

# Twycross House School

1 Main Road, Twycross, Atherstone, Warwickshire CV9 3PL

## Inspection dates

6–8 June 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Outstanding</b>
Sixth form provision	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- The quality of teaching across the full age range ensures outstanding learning and progress for all pupils. The school prepares pupils extremely well, to achieve exemplary GCSE results and to progress successfully into the sixth form.
- Students in the sixth form achieve excellent A-level results. They are exceptionally well prepared to take up places at a range of universities, including Cambridge and Oxford.
- Pupils and students of all ages, across the school, speak positively and warmly about the school as 'one family'. Behaviour is excellent.
- Parents' views of the school are overwhelmingly positive. Staff are universally proud to work at the school.
- Pupils develop exceptional confidence and positive attitudes to learning. The outstanding quality of relationships between staff and pupils makes a major contribution to the personal development and well-being of pupils.
- Pupils are very safe at the school. The staff give excellent, continuous attention to pupils' welfare and well-being.
- The proprietors and senior leaders have ensured that the school meets all the independent school standards.
- The proprietors, including the headteacher, have an excellent understanding of all aspects of the school's provision and outcomes. The headteacher and senior leaders understand the school's strengths and take decisive action to address any areas requiring improvement, including any weaknesses in teaching.
- A minority of staff would like to see additional opportunities for further training and professional development.
- The school's schemes of work for personal, social and health education are not sufficiently detailed and systematic to guarantee comprehensive coverage for all pupils.

### Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

## **Full report**

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

- Further develop the scheme of work for personal, social and health education to ensure that all pupils have consistent access to a comprehensive programme of planned experiences.
- Ensure that the views and needs of all staff are taken into consideration in the school's programme for the further training and professional development of staff.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- The proprietor, working closely with senior leaders, has ensured that the school meets all the independent school standards.
- The proprietor, who is also the headteacher, has established exemplary provision within a caring community. The school has achieved an outstanding balance between academic excellence and sensitive personal development.
- Relationships between staff and pupils are outstanding. All staff who completed the inspection questionnaire stated that they enjoy working at the school.
- The staff demonstrate high expectations for pupils' exemplary behaviour throughout the school. Pupils respond very positively because they respect the staff and appreciate the extent to which their teachers know and understand them.
- The headteacher and senior leaders are extremely ambitious for their pupils. They have created a community in which all staff work tirelessly to ensure that all pupils fulfil their potential.
- The proprietor knows and understands every detail of the school's provision and outcomes. Senior leaders share his vision and ensure that the staff work together to consistently implement the school's high expectations.
- The curriculum ensures that all pupils have access to all the required areas of experience. The breadth of the curriculum enables pupils to prepare successfully for GCSE examinations in English, mathematics, sciences, languages, information technology, humanities, creative and aesthetic subjects.
- Staff and pupils extend the curriculum imaginatively through a range of additional activities. The most recent copy of the Twycross Times illustrates, for example, a visit to a West End theatre, this year's senior musical, a Form 5 production of 'Hetty Feather', and the German exchange visit.
- The school provides effectively for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. The outstanding relationships between staff and pupils contribute strongly to pupils' self-confidence and their willingness to contribute to school and community events.
- The school's personal, social and health education programme makes an important contribution to pupils' understanding of British values, their rights and responsibilities, and their increasing understanding of diversity within the wider community. Planning for this programme is not sufficiently systematic and detailed to ensure that all pupils have a consistent experience of the full range of intended themes and issues.
- Staff and senior leaders have an accurate understanding of the impact of teaching on pupils' progress. They set ambitious targets and monitor these through regular, effective assessment. Senior leaders have worked very effectively with teachers since the previous inspection to improve the assessment of pupils' achievements and to ensure that all staff are aware of the extent of pupils' progress over time.

- The great majority of teachers value the opportunities that the school provides for their further training. However, a minority would like to see increased opportunities for further professional development.
- The proprietor, senior leaders and staff demonstrate excellent capacity for further improvement.

