

# Brighton Hill Community School

Brighton Way, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG22 4HS

## Inspection dates

3–4 May 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Leaders have led the improvement of the school ably. They have created a positive culture of ambition and high expectations among staff and pupils. Leaders are relentless in their focus on continuous and rapid improvement.
- Governors have played a key role in driving school improvement. They have held leaders to account and taken difficult decisions in the best interests of the pupils.
- Leaders' work to improve the quality of teaching has been successful. Teaching, learning and assessment are now good overall. Where further improvement is required, effective actions to achieve this are in place.
- Leaders track pupils' progress rigorously. They monitor and check the accuracy of assessments effectively and use this information to address any underperformance swiftly.
- Leaders have a good understanding of the school's effectiveness. They know where further improvements need to be made. Senior leaders and governors understand the need to sharpen their evaluation of initiatives and use this information to drive further improvement.
- Pupils are confident and articulate. They value their learning and display very positive attitudes. They are proud to be members of the school.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare have a very high priority in the school. Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Staff know pupils very well and this means pupils feel safe.
- Teachers have established very positive relationships with their pupils. Most teachers understand what pupils know and need to learn next and adapt lessons quickly to help them make good progress.
- Outcomes for pupils, especially those who are disadvantaged, are improving at pace. Pupils' progress has accelerated but standards remain lower than expected because of the legacy of previous weak teaching.
- Pupils' outcomes in science have been affected negatively by staffing turbulence and recruitment difficulties until recently.
- Most pupils attend school regularly, although there is a small minority of pupils whose attendance needs to be improved.

## Full report

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

- Improve outcomes for pupils by ensuring that:
  - teaching and assessment continue to focus closely on what pupils need to learn to make up for the legacy of underachievement
  - rates of absence, particularly persistent absence, continue to reduce, so that most pupils attend school most of the time.
- Strengthen the effectiveness of leadership at all levels by sharpening the evaluation of initiatives and the use of additional funding, and using this information to plan future work.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The new headteacher, and before him the interim headteacher, and governors have taken decisive and effective action that has transformed the culture of the school and improved the quality of teaching across all year groups. They have commissioned effective support from external partners, including the local authority. Rapid and sustained improvements in learning since the previous monitoring inspection mean that most pupils are making much better progress.
- The new headteacher has swiftly established high aspirations that are shared by staff, pupils and parents. Pupils told inspectors that his high expectations have transformed the school and that school is now a 'great place' to be. One parent wrote, 'The school has come on in leaps and bounds' and a teacher described the leadership as, 'inspirational'.
- Interim leaders did much to rapidly improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the school, so that it is now good overall. Creative approaches have helped to reduce the impact of recruitment difficulties, for example by training non-specialists to teach science. Leaders have worked effectively with external partners to moderate assessments of pupils' attainment to ensure that the information is accurate and used effectively to improve provision and outcomes further.
- The recent improvements in the school have increased staff morale. High-quality training and development for all staff is effective. Staff feel proud of their school and their contribution to pupils' academic and personal development. The development of middle leaders has been particularly effective, although there is a need to sharpen their evaluation of initiatives to inform future plans.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and leaders regularly review it to ensure that it matches the needs of the pupils. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular activities including sports events, residential trips overseas and academic support. Pupils make good use of these opportunities, many of which supplement their learning in class and enhance their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders have created an inclusive school culture that effectively prepares pupils for life in modern Britain. For example, the school council is currently planning a series of assemblies and events to promote tolerance of different sexual orientations and gender identities. Pupils were very clear that prejudiced behaviour is not tolerated and said that staff act swiftly and effectively to resolve any issues that might occur.
- Leaders know the strengths of the school well. They have identified clearly the areas for improvement and have put in place actions that are helping to improve the school. Current plans for the use of additional funding, such as that for disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, are creative and appropriate. Early indications are that these activities are making a positive difference for pupils. However, there is a weakness in the evaluation of past initiatives. As a result, leaders cannot demonstrate effective use of additional funding from the previous academic year, such as the monies to support pupils to catch up in Year 7.
- Leaders are aware that the information published on the school website does not fully

