



## **SCHOOL INSPECTION SERVICE**

### **INSPECTION REPORT FOR FOCUS SCHOOL GLOUCESTER CAMPUS**

**DfE No: 916/6078**

#### **The key inspection judgements for this school are:**

<b>The quality of education</b>	<b>outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Pupils' personal development</b>	<b>outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Safeguarding pupils' welfare health and safety</b>	<b>outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership, management and governance</b>	<b>outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>

#### **Compliance with the Independent School Standards:**

The school meets 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: 16-18 October 2017**

## **SECTION A: SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS**

Gloucester Campus provides an outstanding quality of education for all its pupils. Following an external review in 2015, which identified concerns in the quality of teaching and learning, a new headteacher was appointed. The school has made excellent progress towards achieving its challenging vision to 'provide an inspiring environment in which every pupil flourishes and is enabled to become a lifelong learner'. Pupils of all abilities have made rapid and sustained progress since the new headteacher began to implement strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning in September 2015. Since then, academic outcomes have continued to rise and pupils now perform at a high level often significantly exceeding national expectations. Despite the impressive progress and the continual improvement in attainment, school leadership is not complacent and recognises that more can still be done to improve further the quality of teaching and learning in relation to self-directed learning (SDL) to challenge pupils in even greater depth. Assessment is thorough and is used effectively to identify focused intervention that enables pupils to make progress. Teaching is of a consistent high quality and makes a strong impact on the progress that pupils make in lessons and when working in the learning centre as a key aspect of their SDL. The curriculum is innovative and inspiring. It is designed to provide opportunities for pupils to apply and extend the skills and knowledge they have acquired in lessons independently through SDL. Behaviour is excellent and pupils treat each other with respect. Personal development is outstanding. Pupils show a genuine sense of concern for social justice and tolerance and do so with considerable maturity. Arrangements for safeguarding pupils' welfare, health and safety are excellent. Leaders ensure that procedures for child protection and safer recruitment are meticulously followed with appropriate checks thoroughly undertaken. Staff receive up to date training in current child protection guidance including staying safe online and raising awareness of the dangers of extremism. Leadership and management are outstanding. The improvements introduced by the headteacher have made a significant impact on the quality of education and personal development of pupils and are at the centre of the current success of the school. He is very ably supported by a senior leadership team who together ensure that rigorous procedures are in place to monitor and evaluate the school's strengths and identify areas to improve further. The involvement and contribution of trustees is excellent. They have a thorough grasp of the school's strengths and the current priorities for development in the school improvement plan. Leaders and trustees work closely together and form a highly effective team. All of the independent school standards are met.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:**

Whilst not required by the regulations, the proprietor should:

- Ensure that approaches to teaching and learning in SDL continue to develop so that they challenge pupils in even greater depth.

## **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 across a range of subjects and areas of learning. Examples of pupils' work were examined and data regarding pupil achievement were analysed. Discussions were held with members of staff and trustees and inspectors spoke with groups of pupils. Inspectors observed the life of the school, including break and lunch times. They scrutinised the school website and other documentation and records. Parents' and pupils' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires were taken into account.

The inspectors were:

Reporting Inspector:	Mr Andrew Rickett
Team inspector:	Mrs Sue Frater

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL:**

Focus School Gloucester Campus is a non-selective independent day school for boys and girls aged between seven and eighteen years. It was established in 1995. The school is owned by the Eastbrook Education Trust. It is registered with the department for education (DfE) as an independent charity being a school with a special religious character. It serves families of the Plymouth Brethren Christian Church from Hereford, Gloucester, Stow, Swindon and Worcester. The Focus Learning Trust (FLT) provides support and direction for the school's management and development. The school's vision is to 'provide an inspiring environment in which every pupil flourishes and is enabled to become a lifelong learner' in a school community underpinned by six core values; integrity, care, compassion, respect, responsibility and commitment. These values reflect the school's Christian ethos. The school has 175 pupils including 33 in the sixth form. At the time of the inspection no pupil had an educational health care (EHC) plan and 27 had been identified as having a special education need and/or disability (SEND). There were no pupils with English as an additional language. The school was last inspected in November 2012.

