

# Futures Community College

Southchurch Boulevard, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS2 4UY

## Inspection dates

3–4 February 2016

## Overall effectiveness

**Requires improvement**

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

Overall effectiveness at previous inspection

Inadequate

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement

- Too many pupils do not make sufficient progress from their different starting points in key academic subjects such as mathematics and modern foreign languages.
- At Key Stage 3, some teachers do not consistently pitch work at the right level for all pupils.
- Pupils are sometimes unclear about what they need to do to improve their work from the feedback given to them.
- Some teachers do not always demand high enough standards of presentation or set homework which effectively promotes learning.
- Fixed-term exclusions and persistent absence are both above the national average.
- Pupils do not consistently learn well when they are not taught by their regular teachers.
- Not all teachers apply the school's behaviour policy consistently during lessons.
- Not all teachers in charge of subjects and year groups are driving improvements forward rapidly enough in the areas for which they are responsible.

### The school has the following strengths

- This is an improving school. Standards of teaching and behaviour are improving and as a result so is achievement.
- Gaps between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others are narrowing rapidly.
- Staff overwhelmingly support the headteacher's clear vision for the improvement of the school.
- The school's programme of training for teachers is thorough and effective.
- The Interim Executive Board (IEB) expertly provides support and challenge for school leaders and so helps improve teaching and achievement.
- The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is highly effective.

## Full report

In accordance with section 13 (4) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires special measures.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve teaching in the school to be good or better, so that achievement is at least in line with national averages in all subjects, by:
  - planning work that provides sufficient challenge to pupils of all abilities in both key stages
  - insisting upon high standards of presentation in all pupils' work
  - setting homework which effectively builds upon or consolidates what pupils have learnt in lessons
  - providing feedback which clearly indicates what pupils need to do to improve.
  
- Improve personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
  - ensuring that levels both of exclusion and of persistent absence reduce so that they are at least in line with national averages
  - improving pupils' attitudes to their own learning so that they behave well even when they are not being taught by their regular teachers
  - ensuring all teachers apply the school behaviour policy consistently in their classes.
  
- Improve leadership and management by:
  - developing the roles of all middle leaders so that they can drive improvements forward more rapidly in the areas for which they are responsible
  - ensuring that all assessment systems are producing accurate information about pupil performance.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders and managers have overseen improvement in achievement but they have not yet secured good outcomes for pupils at the school in some key subjects.
- The school's improvement has been hampered by difficulties in recruitment. However, the determined and tenacious leadership of the headteacher has ensured that staffing is now more stable, and all staff now share his vision for improving the school further.
- Several new subject and year group leaders have recently been appointed. They are in the process of developing their skills in monitoring achievement and the quality of teaching in their areas, but there has not yet been time to see the impact of this.
- There is a lack of consistency in some of the approaches being employed by these middle leaders in order to carry out their roles, for example in how they undertake monitoring of teaching or plan improvements. This is hindering their ability to drive forward improvements in their areas.
- Leaders have introduced a range of measures to enhance the accuracy of assessment at Key Stage 4. These include more regular testing and internal and external moderation of work. As a result, this assessment is secure. However, the recently introduced assessment system for Key Stage 3 is not providing accurate performance information for a number of subject areas.
- The school curriculum is carefully planned, and regularly evaluated, by staff and governors so it provides an appropriately broad and balanced range of pathways for pupils to move on to the next stage of their education or employment. As a result, last year every leaver secured a place on a course or in employment when they finished Year 11. This transition is helped by effective impartial advice and guidance. However, this advice is not so well developed for pupils in lower year groups.
- Pupils value the range of extra-curricular opportunities available to them, especially in sport and the arts. Some of these opportunities, such as the basketball club, are particularly important for some pupils in sustaining their motivation at school.
- Leaders have a secure understanding of where the strongest and weakest teaching is in the school. The quality of teaching is improving rapidly because underperformance has been tackled and weaker teaching greatly reduced. Staff now have a professional development programme, tailored to enhance and improve their skills. The 'getting to good in 10' coaching programme provides intensive coaching sessions to help teachers to improve. Performance management systems are used effectively to challenge staff and hold them to account for pupils' progress.
- Leaders successfully exploit a wide range of external support. The local authority has intensified its support this year and provided extensive advice and challenge to senior leaders, including from leaders in local schools. This is one way in which the school has developed strong links with other schools.
- Opportunities for developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural knowledge and understanding are threaded throughout the curriculum, assemblies and tutorial periods. Pupils gain a good understanding of life in modern Britain through citizenship lessons in Key Stages 3 and 4, in which topics such as world religions and the nature of democracy are covered.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Members of the IEB are highly experienced in education. They understand the school's strengths and areas of weakness well. They have instigated 'scorecards' which provide them with clear information about the progress the school is making in key areas, including the quality of teaching and outcomes. This helps them to challenge school leaders effectively and hold them to account for progress.
  - Members of the IEB have individual responsibility for overseeing priorities in the school's improvement plan. As a number of members have current or recent experience of leadership in schools, they are able to apply relevant expertise to help the school move forward.
  - Safeguarding is overseen effectively. A member of the IEB takes responsibility for safeguarding and checks that procedures and processes are working well.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Procedures and processes to identify and follow up any concerns are rigorous and robust. Working relationships with other agencies and professionals to keep children safe are well established and communication with parents and carers is effective. The care and welfare of looked after children who attend the school is well coordinated.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment requires improvement

