



SCHOOL INSPECTION SERVICE

INSPECTION REPORT FOR FOCUS SCHOOL COTTINGHAM CAMPUS

DfE No: 811/ 6007

The key inspection judgements for this school are:

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| The quality of education | Good | 2 |
| Student's personal development | Outstanding | 1 |
| Safeguarding students' welfare health and safety | Outstanding | 1 |
| Leadership, management and governance | Good | 2 |

Compliance with the Independent School Standards:

The school does not meet all the regulatory requirements of schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Compliance with the Equality Act 2010:

The school meets the requirements of the Equality Act.

Date of inspection: 5-7 October 2015

SECTION A: SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

Focus School Cottingham Campus provides a good quality of education. It fulfils its aims; students say that they are happy to be at the school and their parents agree. The curriculum is good, it covers all the areas of learning and does much to promote students enjoyment of school. Teaching is good, with examples of outstanding teaching in the secondary phase. Teachers plan lessons carefully ensuring that the learning needs of individual students are identified and catered for ensuring that all students make good progress. Marking is generally good but there is some marking which does not give students enough guidance on how to improve their work. Students' behaviour is excellent and this makes a strong contribution to their learning and their enjoyment of school. Students' personal development is outstanding. They have good opportunities to learn about the British values of democracy, equality, liberty and the rule of law. They know about other faiths and cultures. There are good links with wider society and the local community. Arrangements for safeguarding and ensuring students' welfare, health and safety are outstanding, including the safe recruitment of staff. Pastoral care is excellent and there is a good programme of careers guidance. Leadership and management are good. The school is led and managed very effectively enabling students to make good and often outstanding progress in all aspects of their development. Trustees work well with school leaders and there is a strong culture of school self-evaluation and improvement. Trustees carry out their individual responsibilities well but it is felt that one trustee with overarching responsibility for legal compliance would be beneficial in helping the trust carry out its responsibility to work within a corporate, legal regime. The school building is bright, welcoming and well maintained but currently does not have showers although there are plans to provide shower rooms in the coming months.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

To meet the independent school standards, the proprietor must:

- provide showers (paragraph 23 (1) c).

Whilst not required by the regulations, the proprietor should:

- improve the quality of teachers' marking so that all marking is as good as the best and provides clear guidance to students on how to improve their work;
- ensure that one trustee takes overall responsibility for all the school's legal functions in order to fulfil the school's corporate responsibility to work within the legal framework.

SECTION B: INFORMATION

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION

This inspection was carried out by the School Inspection Service (SIS) in accordance with Section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. It follows the inspection framework agreed by SIS and the Department for Education (DfE).

In reaching their judgements the inspectors observed lessons in a range of subjects. They examined samples of the work of students across all key stages. They observed daily life of the school, including at break and lunchtimes. They examined the school's documentation, records and website. They held discussions with staff, including those with management and leadership roles, and with individual trustees. They took account of the responses of parents and students to the pre-inspection questionnaires completed by students and parents, and whilst in school had discussions with groups of students representing each key stage.

The inspectors were:

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| Reporting Inspector: | Mrs Christine Graham |
| Team inspectors: | Mr Peter Jones |
| Lay inspector: | Mr Philip Hutchinson |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Focus School Cottingham Campus is a mixed non-selective independent school which is registered with the DfE as having a special religious character. It operates a Christian ethos and appeals to those parents who value an education based on scriptural principals and Christian values and beliefs. The school belongs to the Focus Learning Trust (FLT). It takes children from Hull, Grimsby and Lincoln. Students join the school at the end of Key Stage 1. The school has been on its present site since 2006. It has 110 students on roll of whom 41 are in the primary phase in Key Stage 2. There are 53 students in Key Stages 3 and 4, and 16 students in the sixth form. There are slightly more boys than girls in the school. Four students have Education Health Care Plans and a further 18 students are identified by the school as needing support for learning difficulties. Eighteen students are identified as being able, gifted or talented (AGT). The

school aims to inspire and challenge its students to reach beyond themselves so they leave satisfied with their achievements.

SECTION C: THE INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

The quality of the curriculum

Focus School Cottingham Campus provides a good quality of education for its students. The curriculum is good. It follows the National Curriculum and is guided by the FLT schemes of work. The curriculum reflects the aims and Christian ethos of the school, and it is supported effectively by the school's policies, schemes of work and long and medium term plans. A particularly strong feature of the school's planning is the daily lesson plans which allow staff to adapt the curriculum to meet the needs and interests of individual students. This ensures that all students make good progress and enjoy learning. The curriculum is outlined for parents in the school's prospectus, and the Cottingham Campus Handbook provides helpful information, for parents, students and staff, about the curriculum and the organisation of learning.

A strong feature of the curriculum is the school's focus on independent learning skills. There is a well-established system of 'talk partners' throughout the school and this is very effective. Students discuss how to organise their work or solve problems and when tasks are challenging students will talk together about how best to move forward with their work, and they do this without prompting from teachers. This encourages reflective learning, builds confidence, helps students to apply new Knowledge and concepts and enhances their speaking and listening skills.