## **Governance**

- The proprietor takes direct personal responsibility for the monitoring and evaluation of all aspects of the school's work. He has an excellent understanding of the quality of provision and outcomes throughout the school. As headteacher, he continuously monitors teachers' work in classrooms. He has an outstanding knowledge and understanding of how each pupil is progressing.
- Senior leaders operate as a cohesive and highly effective team. Their intensive teamwork informs the proprietor's detailed knowledge of the strengths of the school. Since the time of the previous Ofsted inspection they have, for example, made excellent improvements to arrangements for determining the impact of teaching on individual pupils' progress.
- The proprietor takes decisive action to address any weaknesses in provision, including the quality of teaching and assessment. He is constantly alert to the need, for example, to adjust the curriculum to meet the changing needs of pupils and to ensure that the staff maintain high levels of academic challenge.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. The school has a comprehensive safeguarding policy, which has regard to the latest statutory guidance and which is available to parents through the school's website. Staff implement the requirements of the policy consistently and demonstrate exemplary commitment to ensuring the welfare and well-being of all pupils.
- Staff are extremely vigilant in ensuring that pupils are safe and happy in school. An overwhelming majority of parents, in their responses to the Ofsted questionnaire, state that their children are safe in school and looked after well. Pupils are certain that staff support is available to help them with any concerns that they may have.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

## **Outstanding**

- The quality of teaching is outstanding across the full age range of the school. Teachers combine their excellent subject knowledge and their understanding of how pupils learn to ensure that all pupils make outstanding progress.
- Teachers have high expectations of pupils' desire to learn and their ability to maintain their focus and concentration throughout lessons. Pupils respond with exemplary behaviour, excellent attention and interest in their learning.
- Pupils at key stage 2 develop extensive vocabulary in English and use this to produce articulate and imaginative descriptions. Teachers ensure that they reinforce important features of literacy across a range of subjects.

- Year 10 pupils demonstrate the ability to analyse the author's use of structure, form and imagery in poems. They participate confidently in paired and group discussions and provide detailed and accurate analysis in accordance with the examination marking criteria for the subject.
- Pupils are confident and careful in practical experimental work in science, for example, testing the reaction of acids on metals or exploring the principle of moments when working with levers. Teachers provide an excellent balance between high expectations that pupils will manage their own work successfully, and well-judged interventions when pupils require additional challenge or clarification of any misconceptions.
- Teachers are extremely skilled and successful in the use of questioning to deepen and extend pupils' understanding, for example at key stage 4 when maintaining continuous conversation in French or translating classical Greek. Pupils enjoy the challenge and take a pride in their ability to achieve accurate and comprehensive answers.
- Teachers plan their teaching in logical sequences that enable pupils to extend and deepen their learning effectively over time. Year 9 pupils demonstrate high levels of success when calculating percentages of increasing difficulty, including accurate explanations of how to calculate compound interest. Year 10 pupils, similarly, make strong progress in their ability to factorise quadratic equations of increasing complexity, including the ability to sketch an accurate graph to represent the equation. Throughout these and many other lessons, teachers continuously monitor the work of each individual pupil and intervene when additional help or further challenge is required.
- Pupils respond extremely positively to the expectation that they will work things out for themselves and are able to present reasoned justifications for their answers. Pupils in Year 6, for example, were able to record and explain the functions of different artefacts and buildings in a variety of religions. Pupils in Year 9 engaged in mature conversations analysing and justifying their views about the use of the atom bomb in the Second World War. They were also able to analyse and explain different population pyramids in a Year 9 geography lesson.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy the opportunities provided for creative and sporting activities. In Year 6, pupils demonstrate the application of extensive art skills based on taught techniques and the opportunity to work creatively and independently. The quality of artwork on display around the school demonstrates outstanding achievement.
- The quality of teaching is outstanding because teachers understand the learning characteristics of their pupils. They use their excellent subject knowledge, and accurate assessment, to ensure that they continuously challenge and encourage pupils to improve their individual achievements.
- Pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve. Pupils stated that they find feedback from their teachers very useful and informative. They are used to improving their work in response to teachers' marking. They also receive appropriate and challenging homework that extends the work completed in school.
- Almost all pupils enter the school with starting points that are at or above the national average. Teachers enable them to develop depth and sophistication in their knowledge and understanding and prepare them extremely well for GCSE examinations at the end of Year 11.

