

Corley Centre

Church Lane, Corley, Coventry, CV7 8AZ

Inspection dates 15–16 October 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- The Corley Centre is a good and improving school. Students make good progress relative to their starting points and additional needs.
- The headteacher leads the school well. She has a clear vision for the school and has involved all stakeholders in planning for the future. Senior leaders and governors share her drive for improvement.
- Teaching has many strengths, especially in the use of personal learning targets to promote students' learning.
- Leaders have worked very effectively to improve the quality of learning through training and support for staff.
- Students enjoy the wide range of work-related learning placements that help them to apply their learning, social and communication skills.
- Students enjoy their lessons and are usually clear about what they need to learn next.
- Student behaviour is good and improving. Safety has a high priority in the school.
- Systems and approaches for enabling students to improve their conduct help them to settle down and enjoy their lessons.
- The overall effectiveness of the sixth form is good. It provides students with an appropriate balance of skills for life, work-related learning activities and appropriate academic qualifications.
- Governance is strong. The governing body has a good understanding of the school and governors have worked closely with the headteacher to bring about recent improvements.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- While the vast majority teaching is good, not enough is outstanding.
- Students do not have sufficient opportunities to work alongside one another or develop independent research and questioning skills.
- The school does not make full use its very thorough analysis of data to ensure that all students make the best progress they can.
- Attendance is low.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team observed 13 lessons. The headteacher or deputy headteacher observed nine of these lessons with inspectors.
- Discussions were held with senior and middle leaders, a representative of the local authority, governors, students and the leader of the Coventry Autism Support Service (CASS).
- There were insufficient responses from parents to the online questionnaire (Parent View.) The team considered the school's recent survey for which there were 42 respondents.
- Inspectors looked at students' work together with a range of documents including the school's information on keeping students safe, school self-evaluation and improvement planning, student progress and the parent questionnaire.

Inspection team

Rosemary Mackenzie, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Peter Lawley	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The Corley Centre educates students mainly from the City of Coventry with some from Warwickshire and Solihull.
- All students have a statement of special educational needs and have a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder (ASD). They may also have associated mental health, behavioural difficulties and some additional moderate learning needs.
- At the last inspection not all students had an autistic diagnosis. The residential provision closed in 2012. The headteacher and deputy headteacher took up their present positions in 2012.
- The proportion of students receiving the pupil premium funding is above average. The pupil premium is additional funding provided for students in this school who have free school meals or who are looked after by the local authority. Year 7 pupils also receive catch-up funding.
- Most of the students are boys with a large majority being White British.
- The school manages the Coventry Autism Support Service (CASS) on behalf of the local authority. This service supports pupils in other schools in the City of Coventry and its teachers do not teach in this school.
- The school does not use any form of alternative provision for its students. However, the school commissions Grapevine to work with identified individual students on personal planning for their future. This is a charity that provides advocacy and support for students with learning disabilities.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the proportion of good and outstanding teaching in the school by:
 - ensuring that all lessons have interesting, exciting elements, resources and imaginative teaching strategies
 - giving students more opportunities to work together and further develop their questioning and analytical skills
 - further developing the students' independent research skills
 - ensuring that all students become fluent and confident readers.
- Use the wealth of data collected to demonstrate more clearly that students make the best progress they can from their starting points.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students make good progress over time given their starting points and additional learning needs. This is because there has been a strong focus on ensuring that the quality of teaching is consistently good across the school, especially in English and maths. Progress in lessons observed by inspectors was good. Leaders at all levels have high expectations and are providing challenge to improve attainment.
- Students' good progress is underpinned by staff helping them to develop the skills they need to learn. This includes improving their social, communication and personal learning skills alongside their mental well-being. One example of this is in the newly formed learning support group where students can access learning on an individual basis. These students include previous poor attenders and those who have had exclusions. All students observed by inspectors were concentrating and learning in calm environments. Attendance for these students has improved this term and exclusions are beginning to reduce.
- Many students joining the school lack the full range of skills needed to read and write fluently. Students' confidence in applying their literacy and numeracy skills across different subjects is improving as they start to experience success.
- Students' learning levels on entry are now checked carefully. Their learning is tracked by senior and subject leaders and discussed regularly with staff.
- The school does not fully analyse the wealth of data collected to demonstrate that students make the best progress they can. This is particularly the case during their transition period into school and in respect of their additional needs. This prevents students from making more rapid progress.
- Students in sixth form make good progress and gain a suitable range of academic and work related qualifications. They successfully build on their learning acquired in Key Stage 4 and study for qualifications including the ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) certificate in personal effectiveness, employability. They can also study for Entry Level 2 in English and Entry level 3 or GCSE in mathematics.
- Students leave school with a wide range of qualifications including GCSE, Entry Level and Level 2. They particularly enjoy their drama, art and photography studies. This school year, qualifications will be available for all enrichment studies lessons which include French, horse riding and childcare. New technologies are used well by staff to promote learning.
- Students being supported by pupil premium often make more rapid progress than their peers in improving their skills in reading, writing and mathematics. Interventions available for all students include sports leadership, additional support for work-related learning and planning for their future with Grapevine. This has enabled students to take responsibility for themselves and others, and led to students being taken onto apprenticeship schemes.
- Year 7 catch-up funding was used for an outdoor learning summer school last year. Currently it is being used to improve reading.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers have high expectations for students both for their academic performance and conduct. A particular strength lies in the students' weekly personal learning and thinking targets. In one lesson they were able to describe what a reflective learner is and self-assess their progress in this area.
- Teaching assistants have recently become subject specialists and in the majority of lessons they were observed working very effectively to support learning and behaviour. Students responded well to their careful questioning and discrete support. On the few occasions where other adults were less effective, the main focus was on conduct at the expense of learning.
- Staff are skilled at managing students' behaviour and, as a result, learning is rarely interrupted.
- Planning is clear, precise and related to prior learning. Teachers set out clear learning targets at the beginning of each lesson both for academic progress and in how to be an effective learner. In one very well planned lesson, students were very keen to describe their artwork and show the inspector their portfolios of illustrations. Students' learning was enhanced by the teacher's use of resources, careful questioning and subject knowledge.
- Teachers use careful questioning to engage students in lessons and check their understanding. Marking is constructive and informative. Students are usually aware of the next steps they need to take in their learning. However, this is not always the case with readers who are not yet fluent readers and writers.
- The vast majority of lessons are effective in promoting students' learning. However, some lack flair, imagination and opportunities for the students to work together and develop independent learning skills. In these lessons, students are less engaged and opportunities to extend their thinking are missed.
- Staff are providing appropriately tailored support, including phonics work (letters and their sounds), for students whose reading skills are underdeveloped.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good with an appropriate level of challenge for students learning at different levels. In a lesson observed, students were relating their learning to everyday life and work by considering the practicalities and costs of making a journey.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of the students in lessons and around the school is calm and orderly. There are good relationships between staff and students. Students appreciate the clear routines and rewards system. They respond well to staff expectations of good conduct.
- Clear personal learning and thinking targets help them to improve their attitudes to learning. Students report that they like the 'space and freedom' in the school. Pastoral care, mentoring and citizenship have a high profile in the school and the success of these is reflected in the good gains students make in their attitudes and behaviour.
- Parents and students report that students are kept safe in the school and that bullying is dealt with effectively. Students know who to go to if they have a problem. All systems for keeping students safe are effective. One parent commented, 'I feel that my son is in safe hands with a staff that truly care for my son's best interests.'