## **SECTION C: THE INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS**

### **1. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education provided by the school is outstanding.

#### **Pupils' learning and achievement**

Pupils are very effective learners and their achievements are excellent. The rapid and sustained progress of pupils has ensured that attainment, when compared against results from 2015, has risen consistently across all age groups and that standards are now high when compared with national expectations. The level at which pupils in Key Stage 2 perform in mathematics and literacy is excellent. The youngest are continually challenged to deepen their learning and to develop the ability to identify what they need to do to continue to make rapid progress. From the very earliest stages in the school pupils are acquiring the skills to direct their own learning. Pupils have a firm foundation in literacy and numeracy and have the skills and knowledge to apply them effectively when working independently. This is further developed in Key Stage 3 where the rate of progress is sustained. Pupils grow in confidence to direct their own learning as they continue to apply and extend their knowledge within the focussed environment of the well-equipped learning centre. The number of pupils gaining at least a good pass at GCSE has risen significantly over the last two years and a higher proportion of pupils attained higher grades particularly in English and mathematics in 2017. This represents excellent progress over time relative to low starting points. The quality of provision in the sixth form has also improved significantly with students focussed and engaged in their studies. They now perform at a high level and demonstrate a thirst for learning that is reflected in the considerable depth of their knowledge and understanding and how they apply this effectively to further enhance the quality of their assignments. Despite the exceptional progress being made in raising the quality of teaching and learning, the potential of the innovations to teaching and learning with regard to SDL, have yet to make a full impact on challenging pupils to achieve in even greater depth.

#### **The quality of teaching and assessment**

The quality of teaching and assessment is outstanding. In September 2015, the new headteacher and his leadership team accurately identified areas that needed to improve. These focussed on developing teaching skills that enabled all pupils to make rapid progress to close the gap between their actual attainment at that time and the pupils' potential. Teaching is now of a consistently high quality. This was observed during the inspection and reflected in the school's own monitoring of lessons.

Teachers plan lessons with clear objectives that enable pupils to build upon their learning and deepen their understanding. In the very best lessons, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to take some responsibility for their own learning by deciding the level at which they work. Pupils respond positively to this and consistently challenge themselves to tackle tasks that extend their learning. These lessons are highly effective because teachers carefully differentiate the tasks to meet the specific needs of individual pupils which enable them to do well and make progress. An excellent feature of the teaching is the emphasis in class lessons on pupils acquiring the knowledge and learning skills that they then apply

when working independently in the learning centre as part of SDL and which deepens their understanding. For example, pupils demonstrate this depth of knowledge through the use of a rich vocabulary with which they eloquently debate and articulate their views and opinions on what they are learning. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and deliver lessons that provide many opportunities for pupils to think for themselves through open-ended activities that challenge their understanding. The outcome is work of excellent quality and pupils who are highly motivated responding positively to the responsibility given them to work independently.

An excellent aspect of feedback to pupils of their work is the extent to which they are developing the ability to review their own progress and reflect on what they need to do to continue to improve. This was seen in a mixed Year 7/8 French lesson where pupils showed a marked degree of sophistication when evaluating their work and identifying how it could be improved. Data from assessment is used very effectively to inform individual pupils how they can improve. There is a rigorous process that monitors the progress of individual pupils in every subject based on regular and accurate assessments used to set challenging targets which most pupils exceed.

### **The quality of the curriculum**

The curriculum is of outstanding quality. Subject leaders have been innovative in designing the curriculum to ensure that all pupils have access to a broad and balanced range of study that offers challenge and interest, including in the sixth form. Curriculum planning identifies clear progression that strongly supports the high quality of teaching and learning. Curriculum planning, together with extensive extra-curricular activities, such as sports clubs and opportunities to support work in the community, gives pupils high quality experiences in all aspects of the curriculum. Throughout the school, teachers adapt the excellent curriculum plans provided by Focus Learning Trust to meet the needs of individual pupils. Reading, writing, numeracy and communication skills are exceptionally well embedded across the curriculum. For example, pupils have frequent opportunities in lessons and SDL to discuss, clarify and extend their thinking. The many opportunities they have to present their findings to others, helps to develop their confidence and enables pupils to learn from each other. This equips all pupils, including those with SEND, to make rapid progress.

The contribution of SDL to the successful delivery of an innovative curriculum is significant. SDL has developed considerably over the last two years and, with the creation of a high quality learning centre, makes a major contribution to the outstanding progress made by pupils. SDL enables all pupils to very effectively apply and extend the skills and knowledge they acquire independently in lessons. Staff ensure that there is an equal balance of time between taught and self-directed learning. SDL is very effective in developing learning skills such as resilience and time management. This approach is particularly effective for pupils with SEND as it enables staff to provide one-to-one support. As SDL takes place online, pupils become adept at using technology. Staff upload a wide range of high quality resources which engage and support the pupils' study.