- The most able pupils receive sufficient challenge across all subjects to enable them to work towards the highest GCSE grades. The small number of pupils who experience difficulties, particularly with their written work, including handwriting, receive high-quality individual support that enables them to learn successfully within teaching groups in all subjects.
- The overwhelming majority of parents state that they appreciate the information that teachers provide about their children's learning and progress. They agree that the school teaches their children well.

## **Personal development, behaviour and welfare**

## **Outstanding**

### **Personal development and welfare**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils are excellent ambassadors for the values of the school. They are proud to attend Twycross House and talk positively about their experiences.
- Relationships between pupils and staff are excellent, based on mutual respect and high levels of trust. Pupils, from the point of entry to the school, demonstrate self-esteem and full confidence in adults within the school.
- Pupils of all ages develop strong friendships and work productively together. They listen well to the ideas of others and they are able to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in opinions expressed by others.
- The staff provide excellent support for pupils as they make the transitions to examination courses at key stage 4 and on into the sixth form. Pupils speak highly of the advice and care provided by the staff. They know how and where to seek advice at any time.
- Pupils and parents agree overwhelmingly that pupils are safe and well cared for in school. Senior leaders and staff assess risks diligently and take action, within the premises and during off-site visits, to ensure that pupils are safe.
- The school provides pupils with a range of excellent opportunities to learn how to keep themselves safe, including online, and how to lead healthy lives.

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding. Pupils of all ages behave exceptionally well in lessons and around the school.
- Unacceptable behaviour is rare and pupils recognise that staff will deal with any incidents swiftly and fairly. Throughout the inspection, there were no examples of teachers needing to intervene to correct inappropriate behaviour during lessons.
- Pupils' curiosity and their enquiring minds drive much of their successful learning. They are eager to know how to improve and they cooperate extremely well when working together.
- The attendance of pupils is high and is above the national average. There are no issues with unauthorised absence.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Outstanding

- Pupils enter the school with levels of attainment that are mostly at or above the average for their age. The quality of teaching and the dedication of staff ensure that pupils in all year groups make outstanding progress from these starting points.
- Pupils develop their communication skills to a very high standard. They are able to articulate their knowledge and understanding confidently and accurately. They develop the ability to analyse, evaluate and reach conclusions.
- Pupils read fluently and demonstrate the ability to write, both creatively and technically. A major strength in their learning is pupils' ability to apply their reading, comprehension and analytical skills across a diverse range of subjects, including modern and classical languages, sciences and humanities subjects.
- Specialist staff provide effective additional support for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities to ensure that they make excellent progress.
- Pupils make outstanding progress in English and mathematics. Overall attainment by the end of Year 11 is well above the national average.
- Pupils of all ages, including the most able, make substantial and sustained progress across a wide range of subjects. Pupils achieve excellent GCSE results and are extremely well prepared for their A level studies. In 2016, for example, all pupils achieved at least five A\* to C GCSE grades, and a high proportion of examination entries were graded at A\* or A.
- The most recent school newsletter illustrates the breadth and range of pupils' achievements in sports, including individual and team successes in swimming, athletics, football, netball, basketball, cross-country, and five national Ultimate Frisbee titles.
- Pupils are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage of their education, the transition to A-level studies in the sixth form.

