

Inspection of New College Worcester (NMSS)

Whittington Road, Worcester, Worcestershire WR5 2JX

Inspection dates:	19 and 20 November 2024
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Inadequate

What is it like to attend this school?

This school inspires, nurtures, and empowers pupils to succeed both in their education and in later life. It maintains high expectations for all pupils, including those in the sixth form. Staff give careful consideration to the needs of pupils with visual impairments. This allows pupils to thrive. Parents and carers view the school as a community.

The relationships between staff and pupils are built on mutual respect and nurturing. Interactions are filled with smiles, laughter, and joy. Pupils are attentive to each other's individual visual impairment needs and provide excellent support. The overall atmosphere among students is extremely positive. The school enables students to learn to live and work independently.

The school begins preparing pupils for life after school at an early stage. The school actively establishes connections with workplaces that promote and support individuals with visual impairments. It advocates for visual impairment in the workplace, aiming to help all pupils achieve their career ambitions.

There is a huge array of extra-curricular activities on offer to promote pupils' talents and interests. Many consider the needs of the visually impaired. These include shooting, tandem riding, cultural food club and a highly skilled choir.

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

There is a well-balanced and ambitious curriculum in place for all year groups, including the sixth form. It considers the individual needs and interests of the pupils. The school has made sure that learning builds logically and that pupils make links with their learning over time. For example, in history, pupils learn about capital punishment in the 1950s. They then compare this with the use of capital punishment in previous centuries. As a result, pupils achieve well and gain a range of suitable qualifications by the time they move on.

Skilled teachers deliver the school's curriculum. They carry out initial assessments of pupils' abilities when they start school. They then adapt the curriculum for each pupil's individual need. Nearly all teachers have specialist qualifications. Staff support pupils well in lessons, particularly if they have difficulty understanding. Teachers carry out planned checks on pupils' learning. However, staff do not use these checks consistently well to address misconceptions or gaps in learning. This affects how well pupils learn.

Subject leaders are experts in their curriculum. They make sure that a range of resources enable pupils to access their learning. These include braille, enlarged texts and the use of technology. The school is further developing subject leaders. It makes sure that they carry out regular checks on how their subject is being delivered by other members of staff. However, this work is at an early stage. Subject leaders need further support to fully develop their curriculum areas.

All subjects promote reading well. The school ensures that pupils who need extra support to read, in whatever form, receive it. Many pupils love to read in their own time, either reading themselves or listening to audio books.

The school is determined for pupils to attend well. Some pupils have a number of issues which prevent them from attending school regularly. These include pupils with specific health problems and pupils who are waiting to move to a different school. The school works closely with parents and local authorities to support these pupils.

Pupils' personal development is a strength of the school. It is a priority. By ensuring pupils learn important life skills, the school prepares pupils very well for their next steps and adulthood. For example, students in the sixth form know that learning how to cook and clean through the 'independent living skills curriculum' will enable them to live independently at university.

The school's personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education curriculum is very well thought out and organised. Form tutors know the pupils well and adapt the curriculum to address each pupil's specific needs. Pupils speak positively about the experiences they receive both academically and socially. The school is acutely aware of and promotes pupils' physical and mental health. For example, through physical education lessons, pupils learn about fitness and the importance of exercise. The school regularly discusses mental health issues with pupils. It monitors pupils' mental health closely and provides extra expert support if necessary.

A skilled new governing board is passionate about the school. There is a commitment to ensuring pupils live a successful life after school. New staff are particularly positive about how the school supports them in their role. Leaders make sure that staff workload is appropriate and manageable.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, staff do not use their checks on pupils' learning to address gaps and misconceptions consistently. Consequently, some pupils do not learn in as much depth or detail as they could. The school should make sure that staff use the school's approaches to assessment consistently.
- The evaluation and oversight of some subjects is not as developed as it could be. Subject leaders monitor their subject but have not acted on their findings to further improve pupils' learning. The school should ensure that subject leaders receive the

support needed to carry out their roles effectively and bring about improvement in their subjects.

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	117064
Local authority	Worcestershire
Inspection number	10290553
Type of school	Special
School category	Non-maintained special
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	58
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	23
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Pat Dyson
Principal	Rachel Perks
Website	www.ncw.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	15 November 2022, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school caters for pupils who have visual impairments, including a high proportion who are registered as blind. Nearly all pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- 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.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.
- Pupils who attend the school come from all parts of the country. The vast majority of pupils are boarders.

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.
- 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: mathematics, languages, physical education and history. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders.
- Inspectors held meetings with other staff.
- 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 reviewed school documentation.
- Inspectors met with representatives of governors, including the chair of the governing body.
- Inspectors spoke with pupils at social times and in formal meetings. They took account of the online pupil survey.
- Inspectors met with staff and took account of the online staff survey.
- Inspectors met with groups of parents and reviewed Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Barry Yardsley, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Christopher Stevens

His Majesty's Inspector

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