- Teaching is not effective enough to secure good achievement for pupils in every subject. The overall quality of teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection but these improvements have been too uneven within, and between, different subject areas.
- During Key Stage 3, teachers do not always make enough use of accurate assessment information to pitch work at the right level. As a result, teaching does not always provide sufficient challenge to ensure that pupils make the progress of which they are capable.
- Teachers do not routinely plan homework in line with the school's policy or which effectively builds upon or consolidates what pupils have learned in lessons. As a result, teachers often have to spend too long going over previous work, and this hinders progress.
- Teachers follow the school's marking policy in that they routinely give pupils time in lessons to follow up on their feedback. However, many pupils are unsure about what they need to do to improve their work because, although teachers do provide written advice or guidance, it is not usually specific enough to improve subject knowledge, understanding or skills.
- On occasion, teachers accept poorly presented work from pupils. This means that pupils are not able to maintain a clear written record of their learning, which hinders future revision.
- Teaching is strongest where established teachers have constructed trusting relationships with their classes. In these lessons, pupils are entirely engaged, respond to skilful questioning thoughtfully and support each other. Pupils make rapid progress as a result.
- Pupils experience effective teaching in a range of subjects. Teaching in English is increasingly strong, and the progress pupils make is accelerating as a result. In many humanities lessons, teachers have high expectations that pupils will explain their conclusions thoroughly and with relevant detail.
- The school's programme of training for teachers is successfully contributing to the improvement of teaching and allowing teachers to learn from each other, for example through fortnightly morning sessions for sharing good practice. Collaborative work has been undertaken with a local primary deputy headteacher to raise expectations of pupils' literacy after transition from Year 6 in order to improve teaching in Key Stage 3.
- Support staff or additional adults are used well in many lessons to help particular pupils or groups of pupils. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs are now making strong progress.
- Initiatives for improving pupils' reading skills are successfully developing a culture of reading in the school. The library is popular and the number of books borrowed has increased dramatically this year. All pupils benefit from their regular reading sessions, and well-targeted support helps accelerate the progress of those who need additional help. Writing across subjects is also now developing and pupils regularly practise and produce a wide range of written work in subjects other than English.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Pupils' awareness about how they will become successful learners is not sufficiently developed. Many pupils have experienced a large number of changes in teacher, and as a result they have not developed consistently constructive work habits. They often respond poorly to teachers who do not regularly teach them, such as cover teachers or short-term staff.
- School leaders have adopted a range of strategies to encourage positive pupil attitudes, which are starting to have an impact. They have created a number of responsible pupil leadership roles. Pupil voice is increasingly valued in the school and pupils are involved in working with prospective staff. Pupil mentors regularly listen to others read during tutor time or help them with their work.
- Most pupils feel safe and are well looked after in the school. They are appropriately supervised at break and lunchtimes and have confidence in the ability of staff to help and support them should they experience any problems, for example with bullying.
- The school develops the physical well-being of pupils through a range of subjects, including physical education, drama and citizenship, while a large number of pupils benefit from extra-curricular sport. Inspectors observed Year 10 pupils reflecting intelligently upon the nutritional value of the food they were cooking in a practical catering lesson.

