

Prince William School

Herne Road, Oundle, Northamptonshire PE8 4BS

Inspection dates

14–15 November 2017

| Overall effectiveness | Requires improvement |
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| 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 |
| 16 to 19 study programmes | Requires improvement |
| Overall effectiveness at previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Until recently, leaders' view of the quality of provision has not been sharp enough to ensure that appropriate actions have been taken to raise standards.
- Teachers' expectations are not routinely high enough for all pupils, and this limits the progress that some pupils make.
- The impact of teachers' assessment of and feedback on pupils' progress is inconsistent.
- Teachers do not use information about pupils' abilities and skills effectively. Therefore, some pupils are not always sufficiently challenged in their learning.
- Not all of the pupils have confidence in the systems to deal with instances of bullying.
- Teachers do not consistently support pupils to reduce the occurrence of low-level disruption in lessons.
- Leaders have not used the pupil premium funding effectively to accelerate the progress of disadvantaged pupils and the catch-up funding for pupils in Year 7 who require numeracy support.
- Subject leaders require support to develop their curriculum areas and hold teachers to account for the pupils that they teach.
- Until recently, the support that the school has received from the academy trust has not been sufficient to bring about improvements at the school.
- Leaders have not ensured that disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities attend school as often as they should.
- Students in the sixth form do not make consistently strong progress in different subjects, because the quality of teaching is too variable.

The school has the following strengths

- The new principal has an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and has taken action in order to raise expectations and establish more rigorous systems of monitoring.
- Overall, key stage 4 pupils' progress in 2017 was well above average and pupils' achievement in English saw a significant improvement.
- The school is calm and orderly. Pupils show respect for the school's environment and conduct themselves sensibly around the site.
- Leaders have ensured that pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well throughout the school.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, especially in mathematics and languages, by ensuring that all teachers:
 - have high expectations of what pupils are able to achieve
 - apply the school's assessment and feedback policy consistently, so that pupils know what they need to do to improve
 - use information about pupils' abilities and skills to plan learning that challenges pupils sufficiently and matches their varying needs and abilities, particularly for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have low prior attainment.
- Improve pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare by:
 - increasing the attendance of groups of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities
 - reducing instances of low-level disruption in lessons, so that all pupils can make at least good progress
 - working with pupils to reduce instances of bullying and ensuring that all pupils have confidence in the school's ability to deal effectively with incidents of bullying.
- Improve the quality of leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that all leaders thoroughly evaluate the quality of the provision for which they are responsible, to support them in contributing more effectively to school improvement
 - carefully analysing incidents of behaviour and incidents of bullying, so that these can be dealt with more systematically
 - increasing the opportunities for teachers to share best practice and to learn from each other
 - developing a secure oversight of the use of additional government funding, particularly the pupil premium and the Year 7 literacy and numeracy catch-up funding, to enable the eligible groups of pupils to make better progress
 - developing the skills of middle leaders so that, within their areas of responsibility, they are able to hold teachers to account for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment and the progress and attainment of pupils
 - building on the improved relationship between the academy trust and the local governing board, so that there is greater clarity about their respective roles in holding senior leaders to account and in supporting the school.
- Improve the provision in the sixth form by ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good in all subjects.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium funding should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

