

# Foundry College

Brambles Learning Centre, Budes Garden, Wokingham, RG40 1PX

**Inspection dates** 13–14 February 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- The determined leadership of the headteacher has brought about changes and benefits for the pupils. Her vision for further improvements is fully supported by staff and the management committee.
- The achievements of most pupils are good. Many arrive with skills that are well below average for their age, often reflecting poor attendance records and negative attitudes towards school. Attitudes often change quickly and the college is successfully encouraging pupils, in both the primary and secondary sectors, to re-engage with education.
- Teaching in most lessons is at least good and occasionally outstanding. Good planning engages the pupils and enables many to make rapid progress in their reading, communication skills and mathematics.
- Pupils enjoy their learning and feel happy, safe and secure. Behaviour is good and for many, their attendance rates have improved considerably. Many now enjoy school because they see the work as more relevant and they appreciate the help and encouragement offered by staff.
- Leadership is good and staff morale is high. The determination to improve the pupils' education is strong. The college is well supported in this intention by a highly committed and knowledgeable management committee and by the local authority.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- Achievement is not yet outstanding because in some lessons pupils are not offered sufficient opportunities to hone their writing skills. On some occasions, the requirement to write in detail, or for different audiences, is reduced and the set activities offer insufficient challenge.
- Much work has been undertaken to improve assessment techniques and to ensure all pupils are given realistic and challenging targets to meet in terms of their work, attendance and behaviour. Key Stage 4 pupils, however, are not always aware of their target grades or what they need to do to improve.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed ten lessons and various other learning activities, including opportunities for pupils to read.
- Meetings were held with pupils, the Chair of the Management Committee, a representative from the local authority and staff. A number of stakeholders were contacted by telephone to gain their views.
- Insufficient replies were received to the online questionnaire (Parent View) for any judgements to be formed. However, the views of 27 staff who responded to their own questionnaire were considered.
- Inspectors scrutinised examples of pupils' past and present work and looked at various documents. These included the school's self-evaluation and planning, information on pupils' academic progress and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Bill Stoneham, Lead inspector

Additional inspector

Michael Buist

Additional inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Since its previous inspection, Foundry College has changed considerably. Five different services have now been combined into one provision catering for pupils aged from five to 16 and operating from two sites.
- Primary-aged pupils who have been permanently excluded from mainstream provision, or who are likely to be excluded, are educated at Foundry College - Brambles Centre. This centre also provides for older pupils who have been unable to access mainstream education predominantly for medical and mental health issues. Most of these pupils are in Key Stage 4.
- Foxwood Centre provides education for secondary-aged pupils who have behavioural and/or emotional difficulties and who have been permanently excluded from at least one mainstream school. This facility also provides short-stay programmes for secondary pupils who are at risk of being excluded.
- The service also provides home-tuition for pupils whose medical conditions prevent them attending school. This aspect did not form part of the inspection.
- The number on roll can vary over time, but there are usually more boys than girls.
- Most pupils are of a White British heritage. It is rare for a pupil to have a first language other than English.
- All pupils are disabled or have special educational needs usually relating to behaviour, emotional and social difficulties. All are supported at school action plus or have statements of special educational needs. Very few are known to be entitled to free school meals.
- A below-average proportion of pupils are entitled to be supported by the pupil premium (additional funding provided by the government). At present, such funding is not devolved to the school. For dual-registered pupils, the funding is retained by the home school. For full-time eligible pupils, the funding is currently held centrally by the local authority. This arrangement is under review.
- Since the reorganisation of this service in 2011, there have been a number of managerial changes. Most members of the current senior management team are relatively new in post. The headteacher has been in post for just half a term, having commenced her role in January 2013.