- Assemblies and dedicated citizenship lessons supplement themes threaded through the curriculum in history, geography, art, music and drama to promote effective spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and fundamental British values. The schools TRED (team, respect, equality, diversity) programme ensures pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. For example, inspectors observed Year 11 pupils maturely discussing issues of tolerance in an assembly focused on diversity in sexuality. This contributes to the emotional well-being of many pupils.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- While there has been a significant improvement in day-to-day behaviour since the last inspection, there are still instances of low-level disruption in lessons. The school's 'ask, repeat, consequence' sanctions system is highly effective when used systematically, but some teachers are too slow to deploy it and behaviour can deteriorate as a result.
- Pupils look after the site well and are usually polite and courteous to adults and each other. Movement around the school is generally calm and orderly. However, pupils do not always motivate themselves to get to lessons promptly; punctuality is achieved only through careful staff supervision.
- The number of fixed-term exclusions at the school has dropped year-on-year. However, the proportion of pupils who have experienced at least one day of exclusion is still notably above the national average.
- The school has worked effectively to improve attendance. Absence has declined over the last three years, and this year is in line with the national average for the first time. While persistent absence has also declined, it remains well above the national average. It is particularly high for girls.
- Detailed records show that the number of behaviour-related sanctions has reduced significantly. The number of bullying incidents, including bullying of a racist nature, has also fallen. The school has dealt effectively with the bullying incidents that have occurred and pupils say they have confidence in the systems in place.
- Pupils participating in off-site alternative provision have responded positively to a different educational environment. Their attendance and behaviour have improved. The school carefully monitors their safety and welfare.

## Outcomes for pupils

## require improvement

- The attainment of pupils at Key Stage 4 improved notably in 2015, and the proportion of pupils achieving five GCSE passes at grades A\* to C including English and mathematics more than doubled. However, the amount of progress made by pupils in key subject areas such as mathematics and modern foreign languages remained below the national average.
- The school's current performance information indicates that standards of attainment and progress will continue to improve at Key Stage 4 this year, and that achievement will exceed the government's minimum expectations. While evidence from this inspection suggests that these projected outcomes are likely to be secured, they would still not represent good progress for pupils.
- Outcomes are improving across all subject areas and both key stages, but they are not improving evenly. Standards in English, for example, are rising more rapidly than they are in mathematics, and progress is accelerating more rapidly at Key Stage 4 than it is at Key Stage 3.
- The school's assessment information for English and mathematics at Key Stage 3 is secure and accurate. This helps the school to measure, for example, the positive impact that additional funding is having to support pupils who need to catch up in literacy and numeracy in Year 7. However, similar assessment information is less consistently accurate for other subjects in Key Stage 3.
- Gaps in the progress being made by different groups of pupils are narrowing or closing. Gaps between the achievement of disadvantaged pupils and others in the school and nationally have narrowed significantly. In 2015, boys did not achieve as well as girls in their GCSEs. The school is successfully working to close this gap this year.
- The support for pupils who have special educational needs or disability is improving and they are now well supported in lessons. Their progress is improving as a result.
- The school's focus on literacy across the curriculum is having a positive impact on developing pupils' skills in reading, writing, speaking and listening.
- The school closely monitors the progress of the small number of pupils who are educated off-site through

programmes of alternative provision. The school ensures they attend regularly and are following appropriate courses. Consequently, these pupils make progress in line with their peers.

- In 2015, pupils who had been high attaining on entry made more progress than other pupils in their GCSEs. Current performance information suggests that this is also likely to be the case in 2016.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	132762
<b>Local authority</b>	Southend-on-Sea
<b>Inspection number</b>	10008120

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	500
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Interim executive board
<b>Chair</b>	John Grove
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stuart Reynolds
<b>Telephone number</b>	01702 415369
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.futures.uk.com">www.futures.uk.com</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:info@futures.uk.com">info@futures.uk.com</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	12–13 March 2014

## Information about this school

- Futures Community College is smaller than the average secondary school.
- The majority of pupils are White British, with a smaller proportion than average coming from minority ethnic backgrounds. Fewer pupils than average speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils for whom the school receives pupil premium funding (additional government funding to support pupils who are looked after or who are known to be eligible for free school meals) is much higher than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability or an education, health and care plan is slightly higher than the national average.
- The school does not meet the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress at Key Stage 4.
- The school educates a small number of pupils at the YMCA, Southend-on-Sea.
- The school's sixth form closed in August 2015.
- The school receives support from the headteacher of Westcliff High School for Girls, who is a national leader of education.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 41 lessons in order to contribute to their evaluation of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Some of these observations were conducted jointly with members of the school's leadership team. Inspectors also observed small-group sessions, tutorial periods and assemblies.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, school leaders, teachers, representatives of the local authority, members of the interim executive board and various groups of pupils.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of school documentation including policies, the minutes of interim executive board meetings, the school's self-evaluation, the school's improvement plan and information about pupils' achievement, behaviour and attendance.
- Inspectors considered the views expressed in 16 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and 37 questionnaires returned by school staff.
- An inspector held a telephone conversation with the leader of an alternative provider used by the school to educate a small proportion of their pupils.

## Inspection team

Paul Lawrence, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Elizabeth Cornish	Ofsted Inspector
Sally Nutman	Ofsted Inspector



Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2016