An external review of the school's governance should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The school has undergone a period of uncertainty and instability. Frequent changes to leadership have slowed down the rate of improvement and have left staff, pupils and parents confused about the direction of the school.
- Key aspects of the school's work have lacked sufficient oversight. Different leaders have adopted new approaches, for example, to monitoring the impact of the spending of the pupil premium funding.
- Incidents of bullying and poor behaviour have not been analysed sufficiently, so that leaders were aware of and could deal with the root causes.
- Leaders have not used additional government funding well enough to support disadvantaged pupils, in order to secure better outcomes for these pupils. Leaders do not yet evaluate sharply the impact of specific strategies in order to amend and revise their approach.
- Some leaders are newly in post, and are not fully involved in quality assuring the work of their departments. The skills of middle leaders have not been fully developed and so they are not able to hold teachers to account for the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, and the progress and attainment of pupils within their areas of responsibility.
- The academy trust leaders have not ensured that the right support is in place for the school. The arrangements that they put in place to support the school are neither practical, nor strategically thought out.
- Until recently, leaders have not tracked pupils' progress carefully enough. This has meant that leaders have not been able to identify gaps in pupils' learning and intervene effectively, to ensure that all groups of pupils make at least good progress.
- There are too few opportunities for teachers to improve their practice by learning from the school's most skilled and experienced teachers.
- There are positive signs that the school has 'turned the corner'. Since her appointment, the principal has been quick to win the trust of the wider school community. Staff and parents appreciate her open, honest and collaborative approach.
- The principal and the new leadership team have gained an accurate overview of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are now taking decisive and effective action to bring about improvements. Staff value this new leadership team and speak very highly of the principal, in particular, and the impact that she is already having in the school.
- Teachers, middle leaders and others are enthusiastic about and committed to working together to improve outcomes for pupils.
- The systems to track pupils' progress are now much more effective, which allows subject leaders to prioritise those pupils who require the most support. There are encouraging signs that these actions are accelerating the progress these pupils make.
- Leaders have improved the reporting system for parents, who now have much clearer

information about the progress their children are making, and what their children need to do to improve.

- Leaders use Year 7 catch-up funding effectively to support pupils who enter the school with literacy levels below those typical for their age. Pupils make notable progress in catching up with their peers. They have fewer opportunities to develop their numeracy skills across the curriculum.
- Staff offer pupils a wide variety of extra-curricular activities, which support pupils effectively in developing their skills within and beyond the curriculum. Pupils take advantage of activities involving, for example, sport and the arts, as well as trips in Britain and abroad, such as to the battlefields and to Iceland.
- Pupils have extensive opportunities to develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Through a well-planned curriculum, as well as in assemblies, pupils are encouraged to consider relevant issues such as equality and diversity. Pupils are prepared well for life in modern Britain.

Governance of the school

- A lack of clarity regarding roles and responsibilities has meant that governance of the school has not always been effective. Trust leaders have not always communicated clearly with the local governing body (LGB) and some governors struggled to adapt to the changed status of the school.
- Trust leaders know the school's strengths and weaknesses, but the trust's processes for monitoring the school have not been effective in bringing about the necessary improvements. For example, the trust does not have a secure enough oversight of the effectiveness with which senior leaders use additional government funding, including the pupil premium.
- Members of the LGB are ambitious for the pupils in the school and its leaders. While only a small group, they fully appreciate the priorities of the school, as identified by the principal, and the need to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- Since the appointment of the new principal and of a new education director at the trust, links between the school, the LGB and the trust have been strengthened. Leaders now recognise the importance of working together effectively to win back the support of the local community and to bring about improvements. The improved links mean that all aspects of governance are focused on the same priorities.
- Members of the LGB and the trust are fully aware of their responsibilities to safeguard pupils in the school. The safeguarding governor meets regularly with senior leaders to review the school's safeguarding practices.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Pupils are taught how to recognise and to keep themselves safe from harm, or danger, for example, through effective sessions about e-safety. The vast majority of pupils who responded to the inspection survey and who spoke with the inspectors said that they feel safe and are well looked after in school. Pupils are also aware of what to do if they

have a concern, either for themselves or for another, and they are confident that staff will deal with issues effectively.