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

- Raise achievement further by ensuring that:
  - all pupils are given every possible opportunity to improve their writing skills by writing in depth and for different audiences
  - all pupils, especially in Key Stage 4, are fully aware of their precise academic, behaviour and attendance targets and that they know exactly what they have to do to reach those targets.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- The vast majority of pupils join the college with standards that are well below average. Though standards remain below average at the end of Year 11, all groups of pupils, including those of primary age, and irrespective of their special educational needs, make better progress than predicted when they had been in mainstream schools. Their progress and achievement are good.
- Pupils of all ages are suitably prepared for the next stage in their lives. The college improves their skills in reading, communication and mathematics. Pupils of all ages were heard reading aloud. Many read well and with feeling and enthusiasm. Writing skills also improve but often at a slower rate. This is because opportunities for pupils to write in detail, and for different audiences, are not seized consistently.
- In a personal, social and health education lesson on cyber bullying, the reading heard was of a high standard, with technical language clearly understood. The accompanying worksheet, however, limited the scope for writing. The written answers produced tended to be short, superficial and lacking in content and emotion. This was in stark contrast to the detailed and vivid oral work.
- Many pupils make significant strides in their personal development, developing their confidence and self-esteem. Progress and achievement are not confined solely to improvements in academic work. Notable improvements in attendance and behaviour are also identifiable.
- Though the college does not receive any additional government funding through the pupil premium, staff carefully check and monitor the progress of every pupil. There are no significant differences in the achievement of particular groups. The progress made by boys and girls is similar. Pupils whose heritage is other than White British make progress that is similar to that of their peers.
- College staff work in partnership well with an array of other professionals, in health and social care for example, to ensure that every pupil is adequately supported. Such carefully planned cooperative work helps to secure the good outcomes that are now being recorded.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Pupils make good progress because most lessons are taught at least well. None of the lessons observed featured learning that was inadequate. Most lessons featured good learning and in two, the learning observed was outstanding.
- In the good and better lessons, quality learning was promoted because the pupils were challenged, expectations were high and the teachers carefully considered what they wanted the pupils to learn and how this was to be achieved.
- The positive relationships that exist between staff and pupils are key in raising pupils' confidence and improving outcomes. Good learning results because classrooms in both centres are invariably calm, with pupils understanding that the college is primarily a place of work.
- In a particularly effective Key Stage 3 art lesson on origami, the teacher had carefully planned a model-making exercise that was appropriately designed to test skills of dexterity and attention to detail. There was an excellent balance between the teacher showing what had to be done and learning by doing. The practical work was more than adequately supported by self-assessment and internet research to see how a basic paper model might be developed.
- A highly effective Key Stage 4 science lesson was also neatly based on a mixture of theory and practice. High-quality theoretical work on the functioning of the human heart was accompanied by a skilfully planned practical session involving the dissection of a lamb's heart.
- In both parts of the lesson, learning was rapid because the emphasis was on learning by doing rather than the teacher simply demonstrating how the heart worked, or how a dissection should be undertaken. Enabling the full participation in practical work contributed significantly to the

excellent learning that took place.

- There have been recent significant improvements in assessing all aspects of each pupil's performance. When a pupil first enters the college, some form of baseline assessment is undertaken depending on the pupil's age and circumstances. From this a series of targets relating to academic performance, behaviour and attendance are set. Progress against such targets is then carefully monitored and recorded.
- Such careful monitoring is helping to improve teaching and learning further, but some pupils, especially in Key Stage 4, are not always aware of their targets, or what they need to do to improve.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are good**