Provision for pupils with SEND is outstanding. Pupils' individual needs are specifically and accurately identified. Teachers in the specialist learning hub

provide intervention lessons that focus on these specific needs and enable pupils to access the curriculum in lessons and SDL. For example, Year 7 pupils who were identified as requiring learning support made rapid progress in their ability to scan information and note its key messages. In this way, pupils are enabled to use their new skills across the curriculum. The impact is seen in the rapid progress that SEND pupils make with most exceeding their targets.

## **2. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. The quality of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is excellent. A special strength of the school is the way in which it promotes this aspect of the pupils' education as strongly as their academic progress. In particular, school leaders and trustees ensure that all pupils' are treated equally and have equal opportunities to learn. A telling example of this is the introduction of a girls' rugby team following their request for it. Leaders and staff have high expectations of the conduct of pupils. They lead by example and, in turn, expect pupils to demonstrate respect for themselves and for others at all times. This makes a strong contribution to the school ethos in which every individual is valued and discrimination is not tolerated.

The very positive relationships that permeate throughout the school effectively support the development of the pupils' self-esteem. This gives them the confidence to contribute to all aspects of school life. It also helps to develop their excellent attitudes towards learning. Pupils are considerate, polite and well-mannered. They are thoughtful and show a genuine care for others and the world they live in. As members of the school council, or as sixth form prefects, they actively promote school improvement as in leading sports day for pupils in the primary classes. Pupils also make an excellent contribution to the wider community. For example, they not only raise funds for their chosen charity of a local children's hospice, they visit the children and host visits from hospice staff in assemblies. In their interaction with visitors, pupils demonstrate self-assurance and mature social skills.

Personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) and citizenship lessons are exceptionally well planned. Pupils consider how they can make a difference to global issues such as equal access to food and other resources. In debating such issues, pupils develop strong moral values and a keen sense of social justice. Lessons in these subjects are also highly effective in developing pupils' deep understanding of the fundamental British values of democracy, individual liberty, the rule of law and tolerance. Pupils are tolerant and open-minded and show respect for people of different gender, faith and culture. Pupils learn about other faiths and cultures, for example in lessons on Sikhism and in cooking Indian food. Boys and girls confidently discuss with each other issues such as sex discrimination. They work and play together extremely well.

There are excellent opportunities for pupils' cultural development, such as musical performances, exhibitions of their art work, sports tournaments with other FLT schools and educational visits. The curriculum promotes pupils' creativity and leadership skills. For example, for a competition entry, members of the young

enterprise team used their initiative to design cardboard palettes which are efficient and ecologically sound for transporting goods.

High quality careers guidance, which involves employers, helps pupils to make informed choices about which course to select for GCSE and in the sixth form. It also gives them an exceptional insight into employers' expectations in aspects such as communication, self-direction and time management. The school's curriculum strongly promotes such skills. Pupils understand how important their education is to their future employment. Their attendance at school is at least in line with national averages. They arrive at lessons punctually and work hard. The impact of the school's work to promote the pupil's personal development is that, from feedback from employers, they leave school ready to enter employment.

### **3. SAFEGUARDING PUPILS' WELFARE, HEALTH AND SAFETY**

Provision for the safeguarding of pupils' welfare, health and safety is outstanding. Pupils say that they feel safe in school and know that there are adults to whom they can ask for help and advice. The school takes great care of its pupils. Its procedures for promoting welfare, health and safety in school, on the school buses and on trips are comprehensive and implemented consistently by staff. There is a culture of care embedded in its pastoral systems and relationships between the school and the pupils' families are strong.

Pupils, especially the prefects, work hard with the school to prevent all forms of bullying and prejudice. Through assemblies, PSHEE and citizenship lessons, pupils learn about different types of bullying, including cyber bullying and derogatory language, and how to stay safe. Most pupils report that staff and prefects deal highly effectively with the very few instances of bullying in the school.

Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe online and the dangers of inappropriate use of technology, including mobile technology and social networking sites. This includes awareness of the risk of extremism and radicalisation. For example pupils know how to search for information safely and are confident to approach adults in school if they have concerns. Pupils demonstrate an in-depth understanding of how to keep themselves healthy. They make informed choices about healthy eating which they learn about as part of the food curriculum in both the primary and secondary schools with a day each half term designated in the school calendar to promote healthy eating. Pupils participate in a range of fitness and sport activities including involvement in the 'Fit4Focus' initiative and regular cross campus events.

