

Inspection of a good school: Uppingham Community College

London Road, Uppingham, Rutland LE15 9TJ

Inspection dates:

7 and 8 March 2023

Outcome

Uppingham Community College continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a happy, caring and inclusive school. Pupils understand that leaders have high standards and expectations. Pupils know that their teachers want the very best for them. The school's core values of 'respect, honesty and kindness' are seen throughout the school. These are reinforced in every aspect of school life.

Pupils are proud to attend Uppingham Community College. They behave well and display positive attitudes toward their learning. Pupils benefit from both a well-planned curriculum and positive relationships with their teachers. They know what is expected of them. Lessons are positive and purposeful. Pupils get on well together and show respect. Pupils are polite and well mannered to adults, visitors and their classmates. Pupils say bullying is rare. They trust their teachers will solve any problems they may have.

Pupils have many opportunities to take part in activities and trips outside lessons. This helps them develop their talents and interests in the areas of, for example, sports, music and drama. Pupils in key stage 4 have opportunities to develop their leadership skills. They help the younger pupils. The well-being ambassadors support pupils who want to talk about any issues they have.

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

Leaders have a clear vision and intent for the curriculum. It is ambitious. Subject leaders have thought carefully about what pupils should know and understand. The curriculum is well sequenced so that pupils build on what they have already learned. This makes sure that they are ready for the next stage of their learning.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They provide clear explanations and make links with other areas of pupils' learning. These connections help pupils to remember and know more. Teachers check that pupils retain the most important knowledge. They use a range of questioning, quizzes and planned tests. As a result, the vast majority of pupils achieve well. However, in a few subjects, some teachers do not choose the most appropriate

activities. When this happens, pupils do not always learn the intended knowledge as well as they should.

In key stage 4, pupils have the option to study a wide range of subjects. Leaders know the low number of pupils who study languages is a limit to who achieves the English Baccalaureate. Numbers choosing to study a language at GCSE are increasing each year.

Leaders ensure that pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) benefit from all aspects of school life. While leaders have improved the provision for these pupils, there is still work to be done. Pupils in the mainstream plus class and specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision) are well taught and supported to catch up. They achieve well. However, teachers do not always get clear advice on how to support all pupils with SEND and meet their needs. As a result, some pupils with SEND could make better progress.

The behaviour policy is consistently applied. Pupils who sometimes make the wrong choices are supported to meet the school's expectations. Low-level disruption is not tolerated. As a result, pupils participate well in lessons and behave appropriately around the school site.

Leaders provide pupils with a good range of opportunities to support their wider development. Trips abroad and activities during 'ACE' (additional curriculum experience) days help pupils to develop their understanding of different cultures.

The school has a well-planned programme of personal development. Teachers deliver dedicated lessons, as well as assemblies and have visiting speakers. Pupils found the recent talk from police on knife crime and county lines drug issues interesting and helpful. The programme ensures pupils have an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships. Pupils are taught how to prepare for their next steps. They meet employers and learn about different career pathways. This includes 'job of the week'.

Teachers enthuse pupils with their love of books. They provide them with many opportunities to read. The school has its own e-library where pupils can access a wealth of electronic books. Pupils read widely and often.

Teachers are proud and happy to work at this school. Staff appreciate how leaders think about their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders have established systems for reporting and tracking safeguarding concerns. These are thorough and robust. Staff receive regular training. This reminds them of local safeguarding issues and the signs that a pupil might be at risk of harm. Staff understand their responsibilities and how to report any concerns they have. Appropriate recruitment checks are carried out when staff join the school.

Pupils feel safe in school. They know who to talk to if they have a concern. Pupils are taught how to recognise risks, including when online. They know that inappropriate behaviour, including disrespectful and derogatory behaviour, would be challenged by staff should it occur.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, teachers do not always choose the most appropriate activities that enable pupils to learn the most essential knowledge. As a result, not all pupils grasp this knowledge as well as they should. Leaders should ensure that in all subjects, teachers consistently use activities which match the intended learning.
- Some pupils with SEND do not receive the precise support that they need. Teachers do not receive clear enough information that will help pupils with SEND achieve as well as they should. Leaders should provide teachers with precise information about how to support pupils with SEND so that they progress well through the curriculum.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good in June 2013.

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](#)' 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.

School details

Unique reference number	136629
Local authority	Rutland Council
Inspection number	10241692
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	907
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Geoff Thompson
Principal	Ben Solly
Website	www.uppinghamcollege.org.uk/
Date of previous inspection	12 September 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses the services of two registered alternative provisions.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.
- The school has a specially resourced provision for pupils with autism spectrum disorder.
- The school experienced a fire in August 2022 destroying 20% of the buildings. This delayed pupils returning to school.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in design and technology, English, history and science. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with leaders, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and pupils and looked at samples of pupils' work.

- The lead inspector visited a range of lessons in other subjects.
- Inspectors met with leaders responsible for behaviour, personal development, reading and the provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils from key stage 3 and key stage 4.
- The lead inspector met with leaders of safeguarding to discuss the actions taken to keep pupils safe. She reviewed a range of documents related to safeguarding, including the school's single central record.
- The lead inspector visited the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of documentation, including the school's self-evaluation and improvement plan.
- The lead inspector met with three members of the trust board, including the chair.
- Inspectors considered the responses to Ofsted's parent and staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Sue Vasey, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Mohamed Patel

Ofsted Inspector

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