

# Brighton Hill Community College

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	116441
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	385859
<b>Inspection dates</b>	2–3 May 2012
<b>Lead inspector</b>	Angela Corbett HMI

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,084
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Interim executive board
<b>Chair</b>	Jane Pratt
<b>Headteacher</b>	Charlie Currie
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	23–24 March 2011
<b>School address</b>	Brighton Way Basingstoke Hampshire RG22 4HS
<b>Telephone number</b>	01256 350606
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<b>Age group</b>	11–16
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	2–3 May 2012
<b>Inspection number</b>	385859



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## Introduction

Inspection team

Angela Corbett

Her Majesty's Inspector

Anthony Byrne

Additional inspector

Helen Blanchard

Additional inspector

David Howley

Additional inspector

This inspection was carried out with two days' notice. Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 33 lessons taught by 32 teachers, of which four were joint observations with members of the school's senior leadership team. They also made 15 short visits to lessons, observed six tutor groups, one assembly and listened to a small group of students reading. Meetings were held with five groups of students, a group of nine parents and carers, the Chair of the Interim Executive Board and two other board members, a representative from the local authority, senior leaders, middle leaders and a small group of staff. The inspectors observed the school's work and scrutinised a wide range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation, internal data about students' progress, behaviour records, monitoring records and minutes of meetings of the Interim Executive Board. They took account of the responses to the on-line Parent View survey in planning the inspection, and analysed questionnaires completed by 166 parents and carers, 138 students and 77 staff.

## Information about the school

This is a larger than average-sized secondary school that gained specialist sports college status in 2002. Most students are of White British heritage, although a wide range of minority ethnic groups is represented. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is well below average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is average. The school has Healthy School status and is an International Link School. The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

At the time of the previous inspection in March 2011, the school was given a notice to improve. At a monitoring visit in November 2011, inspectors judged the school to be making satisfactory progress. In September 2011, an Interim Executive Board replaced the governing body and an interim headteacher was appointed; he became the permanent headteacher from 1 April 2012. Since the last inspection, there have been a considerable number of staff changes and the leadership team has been restructured.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Achievement of pupils</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Quality of teaching</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Behaviour and safety of pupils</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Leadership and management</b>	<b>3</b>

## Key findings

- In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to achievement and the quality of teaching, particularly in science and mathematics.
- The new headteacher, on arrival, quickly identified priorities for improvement and brought clear direction to the school. Roles and responsibilities of senior leaders have been established, as have lines of accountability, and improvements in attendance, behaviour and the curriculum have been secured. However, overall effectiveness is not yet satisfactory because systems are not fully embedded: there are inconsistencies in whole-school assessment strategies and the use of data to measure the impact of actions on students’ achievement. A firm grasp has been taken on the leadership and management of teaching with underperformance in the classroom tackled rigorously; as a result, improvements in the quality of teaching are emerging.
- Inspection evidence indicates that achievement is rising across the school, including in English and mathematics and for lower-ability students, whose achievement was seen to be inadequate at the last inspection. However, progress is still too variable and has not been accelerated sufficiently to make up for past underperformance, in particular, in mathematics and science; consequently, achievement remains inadequate.
- While teaching is satisfactory or better in many subjects, it is inadequate overall because of weaknesses in mathematics and science, in particular. As a result of well-planned professional development, the quality of teachers’ planning has improved so that the needs of different groups of students within lessons are better met. However, the pace of learning is often slow because teachers’

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expectations of what students can achieve are too low; teaching is not always sufficiently engaging or inspiring and the quality of marking is too variable.

- The pastoral support provided to students is a strength of the school. Most students say they feel safe and have someone to turn to. In general, attitudes to learning are positive, and students respond to most teachers' direction and work cooperatively together.

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

- Accelerate students' progress so that more make good progress and achievement rises by:
  - ensuring the quality of learning is consistently good or better in all subjects, and particularly in mathematics and science
  - giving students greater opportunities to develop, apply and reinforce their skills in reading, writing, communication and numeracy across the curriculum.
- Further improve the quality and consistency of teaching, increasing the proportion of good and outstanding lessons and eradicating remaining inadequate teaching, by:
  - raising teachers' expectations of what students can achieve
  - involving all students in active learning through the use of a wider range of teaching approaches and strategies to inspire and engage them
  - sharing best practice more widely
  - making sure that marking is of consistently high quality so that students know how to take the next steps to improve.
- Build on the recent improvements in leadership and management at all levels by:
  - developing a more consistent approach to whole-school assessment strategies to improve achievement over time
  - ensuring that precise timescales are set for all improvement initiatives
  - evaluating all actions and strategies more accurately in terms of their impact on improving outcomes for all students.

