

Inspection of The National Mathematics and Science College

No 2 The Oaks, Westwood Way, Westwood Business Park, Coventry CV4 8JB

Inspection dates: 4–6 February 2020

Overall effectiveness

Good

The quality of education

Outstanding

Behaviour and attitudes

Outstanding

Personal development

Outstanding

Leadership and management

Good

Sixth-form provision

Outstanding

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection

Requires improvement

Does the school meet the independent
school standards?

Yes

What is it like to attend this school?

All the staff at this college clearly have the students' best interests at heart. They are ambitious for the students to achieve very well academically and as highly successful members of society. The students know this, and say they value the care and support they are given. Leaders make sure that the students receive the very best quality teaching. Teachers are experts in their subjects. They use their extensive knowledge and effective teaching skills very well to make sure that students understand and remember their learning well.

Behaviour is excellent. Students have extremely positive attitudes towards their learning and always listen carefully in lessons. They work very hard. They are not afraid of making mistakes and understand the importance of not giving up when they find something difficult. Students have a very good understanding of different types of bullying, and they say there is no bullying in the college. The college's behaviour records support this.

Students are able to take part in a wide range of high-quality experiences, including in sport, music and theatre. This makes sure that they are able to develop any individual skills they may already have, as well as learn new ones.

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

The National Mathematical and Science College is a specialist sixth-form college. Leaders say their aim is to help students to achieve the highest standards in mathematics and science and to prepare them to become leaders in their chosen careers. The college does this extremely well. The A-level curriculum is very well planned and delivered. Teachers give students plenty of opportunities to practise their skills and deepen their learning. Many students who join the school do not speak English as their first language. Leaders have made sure that these students receive very high-quality support so that they learn to speak, read and write in English well. This means they are able to complete their A-level studies and achieve excellent grades by the time they leave the school.

The way in which leaders and teachers support students' personal development is outstanding. Students in all three year groups have access to a rich, well-planned and broad curriculum. As well as this, they are given opportunities to take part in a wide range of exciting, high-quality experiences. These include sporting activities such as skiing and rock climbing, and creative activities such as art competitions and performing at the Belgrade Theatre. They take part in debates with local schools and enter Olympiad competitions in a wide range of subjects. Students also support their local community, for example by planning activities to raise money for charities and supporting the nearby food bank.

Students are given high-quality guidance and support in careers. The wide programme of activities includes visiting speakers from industry and universities, and

attending conferences, open days and residential courses. Individual support from knowledgeable tutors makes sure students are given the best possible advice. Students say they greatly value this support and feel very well prepared for the next stage of their education or employment.

Students have an excellent attitude towards their learning. They are very well focused in lessons, settle quickly to tasks and are extremely self-motivated. They show high levels of resilience when tackling demanding activities and a determination to succeed. Teachers give students the individual guidance they need in lessons, which helps them to make excellent progress. Students are very eager to learn from their mistakes, and they appreciate the feedback they receive from teachers. Sometimes, though, teachers do not have high enough expectations for the way students present their work.

The college provides high-quality personal, social, health and economic education. As many of the students in the college have only been in the United Kingdom for a short length of time, there is a very strong focus on making sure they are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Students have an excellent understanding of institutions like the Royal Family and the Houses of Parliament. They are able to explain the importance of values such as democracy, respecting others and celebrating diversity. They could also give examples of how they demonstrate these values within the college.

The college's work to support students' spiritual, moral and cultural development is very strong. The students come from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. However, they demonstrate a genuine respect for each other. They are keen to learn about each other's cultures, and the college plans rich activities to help with this. For example, in the language society, students teach each other how to speak in their language, and in the 'come dine with me' experience students prepare and serve traditional cultural meals.

The college is well led and managed. Leaders have a good understanding of the independent school standards and ensure that they meet them consistently. As well as this, leaders have made sure that the college complies with schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010. There is an equal opportunities policy, and pupils and staff are treated equally. The school is fully inclusive and meets the needs of its pupils well.