- In the newly established learning support group, students engage well and this helps to maintain a calm, purposeful learning atmosphere. This provision is for the more challenging and complex students who find it difficult to work alongside others or previously had attendance issues. These students work in a planned individualised environment and are reintroduced to the main school when it is appropriate. New students are also taught in the learning support provision to aid transition and assessment of their learning needs on entry.
- The students who work with Grapevine on personal planning have been able to plan for their future and demonstrate an increased understanding of what they need to do to achieve their goals.
- Attendance is low. Many students are non-attenders prior to their transfer to the Corley Centre. Fixed-term exclusions in the past were mainly related to behaviour that could have compromised the health and safety of others. The school is effectively addressing these issues through an improved pastoral support system, the appointment of a family support worker and the newly established learning support group.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher have formed a strong team and are leading the school forwards rapidly and effectively. They have addressed weaknesses, including appointing new leaders for autism, the sixth form and the family support worker. They are particularly good at forward planning and driving changes that will improve educational opportunities, progress and access to learning.
- Subject leaders are enthusiastic and have identified the changes that will help students to make better progress. This includes a stronger focus on the teaching of writing and reading skills across the school. The school has trained all staff in approaches to learning for students with complex communication and social needs. As a result, all students were taking part in learning during the inspection.
- Students benefit from the wide variety of rich opportunities to learn about other cultures, take moral decisions and learn to be considerate of others. They particularly appreciate their art and music lessons, and the drama opportunities at the Belgrade Theatre. A good range of opportunities and placements help the students to apply their learning, communication and social skills.
- The wide variety of curriculum activities, alongside the personalised approach, is a strength of the school. Students study a balance of subjects that help them develop personally and academically. They enjoy their photography course and can be seen composing and analysing their work. Enrichment activities include cooking, outdoor learning and studying for Duke of Edinburgh awards.
- Students work closely with an independent, external careers adviser and have a variety of work placements where they develop their social, communication and team skills. They report that they appreciate these opportunities to learn in the community.
- The school provides appropriate management support for the Coventry Autism Support Service.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors know the school well and provide very effective support and challenge. They are involved in setting the priorities for the school and have been closely involved in ensuring that

all teaching is at least good. They have worked with the headteacher to improve the sixth form and make sure that the school has effective middle level leaders. Governors have been into school to audit areas such as human resources and safety systems. They know how the additional funding has been used and understand the new teachers' pay and performance requirements. They are well informed and in a good position to provide strategic leadership for their school.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	134533
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	427064

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Special
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	82
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	7
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Paul Barker
Headteacher	Lisa Batch
Date of previous school inspection	9 February 2011
Telephone number	01676 540218
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