The school has an experienced designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and two deputy safeguarding leads who have all received training at an appropriate level. The DSL has a very secure understanding of safeguarding procedures and ensures that all staff and volunteers have up to date training in the latest safeguarding guidance. They receive regular updates and refresher training. Checks made to ensure that the school employs suitable staff are meticulously carried out and leaders ensure that appointment panels include at least one person who has recently undertaken safer recruitment training.

Risk assessments identify clearly and precisely any issues which might prove hazardous, such as the risk of fire in school or crossing a road on a school trip. Trustees and leaders keep all procedures under constant review to ensure pupils' safety at all times. Procedures to ensure the safety of pupils on the premises are excellent with checks thoroughly maintained for fire safety, including regular drills, and high quality facilities for first aid treatment. The premises are kept secure and there are very effective procedures to ensure pupils and adults are safe when moving from the primary to the secondary site. Admissions registers are thoroughly maintained and procedures to check pupil attendance are very effective.

#### **4. LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE**

The quality and effectiveness of the leadership and management are outstanding. Leaders are committed to the promotion of the school ethos and are passionate about creating an innovative learning environment in which all pupils are inspired by a thirst for learning to fulfil their potential academically and personally. Following a review by FLT of the school in 2015, which identified concerns in the quality of education, the current headteacher was appointed and has worked very effectively to develop the quality of teaching and learning. These have made an exceptional impact on the rate of pupil progress and the consistent rise in achievement. The school has made excellent progress towards achieving its aim to enable all pupils to flourish as lifelong learners.

The headteacher leads a highly effective senior leadership team. The improvements in areas for development identified in the school improvement plan are rigorously monitored. The evidence gathered from this monitoring is regularly evaluated and leads directly to further improvement. This enables the school to accurately target any apparent weaknesses and address them in a timely way. The high quality of professional support for staff through ongoing training, and performance management, makes a vital contribution to the successful way in which the school has brought about change both in terms of rising academic achievement but also in the positive attitudes of pupils towards their learning. Leaders are committed to the promotion of British values as an integral part of the school curriculum and ensure that decisions made, such as the appointment of sixth form prefects, support the principles of equality and justice. Leaders ensure that the safety and care of all pupils is at the centre of the school's pastoral systems and procedures for safeguarding are an integral part of the culture of the school. Leadership and management at the school have benefitted from the support and advice of the FLT outgoing regional principal who has made a valuable contribution to the changes that have helped to transform the school.

Parents' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about the direction the school is taking and the quality of education provided. Premises are of a very high standard and have improved considerably since the previous inspection. The establishment of the learning centre, which has enhanced the quality of delivery of SDL, and two sports halls have made a significant impact on the quality of provision. The school meets the requirements for the information it provides for parents and in how it handles complaints. There have been no formal complaints in the last twelve months. Members of the community make a huge contribution to the life of the school through their support

in fundraising and their commitment in transporting their children to school from distant homes.

### **Governance**

The quality and effectiveness of governance is outstanding. Trustees have made excellent progress in developing their role to challenge and support the school. They have an excellent grasp of the school's strengths and areas to improve and, through appropriate training, robustly challenge leaders about how well pupils make progress academically and in their personal development. Trustees receive regular training that has given them a good awareness of safeguarding. A trustee with responsibility for safeguarding works closely with the DSL and reviews procedures each half term. Trustees work closely with school leaders and the highly efficient administration team to ensure that the Independent School Standards are regularly reviewed and their implementation closely monitored. Trustees are committed to the work of the school and in providing an education of the highest quality for all its pupils.

## SCHOOL DETAILS

Name of school:	Focus School Gloucester Campus			
Address of school:	Eastbrook Educational Trust 7 Eastbrook Road Gloucester GL4 3DB			
Telephone number:	01452 417722			
Email address:	<a href="mailto:gloucestercampus@focus-school.com">gloucestercampus@focus-school.com</a>			
Web address	gloucester.focus-school.com			
Proprietor:	Eastbrook Education Trust			
Chair of Trustees	Guy Knappett			
Head Teacher:	Tom Neave			
DfE Number	916/6078			
Type of school	Independent school			
Annual fees	Fees are charged internally			
Age range of pupils	7-18			
Gender of pupils	Mixed			
Total number on roll	full-time	175	part-time	0
Number of children in registered nursery	NA	NA	NA	NA
Number of children under-5	Boys:	0	Girls:	0
Number of compulsory school age pupils	Boys:	67	Girls:	75
Number of post-compulsory pupils	Boys:	21	Girls:	12
Number of pupils with statements of special educational need	Boys:	0	Girls:	0
Number of pupils 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](http://www.schoolinspectionsservice.co.uk).**