

Inspection of Finham Park School

Green Lane, Coventry, West Midlands CV3 6EA

Inspection dates:	14 and 15 January 2025
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Outstanding
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The headteacher of the school is Chris Bishop. This school is part of the Finham Park Multi-Academy Trust, which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer (CEO), Mark Bailie, and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Peter Burns MBE.

Until November 2020, the school was exempt from routine inspection because it was judged as outstanding for overall effectiveness at its previous inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. The school has not been inspected under section 5 of the Act since January 2015. Since September 2024, schools have not been awarded an overall effectiveness grade.

What is it like to attend this school?

Finham Park is a highly inclusive school where everyone is valued and expectations are high for pupils to achieve well. Pupils and staff embody the school's values, which include humility and kindness. Relationships between pupils and staff are warm and respectful. Pupils speak positively about the support they receive from staff and enjoy their learning. The majority of pupils work hard and achieve well. Pupils feel safe and say they are happy in school.

There is a purposeful atmosphere around the school. Pupils focus on their learning well. The majority of pupils show respectful and positive behaviours during structured lesson times. During unstructured times, such as breaktimes and lunchtimes, they behave sensibly. Where pupils' behaviour is not acceptable, staff speak with them to explain the school's high expectations. This maintains the positive behaviours around the school.

The school places a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. This includes mental health and well-being. Pupils can clearly explain their understanding of diversity and equality in society. Leadership opportunities include pupil subject ambassadors and sports leaders. The extra-curricular programme is rich and diverse. Pupils regularly take part in activities such as debating, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme and robotics.

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

The school has designed a highly ambitious curriculum for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). As a result, many pupils demonstrate significant achievement in their learning and are well prepared for their next stage of their lives. Pupils welcome the broad range of subjects they can study. For example, the school specialises in a breadth of modern foreign languages including Mandarin Chinese. Pupils speak positively around the opportunities to continue at least one modern foreign language to GCSE.

Students in the sixth form are exceptionally positive about their learning experiences and the wider opportunities the school provides. The school has rapidly developed its ambitious curriculum in the sixth form. Sixth-form teachers engage students in challenging and independent learning. This enables students to achieve highly. Students make a significant contribution to supporting the school, including through student leadership roles. These include duties at break and lunch as well as mentoring and supporting younger pupils. Students benefit greatly from this exceptional provision.

Most teachers use assessments well, check what pupils know and ensure that pupils understand what they have to do. Teachers use activities at the start of lessons to help pupils recall and build on their learning. Pupils say it helps them to remember the most important information. However, there are times when some teachers do not check pupils' understanding well enough. Some teachers do not consistently adapt the learning to address any wrong ideas or missing knowledge. Some pupils are unclear about what they need to do to improve further. This means that some pupils have gaps in their knowledge and struggle to complete their work. This can limit progress through the curriculum.

The school identifies and supports pupils with SEND effectively. It ensures that they access the same ambitious curriculum as their peers. All staff receive precise information about pupils' individual needs. Teachers use this information well to adapt their teaching. The school has implemented an extensive range of strategies to support pupils who are not confident readers. These include specialist teachers who rapidly address weaknesses in phonics, grammar and comprehension.

The majority of pupils display excellent self-control and highly positive attitudes to learning. However, some pupils do not focus on their learning well enough. In a small number of cases, pupils behave inappropriately within the school setting. This can impact on both pupils' progress and their enjoyment of school. School attendance is high, with robust systems in place to support absent pupils to catch up on their work quickly.

Pupils' well-being is at the forefront of leaders' vision, including promoting pupils' positive mental health. Pupils and students in the sixth form receive extensive information on next steps through high-quality careers guidance. The personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum, including within the personal development period one each day, is well planned and sequenced. Pupils are taught about topics such as healthy relationships and online safety well. However, in some personal development lessons some teachers do not always present the information effectively nor discuss with pupils in sufficient depth why the information is important. This means that some pupils are not as engaged in the learning as they could be.

All leaders, including those responsible for governance, understand deeply how the school's local context impacts pupils' learning and attendance. The trust holds the school to account well for all aspects of provision, including safeguarding and the quality of the sixth form. The school has implemented a comprehensive and well-thought-out professional development programme for staff, which they welcome. Recent changes to school policies and expectations have supported the commitment to staff workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In a few subjects some teachers do not effectively identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding nor consistently give them feedback on how to improve their work. As a result, some misconceptions initially go unnoticed and some pupils do not always know how they can improve their knowledge and understanding. The school should ensure that all teachers use assessment well to identify and address pupils' knowledge

gaps, ensuring all teachers give pupils clear feedback on what they need to do to improve.

- The school's high expectations for pupils' behaviour and conduct are not always realised. Learning in a small number of lessons is hindered by low-level disruption. This can hinder some pupils' progress and their enjoyment of school. The school should ensure that its well-established routines for behaviour are applied consistently in all lessons so that pupils can learn well in every subject.

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	136963
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	10343952
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	1,764
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	360
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Peter Burns MBE
CEO of the trust	Mark Bailie
Headteacher	Chris Bishop
Website	finhampark.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	20 and 21 January 2015, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Finham Park Multi-Academy Trust. There are four secondary academies and four primary academies in the trust.
- The school uses eight registered alternative providers that a small number of pupils attend part time, attending school on other days.
- 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. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation 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.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, art, drama, geography, modern foreign languages and mathematics. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke with pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The inspectors also looked at the curriculum, lessons and pupils' work in other subjects.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents. These included information about pupils' behaviour, attendance, the school's curriculum and improvement planning.
- 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 observed informal times of the day as part of their evaluation of safeguarding and pupils' behaviour. Additionally, inspectors spoke to pupils to discuss their views about school life.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, other senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers, support staff and pupils.
- The lead inspector met with the chair and also the CEO of the trust; and the chair and vice-chair of the local governing board.
- Inspectors considered responses to the Ofsted Parent View questionnaire and the free-text responses. They also took into consideration the online staff and pupil surveys.

Inspection team

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