- Staff receive training and updates on safeguarding matters regularly and are alert to a broad range of potential risks, from things that may affect a pupil's behaviour to possible signs of radicalisation.
- Staff understand and use the school's simple and straightforward systems for reporting any concerns.
- Safeguarding leaders are well trained and supportive of each other. They maintain accurate and appropriate records of safeguarding concerns, paying close attention to the speed with which they respond to concerns.
- When necessary, leaders work well with other agencies to ensure that potentially vulnerable pupils have the support that they need.
- Leaders ensure that there is a thorough approach to safer recruitment and that all appropriate procedures and checks are in place when new staff are appointed.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- The quality of teaching is inconsistent across and within subjects and key stages. Teaching is not of a high enough quality to ensure that all pupils make the progress of which they are capable.
- Not all teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly pupils who have low prior attainment. This lack of sufficient challenge affects both the quality and quantity of work that these pupils produce, limiting their progress.
- Teachers do not routinely use information about pupils' prior attainment and learning to plan activities which are well matched to pupils' individual needs and abilities. As a result, some key stage 3 pupils and pupils who have low prior attainment lose focus in lessons. On these occasions, teachers do not always re-focus pupils promptly enough.
- The quality of teaching in mathematics and languages is inconsistent in all key stages. New subject leaders are developing better teaching resources and planning materials to enable teachers to improve their classroom practice. However, it is too early to evaluate fully the impact of this work on pupils' progress, which has been too slow.
- The majority of teachers have strong subject knowledge and use this to plan learning that challenges and extends pupils. However, teachers do not always adjust their activities in response to pupils' answers and so pupils sometimes become less motivated.
- Year 7 pupils read confidently and fluently, and teachers promote literacy across the curriculum.
- Where learning is more effective, teachers use their knowledge of pupils to ask incisive questions that make the pupils think more deeply. For example, in English, teachers regularly extend pupils' understanding through questioning, allowing pupils to respond in more detail, both orally and in their writing. As a result, pupils, including those who are disadvantaged, make better progress in English than in other subjects.
- Pupils' relationships with teachers are generally positive and the pupils speak highly of

teachers who foster good relationships with them and are keen for them to succeed. Disadvantaged pupils feel particularly well challenged and supported in English, while inspectors observed key stage 4 pupils engaging enthusiastically in the performing arts lessons.

- Pupils are very clear that the use of any stereotypes or derogatory language in lessons is unacceptable and their teachers will be quick to challenge individuals, if any such instances arise. In Year 9, an informed debate between pupils about equality of opportunity reflected their feelings about and interest in this issue.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Not all pupils have confidence in the systems to deal with instances of bullying. Leaders are currently taking action to address this issue and to find ways of reassuring these pupils.
- Pupils are aware of different types of bullying, including physical and homophobic. They know how to stay safe online and are aware of the dangers of sexting. Pupils appreciate that they are far less likely to be a victim of cyber bullying in school since leaders introduced tighter controls regarding mobile phones in school.
- Pupils understand how to be safe and how to lead healthy lives. This includes considering, for example, consensual relationships, mental health, resilience and the negative effects of drugs.
- Pupils have a clear understanding of the need to treat all people with respect. Despite weakness in some aspects of the school's work, a positive culture of equality and diversity prevails.
- Leaders meet regularly with the leaders of alternative provision and effectively monitor the attendance, welfare and progress of all pupils who are educated elsewhere, to ensure that these pupils are successful and kept safe.
- A designated teacher closely monitors pupils who are looked after by the local authority, to ensure that they receive the support that they need. As a result, these pupils have high levels of attendance and make progress in their studies.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Teachers do not consistently set work that meets pupils' different learning needs. When this is the case, pupils lose interest in their work and disrupt the learning of others.
- Pupils' overall attendance has declined and the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent has increased.