meet statutory requirements and were taking action to address this prior to the inspection. By the end of the inspection, much of the missing information was in place.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governors are very ambitious for the school and its pupils and staff and committed to its current and future success. Following the previous monitoring inspection, governors took decisive and effective action to improve the school, including appointing strong interim school leaders. Working in partnership with the local authority, they supported and challenged these leaders to improve standards at the school. As a result, teaching, learning and assessment improved.
- Following their appointment of the new headteacher, who joined the school in January 2017, governors have maintained their effective and close monitoring. They challenge leaders sharply to provide clear evidence of the difference their actions are making. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and know where there is still work to be done to tackle weaknesses. They continue to make good use of local authority support.
- Governors are aware that evaluation of the use of additional funding, such as the pupil premium and catch-up funding, is not as sharp as it should be. They understand the need for more careful evaluation to inform future spending plans.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Leaders have ensured that appropriate systems and procedures are in place alongside frequent training for staff. Leaders are aware that safeguarding is a priority and have commissioned an external audit to further develop this important aspect of their work and ensure that they are following best practice in all areas.
- Pupils feel safe and have a clear understanding of how to stay safe. They are able to assess the risks that may face them, including online. They told inspectors that staff deal effectively with any concerns raised. The vast majority of parents who responded to the online Parent View questionnaire said that they feel that their children are safe in school.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Leaders' determined work to improve the quality of teaching, learning and assessment has been successful. Pupils now benefit from good teaching overall. A few parents commented on some inconsistency in the quality of teaching and pupils told inspectors that there were still a few lessons that were not as good as most. Leaders have a precise understanding of where additional improvements are required and are making good progress in building on the success they have achieved so far.
- Teachers have responded well to carefully planned professional development, including coaching, that has had a positive impact on their practice. For example, one told an inspector that they now feel 'empowered' to try different approaches in the classroom

and to match activities more closely to the needs of their pupils. Others spoke about the learning culture that had been established for the whole school. Inspectors saw how training and coaching have had a positive impact on teaching and learning.

- The vast majority of teachers have high expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour. Most teachers plan tasks that stretch pupils and support their good progress. As a consequence, pupils display high levels of interest and engagement in most lessons. For example, during an English lesson pupils challenged each other's ideas with interest and respect. This enabled them to develop their analysis of a tricky poem successfully.
- Teachers make good use of technology to support learning. In science, pupils enjoyed the instant feedback from a voting application that provided a live tally of their answers to a quiz. This was used well to demonstrate to pupils the new knowledge they had learned during the lesson and pupils found this motivational.
- Teachers monitor pupils' progress carefully and use assessment information effectively to address any gaps in learning. They also provide support after school for any pupil who needs to catch up. Pupils appreciate this additional help and the fact that teachers give up their time whenever pupils need it.
- Reading is promoted as fundamental to learning but this does not routinely translate into practice. During lunchtime, the welcoming and vibrant library was full of pupils who enjoyed a 'blind date with a book'. One pupil told the inspector that he liked the library because, 'If you read, you learn.' However, the school policy of reading during morning tutor times is not applied consistently. Pupils in some tutor groups explained to inspectors that they just had to have a book in front of them rather than actually develop their reading skills.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils enjoy school and are proud to wear the uniform and be part of what they call the '#YellowArmy'. They recognise and welcome the recent improvements to the school, commenting very favourably to inspectors about the changes they see. Parents also talked about these improvements and many commented on the positive impact they have had on their children.
- Pupils are respectful to each other in lessons and around the school. They enjoy the very many extra-curricular activities that are provided by staff, including clubs, trips and projects that develop skills such as leadership, organisation, resilience, initiative and communication.
- Pupils' emotional well-being is prioritised and supported effectively throughout the school. For example, 'The Flexible Learning Centre' successfully provides a support hub, and many parents praised this in their responses via Parent View. One commented that, 'Without their help and support my Year 11 [child] would not be sitting exams now.'
- The school council has been instrumental in supporting pupils' well-being. For example,

it has worked with school leaders to reduce examination stress through introducing strategies such as pupils keeping the same desk in the examination hall. It also negotiated pupils being allowed to work in the hall prior to the examination season so they were familiar with the environment. Year 11 pupils were very positive about these strategies and told inspectors that they felt listened to and supported.

- Pupils trust the adults in the school to act in their best interests and help sort out any problems. They say that bullying is infrequent, but, if it happens, adults are good at resolving it.
- Pupils attending alternative provision are well supported with visits from school staff and support for any examinations. For example, teachers of English help to train and provide guidance for teachers in the alternative provision so that pupils can take their GCSE examinations. Staff track pupils' progress and attendance closely. They communicate frequently with the alternative provision staff to ensure the same high expectations of pupils.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Pupils are polite and friendly, confident and articulate. They value their learning and respond well to the high expectations evident through the school.
- Pupils behave well in and out of class, and disruption is rare. The vast majority of teachers deal well with any instances of misbehaviour, including any low-level disruption.
- Attitudes to learning are very positive and pupils enjoy the different rewards and praise schemes that are offered by teachers. However, some pupils feel frustrated that some of the new incentive schemes are only offered to pupils who have previously struggled with their behaviour or attendance rather than being open to all.
- Attendance overall has improved and is now in line with the national average for all pupils in secondary schools. Leaders have worked hard to improve the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and, while absence for this group is still higher than that of other pupils, it is showing marked and sustained improvement. Innovative projects to get disadvantaged pupils into school, such as engaging them in creating a 'pop-up kitchen' with a professional chef, are providing very encouraging results so far.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Requires improvement

