pupils in Year 11 appreciate and make good use of after-school revision sessions.

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

The school and those responsible for governance have not ensured that there is an ambitious and clear vision for the quality of education that pupils receive. They do not always have a precise understanding of how well the curriculum is delivered. As a result, the school has not addressed some inconsistencies in how teachers deliver the curriculum. New school and trust leaders know this and plan to address the issues quickly.

There is an ambitious and well-planned curriculum in place for most subjects. However, in some subjects, it is not always clear what key knowledge pupils should learn and in what order. This means the quality of education the school provides is variable.

Many teachers have good subject knowledge. They present information clearly and check pupils' understanding. However, this is not done consistently well by all teachers. Some teachers do not check pupils' understanding carefully enough. They are not always aware of gaps in learning and misconceptions pupils may have. This means teachers do not always address these. Therefore, some pupils do not learn as well as they could.

Not all teachers ensure that pupils produce high-quality work. Some pupils repeatedly make spelling and punctuation errors. Teachers do not always correct these. This means that some pupils do not develop their writing skills well.

The school has ensured that teachers get the information they need to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). In lessons, some pupils with SEND get support from learning support assistants. These staff help pupils access the curriculum. Most pupils with SEND feel well-supported. However, not all teachers adapt their teaching well enough to support pupils with SEND. This means some pupils with SEND do not achieve as well as they could. Pupils who need support to improve their reading skills get appropriate help. This is helping these pupils to improve their reading.

There is a clear behaviour system that pupils understand. This has helped to improve behaviour. Most lessons are calm and orderly. Most pupils enjoy their lessons. However, pupils said that not all teachers apply the system consistently well, and sometimes lessons are disrupted by off-task behaviour. Effective systems are in place to ensure that pupils attend school regularly. Pupils with lower attendance get well-thought-out support. This is helping to improve their attendance.

The school has planned well for pupils' broader development. For example, pupils learn about how to be safe online, cyber-bullying and consent. Pupils understand fundamental British values. They also learn about equality and the importance of respecting others. The careers programme prepares pupils well for their next steps.

Most staff feel well supported by leaders and are proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Teachers do not always check pupils' understanding carefully enough. This means that gaps in learning and misconceptions are not always addressed. As a result, some pupils do not learn as well as they could. Teachers should ensure that they systematically check pupils' understanding to address gaps in learning and misconceptions.
- Teachers do not always ensure that pupils produce high-quality work. They do not check that pupils spell keywords correctly or that they use correct punctuation. This means that some pupils make errors that are not always corrected, which affects the accuracy of their writing. Teachers should ensure that pupils' writing is of a high quality by checking that they are spelling correctly and using correct punctuation.
- Teachers do not always adapt their teaching to support pupils with SEND to access the curriculum. This means that some pupils with SEND do not learn as well as they could. Teachers should ensure that they use the information and

strategies they are given to support pupils with SEND so that they can access the curriculum and achieve well.

- Teachers do not always use the behaviour policy well. They do not always address off-task behaviour. Some pupils think teachers are not always fair when dealing with behaviour issues. The school should ensure that all staff use the behaviour policy consistently.
- Leaders have not addressed some of the inconsistencies in implementing the curriculum. This means that the quality of education provided by the school is inconsistent. Pupils do not achieve as well as they could. The school should ensure that quality assurance procedures precisely identify how well staff implement the curriculum. They should use this information to support staff to improve their practice.

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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	137617
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10324137
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	1189
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Anne Frost
CEO of the trust	Christine Stansfield
Headteacher	Terry Claridge
Website	www.johnferneley.org
Date of previous inspection	17 October 2018

Information about this school

- The headteacher was appointed in April 2024.
- The school is part of Mowbray Education Trust.
- The school uses one registered and seven unregistered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 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.

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID 19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils’ interests first.
- Inspectors spoke with the headteacher, the assistant headteachers, and other trust leaders.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, English, history, geography and physical education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils’ work.
- Inspectors also discussed the curriculum and visited lessons in some other subjects.
- Inspectors visited tutorial sessions and an assembly.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from a range of year groups, including pupils with SEND. Inspectors spoke with pupils at break and lunchtime.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text responses. Inspectors also considered the responses to Ofsted’s staff questionnaire.
- The lead inspector met with a member of the trust board and a member of the local governing committee.
- The lead inspector met with the trust executive lead for secondaries.
- Inspectors observed pupils’ behaviour and break and lunchtimes.

Inspection team

Paul Halcro, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Damian Painton	Ofsted Inspector
Emma Mason	Ofsted Inspector
Jenny Brown	Ofsted Inspector
Ruth Hurcombe	Ofsted Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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