## Sixth form provision

## Outstanding

- Senior leaders maintain the drive for excellence in the work of the sixth form. Well-qualified and committed staff provide a continuing range of opportunities for students to extend their outstanding progress. The careers advice and guidance is excellent. Students are well informed about a wide range of career options and how to access them.
- Students speak highly of the quality of teaching that they receive as they prepare for A-level examinations and entry to university. Senior leaders monitor the quality of the provision in the sixth form and ensure that learning builds highly effectively on the foundations that have been set in earlier school years.
- Students explain articulately how the quality of teaching is highly individualised. They are particularly appreciative of the manner in which staff will give them individual additional tuition and support, often one-to-one, to ensure that they can confidently manage the high level of challenge in their studies.
- Students in the sixth form make substantial and sustained progress towards the A level outcomes that they require for university entrance. They believe that they are well

prepared for the rigours of higher education. Parents support this view in their comments about how the school encourages positive attitudes to learning and develops the personal qualities that enable students to thrive in higher education.

- Students also speak very positively about the continuing opportunities to engage in a variety of activities beyond the scope of the classroom. The most recent school newsletter includes details of sixth-form students' involvement in a history visit to Hampton Court Palace, geography fieldwork on Cromer beach, a classics conference in Loughborough, sixth-form Friday challenges and the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. This develops their knowledge and skills, and promotes their personal and social development. In addition, sixth-form students make an enormous contribution to the school's success across a range of sporting events.
- Students achieve outstanding grades in their A-level courses. In 2016, for example, more than two-thirds of the school's A level grades were awarded at grade A\* or A. Eleven students achieved three or more grades at this level.
- Almost all students aim for, and achieve, ambitious destinations. They are extremely successful in achieving places at the universities of their choice, including Cambridge, Oxford and other universities with very demanding entrance requirements. Students are extremely well prepared to take up further studies at the highest level across a wide range of disciplines, including medicine, law, engineering, classics, politics, sciences and humanities subjects.



## School details

Unique reference number	120331
DfE registration number	855/6006
Inspection number	10026046

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	8 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	386
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	67
Proprietor	Steven and Roxanne Assinder
Chair	Steven Assinder
Headteacher	Steven Assinder
Annual fees (day pupils)	£9,090–10,230
Telephone number	01827 880651
Website	<a href="http://www.twycrosshouseschool.org.uk">www.twycrosshouseschool.org.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:enquiries@twycrosshouseschool.org.uk">enquiries@twycrosshouseschool.org.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	20–21 February 2013

## Information about this school

- Twycross House School is an independent, selective day school in Twycross, near Atherstone in Warwickshire. It was founded in 1977 and is privately owned. The headteacher and his wife are the proprietors of the school.
- The school provides full-time education for 386 girls and boys aged eight to 18 years. Most pupils are drawn from within a 20-mile radius; many come from local villages and others from nearby towns.

- It is one of two local schools operating under the Twycross House name, the other being the associated pre-preparatory school, which is inspected separately. Both schools operate in a cluster of listed buildings in a preservation area next to the village green. Additional buildings have been added since the time of the previous inspection. A theatre is currently under construction.
- Most pupils are White British, with a very few from other ethnic backgrounds. None is in the early stages of learning to speak English. The school caters for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities by providing extra tuition to meet the pupils' needs.
- The school does not use the services of any additional providers.
- The previous Ofsted inspection of the school was in February 2013.
- The school aims to 'endeavour to cultivate a supportive and guiding environment where our pupils can flourish and achieve their full potential'.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed learning in 25 lessons across Years 4 to 10. It was not possible to observe learning in Years 11 to 13 as pupils and students were engaged in GCSE and A-level examinations. The inspectors also attended two assemblies.
- The inspectors met with the joint proprietors to discuss their arrangements for the evaluation and oversight of the school's provision and outcomes. In addition, they met separately with the headteacher, who is one of the joint proprietors.
- Inspectors scrutinised examples of pupils' work in a variety of subjects, including English and mathematics. They met with senior leaders, members of staff with management responsibilities and teaching staff. They also considered responses to inspection questionnaires submitted by 42 members of staff.
- The inspectors took account of 65 responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire. They held meetings with groups of pupils across the age range of the school, including sixth formers, and discussed the school informally with a number of others.
- The inspectors scrutinised a number of school policies, procedures and records in order to check the school's compliance with the independent school standards.

## Inspection team

David Young, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Aileen King

Ofsted Inspector

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