The board of directors acts on behalf of the proprietors and provides governance for the college. They are responsible for making sure the school meets its statutory requirements, including those under health and safety. However, the board of directors has not been holding leaders fully to account in this area. For example, they did not know whether all the necessary health and safety checks had been carried out. Also, they could not confirm whether all the actions listed in the college's fire risk assessment had been completed. The principal was able to provide evidence during the inspection to show that all the required health and safety checks had been completed. However, the way the college is currently monitoring and recording these checks is not robust enough.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Safeguarding is a strength.

Students are very well cared for at the college. Staff know their students very well and quickly spot if any of them are experiencing difficulties. The college's designated safeguarding lead has a very good understanding of how to keep pupils safe and makes sure all the staff keep up to date with their training. All written records are kept securely and contain appropriate information. When a concern is raised it is responded to immediately by a member of the college's very effective safeguarding team. The college's safeguarding policy is available on the website and meets requirements.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and proprietor)

- The way in which the necessary health and safety checks are monitored and recorded is not clear enough. This means that leaders, including those responsible for governance, cannot easily demonstrate that all the required checks are being carried out on time. The college must improve its recording of these checks and make sure that all the necessary checks are carried out regularly and on time.
- In some subjects, pupils' work is not completed as accurately as it could be. Leaders, and those responsible for governance, need to make sure that all teachers have consistently high expectations of how pupils should complete their work. Leaders should make sure that the pupils meet these high standards in all subjects.

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The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

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School details

Unique reference number	143105
DfE registration number	331/6004
Local authority	Coventry
Inspection number	10119227
Type of school	Other independent school
School category	Independent boarding school
Age range of pupils	15 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	54
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	44
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	The National Mathematics and Science College Limited
Chair	G Robinson
Principal	Antonia Giovanazzi
Annual fees (day pupils)	£29,505
Annual fees (boarders)	£16,395
Telephone number	024 7509 2950
Website	www.natmatsci.ac.uk
Email address	info@natmatsci.ac.uk
Date of previous inspection	1–3 May 2018

Information about this school

- The National Mathematics and Science College is registered with the Department for Education as an independent sixth form specialising in science, technology and mathematics. It is registered to accommodate 200 students aged between 15

and 19. There are currently 54 students on roll. The college is operating within its registration.

- The college was opened in October 2016. This is the school's second full inspection. The previous inspection was in May 2018.
- The college offers places to international students, as well as students from the United Kingdom, through a scholarship scheme.
- The college is situated four miles from Coventry City Centre. It is housed in a modern two-story former government building. The building has undergone extensive refurbishment to make it fit for purpose as an educational setting. The college has an adequate number of spacious classroom areas as well as a large number of well-resourced specialist laboratories.
- The college offers boarding accommodation through a mix of guardianship home stay, organised by Sutherland Education, and within its own boarding accommodation. The college has plans to further develop its own boarding facility in the future.
- The college does not use any alternative providers.
- Students use physical education and dining facilities at nearby Westwood Academy.

Information about this inspection

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

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- This inspection was carried out by one inspector over three days and by an additional inspector who attended for one day.
- Inspectors met with the principal, senior leaders, members of the board of directors and representatives of the advisory board.
- Inspectors conducted deep dives into English, mathematics, chemistry and physics. The deep dives consisted of visits to lessons, discussions with leaders and teachers, discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of pupils' work.
- A meeting was held with the school's designated safeguarding lead. A wide range of safeguarding documentation was scrutinised, including pupils' records and the school's single central record.
- A range of health and safety documents were checked, including the school's health and safety policy, first aid policy, risk assessments and fire safety checks.
- Inspectors looked at the school's written curriculum plans for all subjects.

- A check of the premises was carried out.

Inspection team

Janet Satchwell, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Sarah Ashley	Ofsted Inspector

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