- The attendance of disadvantaged pupils has declined and the attendance of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities has fallen below the national average.
- While leaders have implemented a range of strategies to improve pupils' attendance, changes to leadership have meant that the impact of these strategies has not always been evaluated.
- Pupils told inspectors that behaviour in lessons and around the school site has improved since the appointment of the new principal.
- Pupils conduct themselves well between lessons, during social times and on the way to and from school on the school buses. Most pupils' attitudes towards one another and adults are polite and cooperative.
- Almost all pupils arrive at school promptly at the beginning of the school day and are punctual to lessons. Pupils respond well to teachers' expectations that they will be ready to learn.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- The achievement of different groups of pupils is too variable. This is due to the inconsistent quality of teaching across the school and, until recently, leaders' lack of precise checks on pupils' progress.
- In 2017, Year 11 disadvantaged pupils, particularly those pupils who have low prior attainment, made less progress than other pupils, and the gap has widened over time. This was the case across a broad range of subjects, including English, mathematics, science, geography and history. As a result, disadvantaged pupils' attainment was also well below that of their peers.
- In 2017, pupils' progress in mathematics was broadly average. However, they did not make as much progress in mathematics as they did in English, particularly pupils who have low prior-attainment.
- Pupils' progress in modern foreign languages is well below average, particularly of boys and pupils of average ability.
- Although boys make average progress overall, they do not make as much progress as girls, particularly in English, but also in a range of other subjects.
- In 2017, although Year 11 pupils' progress was well above average overall and their progress in English saw a significant improvement, leaders recognise that groups of pupils are performing better in some subjects than others. This is mainly due to inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and instability in staffing.
- In 2017, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities made better-than-average progress overall and only slightly less progress than pupils who have no SEN and/or disabilities. In English, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities made better progress than pupils who have no SEN and/or disabilities.
- Leaders are now able to identify accurately strengths and weaknesses in pupils' performance, as a result of implementing a more rigorous analysis of pupils' assessment information. Through their regular meetings with subject leaders, senior leaders check on the progress that the pupils make. Leaders acknowledge that there is

still work to do to ensure that all staff use assessment information consistently well, in order to promote pupils' higher achievement.

- The schools' own performance information indicates that the progress of disadvantaged pupils currently in Years 10 and 11 is improving. The books at which the inspectors looked confirmed this to be the case. The gap in achievement between disadvantaged pupils and other pupils in these two year groups is narrowing, due to the more focused support that disadvantaged pupils now receive from staff.
- Currently in key stage 3, while there are variations in performance in different subjects, the progress of disadvantaged pupils is much closer to that of other pupils in the school, and in Year 8 they are doing better on average than their peers. Pupils' performance in mathematics, however, remains low across all year groups.
- All pupils who left Year 11 in 2017 sustained their participation in the sixth form, further education or work with training. An increasing number of disadvantaged students entered the school's sixth form. The range of different courses indicates that guidance is effective and appropriate.

16 to 19 study programmes

Requires improvement

- Instability in leadership has meant that improvements in the sixth form have not been rapid enough. The leader for this area of the school's work has too many other responsibilities to focus closely on this aspect. However, the new principal understands the need for further improvements in the sixth form and is beginning to take effective action to bring about change.
- Leaders from the trust have not supported school leaders actively in developing the 16 to 19 provision.
- The quality of teaching in the sixth form is too variable across a range of subjects and does not ensure that students make good progress.
- Students' progress has declined. The students are not making the progress of which they are capable, especially the most able, and gaps between the achievements of different groups of students are not reducing.
- Early indications suggest that students' overall achievement rose in 2017. However, leaders did not act swiftly enough to identify and to resolve underachievement in some subjects, particularly mathematics, history, English literature and English Language.
- Sixth-form leaders are now receiving additional support, and this is enabling them to have a clearer understanding of the quality of teaching and learning. However, it is too soon to measure any impact on students' outcomes.
- Recently, leaders have begun to check on the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the 16 to 19 programmes. This has enabled them to identify areas of strength and weakness in different subjects and to take action to bring about improvements.
- Where practice is stronger, teachers plan appropriately challenging activities for students, leading to students engaging actively in their learning and making more rapid progress, for example, in business, biology, chemistry and psychology. Students studying dance, in particular, spoke of their enjoyment and the fact that they are

inspired to continue with their studies on leaving the sixth form.