There is a good range of extra-curricular activities which extend students' skills and talents. This is supplemented by a programme of visits, visitors and enrichment activities which promote students' enjoyment of learning and their understanding of other cultures and faiths. In the primary phase there are opportunities for cross-curricular learning and these are often inspired by educational visits or visiting speakers. Theme and enrichment days provide good opportunities to increase students' enjoyment of learning and to improve their learning skills. The recent Great Cottingham Bake Off provided students with opportunities to work in teams and perfect their designing, organisational and making skills. The competition tested students' creativity by setting a challenge of making a cake which exemplified British Values. The finished cakes, created by mixed age teams, were highly professional and creative.

The quality of teaching and assessment

The quality of teaching is good and has a positive impact on the achievement and progress of the students. They read well and understand what they have read; their speaking is excellent and writing is good. Their understanding and use of numbers are excellent. They are amply prepared through the good range of skills with which they are equipped to play a useful role as an

economically active member of British society. Lessons are well-planned, and in the great majority of cases challenging and effective. Tasks are interesting, as for example when in a Year 8 science lesson eggs were fried to show how physical changes in materials take place.

The school has a learning support policy and clearly identifies students with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). Support for these students is effective and well organised, and recent initiatives have helped this provision to improve. A SEND co-ordinator ensures that planning for the learning needs of SEND students is in place, with key workers allocated to each student. Teachers and teaching assistants are trained and deployed appropriately to provide good SEND support and challenge. The school makes use of a well-equipped learning support area for one-to-one support as well as in-class support. The school is developing Individual Learning Plans for each of the SEND students to help them overcome barriers to learning and to succeed. The school works in partnership with the local authority to ensure that all statutory duties for children with educational health care plans (EHC) are implemented.

Provision for able, gifted or talented (AGT) students is good. Across the school, and especially in the upper years of secondary, teaching is well designed to challenge the most able. The school has a designated AGT tutor, and identifies AGT students through standardised testing, internal assessments and teacher observations. Special provision is made, for example, at Key Stage 2, for able mathematicians and arrangements are made for AGT students to attend special events which challenge their capability.

Assessment information is used accurately to establish a baseline for students' achievement. The school keeps careful records of achievement and progress and these allow teachers to identify students' learning needs including those who need additional support and the most able. As a result all students make good progress and achieve well.

Marking is of generally good quality although some of it does not do enough to show students how to improve. The school is aware that there is work to do to bring all marking up to the quality of the best. Oral feedback in lessons is excellent, with teachers leading high levels of discussion to which students contribute very well.

Students' learning and achievement

Students are keen learners, and make good progress. They take a great interest in their own success and achieve well; one sixth former described it as 'the morale of learning'. Examination and test results over time and the school's own data show that students make good progress, and they achieve well relative to their starting points. This is due to the good teaching they receive and the school's effective use of data to monitor students' progress and set up intervention strategies when needed. Standards have improved recently in both sections of the school in response to the effective use of such information. The school identified relative weaknesses in the results in literacy and numeracy at Key Stage 2 as being due to deficiencies in spelling, grammar, punctuation and mental arithmetic and focused on improving these. In

consequence, students' results have risen and are now in-line with or above the national average. Similarly, in the secondary school, results at GCSE have risen and are well above local and national averages, irrespective of the broad range of students' abilities in the school. In 2014 all students achieved at least five A*-Cs including in English and mathematics. Overall, these results were in line with the grades predicted by the baseline tests. Results in the sixth form are broadly in line with the results of students nationally. Students at all levels write extensively and expressively, showing a wide vocabulary and flexible use of syntax. They have a secure grasp of number and are able to apply this in subjects like geography and mathematics. Students of all abilities acquire very good speaking, listening and numeracy skills which are reflected in the quality of classroom discussions.

2. THE QUALITY OF STUDENTS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Students' personal development is outstanding. Provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Students are polite, well-mannered and thoughtful young people. They have a mature attitude towards their learning and in their interactions with others. They support and care for each other and their environment very well. Younger students say they particularly value the support they receive from their older peers. Students of all ages make a strong contribution to the school by volunteering to take on responsibilities which they carry out very sensibly. They support a wide range of local and national charities many of which help them to understand the challenges faced by people in their everyday lives, such as teenagers with life threatening illnesses or the homeless. Students develop into confident and articulate young people as they move through the school. They listen well to their peers and their teachers and they show respect for the beliefs, lifestyles and cultures of others.

Students have excellent attitudes to learning, a Year 7 student said this was because they know that the school is preparing them for their working lives. All students recognise the importance of hard work and effort. Students' attendance is good and students say that they enjoy school and that they would recommend the school to others. Some younger students talked of how much their achievement had improved since joining the school and it was clear that this had led to greater self-confidence and self-esteem. Students' behaviour is usually excellent and the school promotes good behaviour through its, recently reviewed, behaviour policy which has seen expectations for students' behaviour further enhanced. Relationships within the school are excellent.