- In the past, pupils made less progress than other pupils nationally with similar starting points. In 2016, improvements to teaching had not had sufficient time to have a marked impact on learning, so published results remained below average, especially for pupils who are disadvantaged.
- Pupils' work and their learning in class show that the progress and attainment of current key stage 4 pupils are much improved, although this is not yet consistent across all areas of the curriculum. Pupils in this key stage are performing well in many subjects, including in English, French, art, physical education and psychology. However, their progress in a few subjects, such as science, has not been as strong

until recently, usually as a result of previous staffing difficulties.

- While current key stage 4 pupils, including the most able pupils, are making strong progress in many subjects, it has not yet made up for the legacy of underachievement and brought standards up to national averages.
- School information shows that pupils in key stage 3 are achieving increasingly well and making good progress across a range of subjects. The most able pupils are making rapid progress from their starting points. However, pupils' work indicates that there is still some variability across subjects and that, again, improvements in some subjects, such as science, are relatively recent.
- The greatly improved teaching across the school means that the vast majority of disadvantaged pupils, including the most able disadvantaged pupils, have made better progress than in the past. School information and pupils' work indicate that most of these pupils are now working at a similar level to their peers with the same starting points. Increasingly, this is similar to other pupils nationally.
- Provision for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is effective. The new special educational needs coordinator has created clear systems to track and support the progress of these pupils. Teachers' raised awareness of pupils' individual needs has helped to accelerate pupils' progress and attainment.
- Pupils at alternative provision are making good progress and are supported to take a range of examinations. For example, several return to Brighton Hill after the school day for extra tuition and to take additional qualifications, including the European Computer Driving Licence.
- Careers education is effective. Pupils appreciate the talks from visiting universities and employers and enjoy the trips to universities and colleges. There is very effective support for pupils who might find the transition to their next steps in education or training more than ordinarily challenging. The transition to both Brighton Hill at Year 7 and on to college or an apprenticeship at Year 11 is managed well. The transition programme for Year 6 into Year 7 is highlighted for praise by many parents. For example, one commented, 'My son had a good transition. He has been brought out of his shell and now is confident.'

## School details

Unique reference number	116441
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10032892

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

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	530
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jane Pratt
Headteacher	Christopher Edwards
Telephone number	01256 350606
Website	<a href="http://www.brightonhill.hants.sch.uk">www.brightonhill.hants.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:headteacher@brightonhill.hants.sch.uk">headteacher@brightonhill.hants.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	22–23 April 2015

## Information about this school

- Brighton Hill Community School is a smaller-than-average-sized secondary school.
- The headteacher has been in post since January 2017, following a period with interim headteachers from April 2016.
- The majority of the pupils are of White British heritage. A very small proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of pupils supported by the pupil premium is lower than the national average.
- A small number of pupils attend alternative provision at The Ashwood Academy or Basingstoke College of Technology.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' progress and attainment by the end of Year 11.
- The school does not meet requirements on the publication of information about the



science curriculum, the key stage 4 results using the 2016 measures and pupil destinations on its website.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed pupils' learning in 44 lessons and part lessons across a range of subjects and year groups. Several of these were observed jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors held meetings with senior leaders, other staff, governors, and a representative from the local authority. Inspectors also took account of the views of the 42 staff who completed Ofsted's online staff survey.
- An inspector held telephone calls with leaders of alternative provision and the virtual school which supports children who are looked after.
- Inspectors listened to pupils read and spoke with pupils in lessons and around the school. They also met formally with groups of pupils and considered the views from the 97 pupils who responded to Ofsted's online pupil survey.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents. They took account of the 102 responses to the online Ofsted questionnaire, Parent View, and the 66 free-text responses.
- A wide range of documentation was reviewed, including information available on the school's website and records relating to pupils' attainment, progress, attendance and behaviour. Information on governance, including minutes of governors' meetings, was examined. The school's self-evaluation summary and raising achievement plan were scrutinised, along with records on the school's arrangements for keeping pupils safe.

## Inspection team

Lucy English, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Lizzie Jeanes	Ofsted Inspector
John McAteer	Ofsted Inspector

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