- More students have entered the sixth form over the past three years, and an increasing proportion of Year 12 students continue with their studies into Year 13. This is because leaders have gained a better understanding of individual students' personal barriers to learning and have taken effective action to overcome them.
- Students who are required to re-sit GCSE English or mathematics on entering the sixth form receive support to enable them to attain these qualifications. In the last three years, all students have achieved both qualifications by the end of Year 13.
- The sixth form meets the requirements of the 16 to 19 study programmes. All students receive the opportunity to undertake work experience. This provides them with an insight into the world of work.
- Leaders help students to make informed choices about their future careers and education. Students are well supported and guided through the process of choosing and applying to universities, and of securing apprenticeships and jobs. The students told inspectors that they do not receive enough information about apprenticeships.
- Students take part in wide-ranging enrichment activities that extend their learning beyond the classroom. Leaders encourage students to play an active part in the work of the school, for example, through the sixth-form council. Students work with younger pupils, providing support in lessons and acting as reading mentors. Through these opportunities, the students act as effective role models and grow in confidence.
- Students understand the need to respect all people, including those who are different from themselves.
- Students know how to keep themselves safe, including online, when in relationships and out in the local community.
- Students said that they feel safe in the school. They have staff whom they can approach should they have a concern and are confident that they will receive effective support. Students recognise that their teachers are supporting them in becoming more independent.

School details

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| Unique reference number | 142063 |
| Local authority | Northamptonshire |
| Inspection number | 10038214 |

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

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| Type of school | Secondary comprehensive |
| School category | Academy sponsor-led |
| Age range of pupils | 11 to 18 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 1101 |
| Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes | 143 |
| Appropriate authority | Board of trustees |
| Chair | Kevin Crompton |
| Principal | Elizabeth Dormor |
| Telephone number | 01832 272881 |
| Website | www.princewilliamschool.co.uk |
| Email address | reception@princewilliamschool.co.uk |
| Date of previous inspection | Not previously inspected |

Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- Prince William School is a larger than average-sized secondary school.
- The school has been sponsored by the EMLC Academy Trust since September 2015. The trust is responsible for the school's governance. The school has a local governing board. The trust holds all the legal responsibilities for the school.

- The proportion of pupils who are from minority ethnic groups is smaller than average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for pupil premium funding is below average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above average. The proportion of pupils with a statement of SEN or an education, health and care plan is above average.
- When required, pupils access full-time alternative provision through local authority commissioned placements.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics at the end of key stage 4.
- Since the school became a sponsor-led academy, there have been several changes to the school's leadership team. The current principal took up the substantive post in September 2017.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 61 lessons, across a wide range of subjects and in all key stages. Some lessons were jointly observed with senior leaders. Inspectors also observed tutor time and one assembly.
- Inspectors looked at pupils' work in lessons across all year groups and a sample of pupils' books.
- The lead inspector held a range of meetings, including with the principal, members of the safeguarding team, including the designated safeguarding lead, the 'achievement lead', two members of the local governing board, and two representatives of the multi-academy trust, including the chief executive officer.
- The inspectors held a range of meetings with the school's leaders including: senior leaders responsible for behaviour and attendance, teaching and learning, and the curriculum; the vice-principal responsible for the sixth form; the leader with oversight of the use of the pupil premium; the coordinator for provision for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities; the careers leader; the whole-school literacy leader; the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education coordinator; subject leaders and pastoral leaders.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour during lessons, before school and during breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors listened to pupils reading, including pupils from Year 7 and pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Inspectors also spoke with a group of students who receive additional support.
- Inspectors spoke formally with pupils from key stage 3, key stage 4 and the sixth form, as well a group of disadvantaged pupils.
- Throughout the two days, inspectors spoke informally with pupils about their experiences, their learning and their safety.
- An inspector spoke with a representative of an alternative provider, which pupils from the school attend to be educated elsewhere.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school's development plan, minutes of meetings of the local governing board and the trust, information about the attainment and progress of all pupils, records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding, and information on the school's website. The lead inspector also checked the school's single central register and the school's system for recruiting staff.
- Inspectors evaluated 186 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey, including 122 free text responses, as well as additional written communications received from parents. An inspector also spoke with parents before school.
- Inspectors analysed the 48 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for staff and the 87 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire for pupils.

Inspection team

| | |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Rachel Tordoff, lead inspector | Her Majesty's Inspector |
| Paul Sweeney | Ofsted Inspector |
| Clare Considine | Ofsted Inspector |
| Dick Vasey | Ofsted Inspector |
| Bernadette Green | Ofsted Inspector |

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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