- The college successfully meets a core aim of motivating its pupils and re-engaging them with education. During their time at the college, the attitudes and commitment of many pupils improve well. Pupils who previously may not have had the confidence to go to school, or who may have simply truanted, now attend with greater regularity, are punctual and even admit to enjoying school.
- Behaviour in lessons and around both sites is usually good and where lessons are especially engaging or inspiring, it is outstanding. Staff place considerable emphasis on encouraging pupils to behave well, to be polite, show respect and take pride in their achievements.
- Where these standards are not met, staff endeavour to encourage pupils to reflect on their conduct and to remedy their ways. Such an approach was seen to work with great success during the inspection in the primary sector.
- Staff place much emphasis on acknowledging and rewarding success. For many pupils, being congratulated on an achievement, or being told they had done something well, is a new experience. The successful nurturing of a pupil's worthiness contributes well to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Pupils are encouraged to lead safe and healthy lives. Much work is undertaken on personal safety. There is a strong emphasis on eating healthily and older pupils are given ample information about the dangers associated with drug, alcohol and substance abuse.
- Pupils have an awareness of different types of bullying such as cyber bullying, racist or homophobic name calling and know how to respond to such difficulties. Pupils at both sites feel safe and secure.
- Pupils express great confidence in the staff and know that if they are troubled, or worried, the staff will be on hand to offer help, support and guidance.
- Many pupils had poor attendance records before joining the college. Though a small minority still do not attend well, most can now boast vastly improved attendance and better records of conduct in class. Once they settle to college life, the attendance of the majority improves rapidly.

### **The leadership and management are good**

- The recently appointed headteacher has already had a marked impact on galvanising staff and setting clear objectives for the college.
- She is well supported by her keen and dedicated staff. All aspects of the college's provision are managed well. The staff inspection questionnaires showed that morale is high and that there is a strong determination to improve the life chances of pupils who have often faced difficult and challenging circumstances.
- Both centres are calm havens in which the pupils can work safely. Though no parental responses were received, the college's own parental questionnaires show a high level of satisfaction. Parents and carers are grateful for the help and assistance provided by college staff.

- Partnership work is strong. A number of partners consulted during the inspection praised the college for its work. They identified key strengths in helping pupils, who have often had negative experiences of school, to change their lives and successfully re-engage in education. Many also described the college as being an essential resource in the local community; a place where other professionals can turn to for advice and guidance, especially when dealing with challenging, difficult or disillusioned pupils.
  - Achievement and the quality of learning are improving well because of improved monitoring, tracking and target setting processes, as well as improvements in staff training.
  - More thought is now being given to the range of courses and activities that are available. There is a strong desire to ensure that what is available matches mainstream provision, while simultaneously endeavouring to meet the varied, individual needs of each pupil. Improved planning and greater flexibility is leading to improved pupil outcomes.
  - A keen commitment to equality is ensuring that all pupils, including those whose circumstances have made them vulnerable, make good progress in their learning and personal development. This is clearly evident in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Relationships across the college are good, with no evidence of discrimination.
  - Procedures for managing teachers' performance are secure. Only those teachers who met the required standards, as judged by the management committee, will be able to progress up the salary scale. Where teaching requires improvement, the headteacher ensures that appropriate training is offered.
  - Self-evaluation is effective and is contributing well to improvements. A good development plan has been established and this too is aiding improvements, as is the good support offered by the local authority.
  - Arrangements for safeguarding are thorough and meet statutory requirements. Risk assessments, including those for occasions when pupils might be working off site, are detailed and fit for purpose.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - The management committee is most supportive and the members know how well the college is performing. They monitor its work, including the quality of teaching and learning, well. They are kept well informed of the targets set for teachers and how performance is rewarded and supported. They rightly judge that provision has improved and is now good. They also know where further improvements are required. They are active in helping the headteacher and senior staff to facilitate improvements and they realise that their own roles will change in the coming months. The training they have received enables them to analyse outcomes, including examination results and the success of re-engagement programmes. The management committee is proud of the many improvements that are now being made after a rather problematic period following reorganisation. Members also praise the impact of the current headteacher.
-

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	101493
<b>Local authority</b>	Wokingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	400484

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>School category</b>	Pupil referral unit
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	55
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The local authority
<b>Chair</b>	Sue Hammond
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mary Rome
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22–23 March 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	0118 9088012
<b>Fax number</b>	0118 9770637
<b>Email address</b>	mary.rome@wokingham.gov.uk



Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)  
[Store St](#)  
[Manchester](#)  
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013