## Main report

### Achievement of pupils

As recognised at the last inspection, students' rate of progress has declined and attainment has fallen and is now broadly average, including in English and mathematics. Consequently, in 2011, this represented inadequate achievement in most subjects and for all ability groups from their above-average starting points. Current assessment data suggest that attainment is beginning to rise across all year groups and subjects.

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Observations of learning in lessons and the scrutiny of books show that progress is improving and is satisfactory in some subjects and for some students. Additional sessions after school and deployment of the most effective teachers to support students' learning are also contributing to better progress for Year 11 students in particular. However, there is still too much variation in rates of progress across the school because of the inconsistencies in teaching. Low expectations of what students can achieve, coupled with insufficient acceleration of learning to compensate for previous rates of progress, which were below average, are still leading to inadequate achievement in relation to students' differing starting points and capabilities, particularly in mathematics and science. Even in some of the better-taught lessons, students do not remain focused and lack curiosity. While students want to learn and achieve well and respond to teachers' direction, their approach is too often passive. The school is focusing relentlessly on improving the quality of teaching so that students become more engaged and able to take responsibility for their own learning. Better support and targeted interventions for disabled students, those with special educational needs and those whose circumstances make them vulnerable is improving their progress and, in general, this is now satisfactory. For example, new intervention programmes are enabling students to make significant gains in their attainment in reading so they are able to access the secondary curriculum.

Students' skills in information and communication technology are well developed and applied in a wide range of contexts. Overall, students develop their literacy skills to a satisfactory level. However, some students' oral skills are less well developed and the quality of their writing, including presentation, is variable.

**Quality of teaching**

A significant proportion of teaching seen was satisfactory with some good and outstanding practice, reflecting the improvements being made in the quality of teaching. However, this is inconsistent across the school, with significant weaknesses in mathematics and science remaining. Consequently, when viewed over time, the quality of teaching is inadequate overall. In their questionnaires, the majority of parents and carers say that their children are taught well. However, almost half of their comments outline concerns about the high turnover of staff and quality of teaching, particularly in science.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and use assessment information to plan lessons, but not all use it effectively to set sufficiently high expectations of what students can achieve within a lesson. In the least effective lessons seen, teaching was mundane, thus failing to engage and inspire students to take an active part in their learning. Too little work was set and, too often, it lacked challenge and progression to consolidate and develop students' learning.

The most effective teachers plan tasks and activities designed to meet the full range of students' learning needs within the class. For example, in a good geography lesson, the teacher had prepared more challenging tasks for the more-able students and ensured that other resources supported the needs of disabled students and

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those with special educational needs. This, together with targeted questioning, enabled students to make good progress. In the small minority of good or better lessons seen, teachers set high expectations, used a range of approaches including group work, frequently made reference to the learning intentions when using questioning to probe and check understanding, and made the best use of time. This was exemplified in an outstanding Year 10 dance lesson, where students worked collaboratively, rapidly developing their dance skills and very successfully building their self-confidence and independence.

In some lessons, students have opportunities to assess their own or others' work, or to reflect on wider issues, such as in a business studies lesson where students considered the ethical issues of production. However, too often, such opportunities are missed. Some high quality marking was seen, for example in some mathematics books when teachers made clear the successful aspects of learning, together with specific guidance on how to improve. However, such good practice varied both within and across subjects, including in mathematics.

Students who are disabled, those with special educational needs and those whose circumstances make them vulnerable are well supported in most lessons and through planned interventions. Recent work to establish the promotion of reading, writing and communication skills across the curriculum is evident in some lessons. However, opportunities are missed to develop and apply these skills consistently, such as through paired discussion and group work. The school's sports specialism has a good impact on students' self-esteem, and some of the good practice in physical education is being shared in other subjects.

**Behaviour and safety of pupils**

Although many parents, carers and students were generally positive about the standards of behaviour in the school, some concerns were expressed about low-level disruption to learning. A new behaviour policy, introduced last term, is leading to improvement which was recognised by parents and carers spoken to and most students. Inspection evidence supports the view that disruption to lessons does occur when the quality of teaching is weakest. The new strategies are universally applied and the few cases of low-level disruption that occurred during the inspection were, in the main, well managed by teachers. The school's record-keeping is diligent, and shows that serious incidents are relatively rare. Exclusions have risen with the introduction of the new policy but the new student support unit has ensured that some students at risk of permanent exclusion have remained in school. It provides excellent support to others whose circumstances make them vulnerable. During the inspection, students were generally courteous and showed respect to each other and adults.

Students have a secure awareness of cyber-safety and types of bullying, and other aspects of how to stay safe, such as road safety. They say that bullying is rare and confirm that the school deals with any bullying promptly and, in most cases, effectively. As a result, the majority of parents, carers and students consider the school to be a safe environment. Parents and carers recognise the high quality of

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pastoral care and support for students with special educational needs. Students' attendance has improved and is now above the national average.

