



Cotham School Ofsted Highlights

We are proud of the richness of our school community, its cultural diversity and of the successes achieved by our students over many years. However, we are never complacent and are always seeking ways to improve outcomes for all our students.

Cotham School was inspected by Ofsted on Tuesday 20 and Wednesday 21 April 2018. The school was graded 'Good' in all categories, and we were especially delighted with the many incredibly positive observations made by the inspection team about our staff and students. Strong relationships between students and staff are valued features of Cotham and rest assured staff will continue to strive to ensure the best possible school experience, achievement and outcomes for every student who studies here.

Some key messages from the report support our capacity to improve even further and include:

“Since her appointment in 2015, the headteacher has acted with great purpose to address the changing needs of the school. The school is responding well to the changing social context of the community which the school serves. The headteacher’s vision and her focus on meeting the needs of all pupils have been at the heart of the school’s transformation.”

“The headteacher is successfully leading the school through a period of significant change. As a result of her vision and her skilful and determined leadership, the school is now steadily improving.”

“Governors and school leaders have a strong commitment to serving the needs of their diverse community. They are determined to make sure that the needs of all their pupils are met so that all can maximise their potential.”

“Pupils make good progress because teaching is typically good. Teachers are well-qualified subject specialists who make sure that they highlight key points and set appropriate work to reinforce them. They use questioning skilfully to make pupils think hard.”

“Pupils treat each other well. Relationships are generally good-humoured and positive. Pupils report that while bullying does sometimes occur, it is dealt with well by staff. Pupils are tolerant of those from other backgrounds or with other beliefs. They are adamant that there is no place for racism or homophobia in their school.”

“Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities receive the support they require to make good progress.”



“Leaders and teachers put a strong emphasis on supporting pupils to improve their literacy skills. Leaders require almost all subjects to focus on literacy and provide stimulating opportunities for writing.”

“There is a strong and well embedded culture of safeguarding right across the school. All members of staff are well trained and take their responsibilities seriously. They are vigilant and know what to do should they feel a pupil is at risk.”

“The leadership of pupil premium is good. Pupils who need support are identified and appropriate help is put in place for them. Their progress is monitored and teachers and teaching assistants intervene if required. A significant proportion of disadvantaged pupils also speak English as an additional language. Leaders have ensured that these pupils are well supported by a knowledgeable and committed team. As a result of their work, these pupils are overcoming the barriers they face and are able to thrive in school”

“The behaviour of pupils is good.... Pupils behave well around the school site. They enjoy coming to school and the atmosphere in the playground and in social areas is positive and friendly. Pupils are respectful and courteous to staff. They welcome those from different backgrounds or who hold different beliefs.”

“Relationships between staff and pupils are good. Pupils are respectful when talking with adults and courteous to visitors.”

“Pupils are keen to take part in lessons. They answer teachers’ questions enthusiastically and they want to do their best. They are keen to respond to teachers’ advice and correct and improve their work where they can.”

“Leaders have ensured that the curriculum is appropriate for all pupils. They have insisted that the curriculum is designed to ensure that there is academic challenge for all pupils and that there are no ‘soft options’. A very high proportion of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, take a foreign language option in key stage 4, for example. Pupils are given additional support to achieve success in these courses rather than being put on less demanding courses.”

“Students in the sixth form make better progress with their A levels than students in other schools. They are achieving well across a broad range of subjects. They are also making better-than-average progress with English and mathematics GCSE courses they are retaking. Disadvantaged students are making similar progress to other students across the country.”

“Leaders have established a good programme of careers education throughout the school. They are aware that some pupils do not have high aspirations and they have put in place a comprehensive programme to raise pupils’ expectations of themselves. As a result of this package, an increasing number of pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language are setting their sights high and moving on to top universities.”