Students have very good opportunities to develop their creative, sporting, musical and artistic talents and displays around the school reflect the range of the opportunities that are available. Opportunities for students to develop entrepreneurial skills are particularly well developed through Enterprise Days and through the interest shown by individuals. These enterprises raise a great deal of money for local and national charities. Students receive effective careers guidance and support which helps them to make well-informed choices about

their future lives. Students benefit from support from business mentors and they receive information about the skills and aptitudes needed for a range of careers. The school is piloting a healthy living programme and there have been changes made to the food provided in school together with increased opportunities for sport and exercise. The programme is designed to encourage students to maintain a healthy lifestyle throughout their lives. Students have good opportunities to learn about democratic processes. The school held a mock election in May 2014 and students voted for their preferred candidate after each had given an election speech. More recently students voted for the head boy and girl and their deputies. Students' views are sought and taken account of by school leaders. There are well established school councils and students complete surveys, most recently surveys on the changes to school meals. Students provide thoughtful responses to surveys providing balanced views which give helpful feedback to the school.

3. SAFEGUARDING STUDENTS' WELFARE, HEALTH AND SAFETY

The school's provision for welfare, health and safety is outstanding. There is a strong culture of vigilance. All staff are aware of the importance of safeguarding to students' welfare, health and safety and consider all aspects which will enable them to feel safe and fully protected.

The school produces and successfully implements the required policies to ensure compliance with the requirements of the standards and government guidance. Particular attention has been paid to the latest versions of guidance which have significant additions relating to keeping children safe and preventing radicalisation.

Staff with responsibilities for safeguarding are very well aware of their responsibilities and fulfil them with care. Requirements for staff recruitment and vetting, fire precautions, health and safety and risk assessments are all met in full. The school has appropriate anti-bullying and e-safety policies and strategies, good supervision arrangements and good behaviour is effectively promoted. The school ensures that students are aware the dangers of abuse, sexual exploitation, radicalisation and extremism. Students are well supervised and the premises are secure and offer good protection. The school maintains its admission and attendance registers appropriately. Attendance is well above the national average.

The school's recruitment and vetting procedures, and records, including the Single Central Record (SCR) of staff appointments are well organised and meet requirements.

Students say they feel safe in school and that any misbehaviour or bullying is dealt with quickly and effectively.

4. LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

The leadership and management of the school are good. Leaders, managers and trustees have established an ambitious vision for the school and they have high expectations of staff and students. School leaders are promoting improvement effectively. They lead by example to create a culture of respect and tolerance and there is a clear focus on improving outcomes for students. As a result students are making better progress than in the past and standards of achievement are rising at all key stages. Leaders, managers and trustees have an accurate understanding of the quality of education at the school. School improvement planning identifies areas that require improvement and school leaders have taken a number of well-targeted actions which have improved the leadership and management of the school and outcomes for students. School leaders use performance management effectively to improve teaching. Staff are provided with a good range of internal and external courses and a coaching programme. Teachers value the support they are given and they recognise the impact that this is having on their teaching and on outcomes for students. The Campus Administrators carry out their role very effectively. Administrative systems and procedures, including those for students' welfare and safeguarding, are thorough. Parents have access to the information they need and the regulations relating to the handling of complaints are met in full. The management of the school and trustees work very well together.

Governance

The quality of governance and the effectiveness of the trustees are good. The trustees are fully aware of their responsibilities and have successfully ensured that nearly all regulatory requirements are met. Trustees visit the school regularly and ensure that the premises and accommodation are safe, secure and present a good quality learning environment. The trustees carry out their individual responsibilities well but it is felt that one trustee with overarching responsibility for legal compliance would be beneficial to the trust and its responsibility to work within a corporate, legal regime. Trustees are suitably informed about all aspects of the school and the provision made for students.

SCHOOL DETAILS

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| Name of school: | Focus School Cottingham Campus | | | |
| Address of school: | Old Victorian School Hallgate Cottingham HU16 4DD | | | |
| Telephone number: | 01482 840722 | | | |
| Email addresses: | cottinghamcampus@focus-school.com | | | |
| Web address | www.cottingham.focus-school.com | | | |
| Proprietor: | Northmoor Education Trust | | | |
| Person registered with DfE as proprietor under paragraph 20 of Part 4: | Northmoor Education Trust | | | |
| Head Teacher: | Mrs Kimberley Hutton | | | |
| DfE Number | 811/6007 | | | |
| Type of school | Independent school | | | |
| Annual fees | N/A | | | |
| Age range of students | 7-18 | | | |
| Gender of students | Mixed | | | |
| Total number on roll | full-time | 110 | part-time | 0 |
| Number of children under-5 | Boys: | 0 | Girls: | 0 |
| Number of compulsory school age students | Boys: | 53 | Girls: | 41 |
| Number of post-compulsory students | Boys: | 8 | Girls: | 8 |
| Number of students with statements of special educational need | Boys: | 2 | Girls: | 2 |
| Number of students with English as an additional language | Boys: | 0 | Girls: | 0 |
| Type of inspection | Section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008 | | | |

This report has been prepared by the School Inspection Service, which provides independent professional inspection of all schools affiliated to the Focus Learning Trust, and members of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship or Cognita group. The report is available from the School Inspection Service website: www.schoolinspectionsservice.co.uk.