### **Leadership and management**

The new headteacher and interim executive board swiftly recognised and acted on the issues identified in the last inspection report. Within a relatively short time, they have worked with determination and commitment to improve the equality of opportunity and outcomes for all students, with some positive impact already evident. Senior leadership has been restructured effectively with additional members co-opted to build capacity. Although some variability in practice remains, middle leaders are becoming increasingly effective both in holding their staff to account for monitoring the progress of students and in working to improve the quality of teaching within their subjects. Underperformance is being tackled rigorously. A relatively high number of staff have left and effective professional development has been put in place to improve the quality of teaching. Although the sharing of good practice is underdeveloped, the Lead Practitioner programme, which draws on the expertise of the school's most effective teachers, has had some notable success in supporting and improving some of the weaker teachers. However, in part due to the many staffing changes and the limited time, teaching overall, but especially in mathematics and science, remains inadequate. Although the school has received some external support, such as in improving provision for students with special educational needs, the improvements so far in behaviour, attendance and teaching demonstrate there is satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

The school's commitment to tackling discrimination is reflected in improvements in the achievement of lower-ability students and those whose circumstances make them vulnerable. A new system for tracking students' progress has been put in place. However, there are weaknesses in assessment overall; as a result, there is not full confidence in the data and it is not always used as effectively as possible in reviewing progress, or to set measurable targets within precise timescales by which to evaluate the impact of actions. Safeguarding arrangements continue to meet requirements. Members of the interim executive board are exceptionally knowledgeable and are providing excellent challenge and support to the school in its journey of improvement. They are committed to continue working with the school as governors when the new governing body is formed.

The curriculum meets students' needs and satisfactorily promotes their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Successful refinements include programmes to improve attainment in reading and the introduction of the student support unit to help, in particular, those at greatest risk of exclusion. Parents and carers spoke of recent improvements in communication and appreciated the recent update on actions taken to improve the school.



## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	54	42	2	2
Primary schools	14	49	32	6
Secondary schools	20	39	34	7
Special schools	33	45	20	3
Pupil referral units	9	55	28	8
All schools	16	47	31	6

New school inspection arrangements have been introduced from 1 January 2012. This means that inspectors make judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September to 31 December 2011 and represent judgements that were made under the school inspection arrangements that were introduced on 1 September 2009. These data are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Primary schools include primary academy converters. Secondary schools include secondary academy converters, sponsor-led academies and city technology colleges. Special schools include special academy converters and non-maintained special schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning and development taking account of their attainment.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Attendance	the regular attendance of pupils at school and in lessons, taking into account the school's efforts to encourage good attendance.
Behaviour	how well pupils behave in lessons, with emphasis on their attitude to learning. Pupils' punctuality to lessons and their conduct around the school.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving based on its self-evaluation and what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Floor standards	the national minimum expectation of attainment and progression measures.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the governors and headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.
Safety	how safe pupils are in school, including in lessons; and their understanding of risks. Pupils' freedom from bullying and harassment. How well the school promotes safety, for example e-learning.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**

4 May 2012

Dear Students



### **Inspection of Brighton Hill Community College, Basingstoke RG22 4HS**

On behalf of the inspection team, I would like to thank you for making us feel so welcome and for sharing your views with us in meetings, lessons and around the school. We are concerned that some of you are still not achieving as well as you might, so we have given the school a second 'notice to improve', as its overall effectiveness is inadequate. This means that there will be another inspection in around 12 to 16 months' time and, in the meantime, inspectors may visit the school to check that it improves. Here is a summary of our main judgements.

- Your attainment by the end of Year 11 is around the national average.
- Your progress in most subjects is improving, including in English and mathematics. However, regardless of your ability, you are not all making the progress you should, especially in mathematics and science.
- The quality of teaching is also improving and some is good or better. Nonetheless, it is inadequate overall, particularly in mathematics and science.
- Your attendance has improved and it is now above average. Well done!
- You value the school's sport specialism, and enjoy participating in sport and performance activities. These help to build your self-esteem and confidence.
- Your attitudes to learning are generally positive, and you usually work well together and do as teachers ask.
- Your new headteacher, senior leaders, staff and the interim executive board are working hard to bring about further improvement.

To help the school improve, we have asked your headteacher and senior leaders to:

- improve the progress you make and so raise your achievement, especially in science and mathematics
- build on the improvements in the quality of teaching by setting higher expectations for what you can achieve, making lessons more interesting and active, and improving the quality of written feedback on how to improve
- make better use of assessment information to raise your achievement over time, and when planning new initiatives and assessing their impact.

You can all help improve the school by being more actively involved in lessons and taking more responsibility for your own learning.

Yours sincerely  
Angela Corbett  
Her Majesty's Inspector

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