

# Hailsham Community College

Battle Road, Hailsham, BN27 1DT

**Inspection dates** 14–15 May 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	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.

- Ably supported by his leadership team, the Principal has developed a clear and ambitious vision for the new school that is based on high expectations for all. As a result, students are making good progress.
- Almost all teaching is good and some is inspirational. The relationship between teachers and students is particularly strong.
- Students enjoy school and are proud of it. They arrive in lessons on time and ready to learn and they respond well to the encouragement of staff. Behaviour is good. Students feel safe in school and confirm that bullying is very rare and, if it does occur, is dealt with effectively.
- Governors know their school well, make a very positive contribution to its overall leadership and are committed to improving the school still further.
- The sixth form is good. Teaching is good and, as a result, students make good progress. Students appreciate the quality of guidance and support that they receive. The inclusion of European students in the sixth form provides an added richness.
- The school's curriculum is very successful in meeting the needs of all students. This helps students to enjoy their learning and achieve well.
- Through a wide variety of trips, charity sponsorship and other events, the school is very effective in promoting the students' social, moral and cultural development.

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

- Through their marking, teachers do not always provide students with enough information or opportunity to improve their work.
- Students do not always have sufficient opportunity to learn independently or from each other in lessons.
- Not all teachers use their questioning to check students' learning and to deepen students' thinking.
- There is a significant minority of students who do not attend school regularly and this affects their progress.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 46 lessons, in addition to making shorter visits to a number of classrooms. Ten of these observations were made jointly with school leaders. They also looked at the quality of teachers' marking and how this was helping students to improve.
- Inspectors met with three groups of students to discuss their experience of the school, and particularly their learning, behaviour and safety. They also spoke to students informally at lunch and break times and in lessons.
- Inspectors met with five members of the governing body, including the Chair of the Governing Body. They also met with a number of groups of school leaders.
- Inspectors reviewed a number of documents including: the governing body minutes; safeguarding procedures; behaviour and attendance records; documents relating to school self-review and improvement; and school records on performance management and teaching and learning, including records of lesson observations.
- The lead inspector worked with the Principal and vice principal to analyse the school's data on students' current progress, including those supported through the pupil premium, those who are disabled and those who have special educational needs.
- In planning and carrying out the inspection, inspectors took account of 63 responses to the Parent View survey and 27 questionnaires completed by members of staff.

## Inspection team

Graham Tuck, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Angela Podmore	Additional Inspector
David Lewis	Additional Inspector
Steven Williams	Additional Inspector
Andrew Baker	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This is a slightly larger than average-size secondary school with 146 students in the sixth form.
- It converted to become an academy in August 2012. When its predecessor school, also Hailsham Community College, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be good.
- The college's Principal has been in post since October 2012.
- The college has a specialism in sport and a second specialism in business and enterprise.
- A little over one in 10 students is from a minority ethnic group, which is approximately half the national average.
- Approximately one in five of the school's population is known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is additional funding provided for children in local authority care, children of service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals. This proportion is below the national average. There are no children from service families currently on the school's roll.
- About one in four Year 7 students is eligible for the Year 7 catch-up premium, which is provided by the government to support those students who have not previously reached the expected levels in English and mathematics.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above the national average. Approximately one in 10 students is supported at school action plus or has a statement of special educational needs, which is also above the national average.
- A very few students attend courses at Sussex Downs College and Plumpton College.
- The school operates a small specialist unit to support 10 students on the autistic spectrum.
- The school meets the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

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

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring that:
  - teachers' written comments on students' work are consistently informative and challenging and students are given the time and the opportunity to act upon these comments to improve their work
  - students are provided with rich opportunities to work and learn independently and with each other in lessons
  - teachers' questioning is used to assess and deepen students' learning and to reshape activities when appropriate.
- Reduce the number of students who are absent from school for 15% or more of the school year to the national average by September 2015.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Students join the school with standards of attainment that are below the national average. They make good progress in their learning throughout the school and, based on the school's reliable estimates, will attain at above the national average at GCSE this year.
- In both English and mathematics, students' rates of progress are above national averages and in lessons they are making good progress as a result of effective teaching. A large percentage of students have taken their GCSE mathematics examination at the start of their final year, with an opportunity to resit the examination in the summer. The school uses this system to help motivate its students and care is taken to ensure that students do not drop the subject until they have achieved the grade that is expected of them.
- Achievement is not yet outstanding because gaps in some students' learning due to above average absence rates restrict the progress they can make.
- Opportunities are provided across the curriculum for students to focus on their reading, speaking, listening and writing. For example, time is set aside twice a week for quiet personal reading which students engage with and enjoy. In an outstanding drama lesson, students were encouraged to answer the teacher's questions by using the words and definitions set out on a 'Word Wall'. This helped them to achieve clear and intelligent explanations for important areas of their study.
- The school estimates that those students supported by the pupil premium will attain at least one grade lower than other students in English and mathematics this year. However, given their starting points their rates of progress will be better than those of similar students nationally. The school has in place good systems for monitoring the progress of its students and for putting in place additional support where it is needed. Teachers are also provided with this information so that they can include it in their planning. As a result, any gaps in attainment between these students and the attainment of others are narrowing rapidly. The effective targeting of pupil premium money, for example in providing additional support for reading and writing and the setting up of a homework club, has contributed to this success.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs, including those in the school's specialist unit, are supported extremely well and, as a result, make very good progress. Where additional support is given, school leaders are careful to monitor the impact it is having on students' learning. Teaching assistants work closely with the classroom teacher to plan their role in supporting students' progress. In a Year 8 mathematics lesson, the assistant kept the students she was supporting focused by giving them clear and practical study tips. One student reported, 'Miss keeps me focused and helps me read the questions properly.'
- Students join the sixth form with levels of attainment that are broadly in line with the national average. As a result of effective teaching they make good progress and are well prepared for their examinations.
- A few older students benefit from additional classes held at local colleges in subjects that are relevant to their interests and aspirations. The progress and well-being of these students are carefully monitored by the school and they make good progress.

### The quality of teaching

is good

- Almost all the teaching in school is good and some is outstanding and, as a result, students make good progress over time. Students say that teachers are 'passionate about getting you what you deserve'.
- The good relationships between teachers and students are at the heart of the school's strong climate for learning. When given the opportunity, students work well together and benefit from discussing their ideas and giving feedback on each other's work. For example, in an English lesson students were able to improve their story writing as a result of constructive and incisive

student comments that were skilfully managed by the teacher.

- In a few lessons, students' talking is less carefully managed and, on these occasions, talking tends to be social rather than about the learning. Where lessons are overly dominated by a series of tasks there are insufficient opportunities for students to learn independently and progress is more limited.
- In many lessons, teachers use highly effective questioning to challenge students' thinking and assess what students know and understand. In these lessons, progress is always good and often outstanding. For example in a Year 10 physical education lesson, the teacher's questioning allowed a group of lower-ability students to explain and extend their thinking about footballing skills in a confident and articulate manner. This resulted in high levels of enjoyment and engagement and outstanding levels of achievement.
- Where questioning is less effective, teachers do not allow sufficient time for students to develop their ideas or they accept simple answers. Sometimes, teachers fail to adapt activities sufficiently when students do not respond as they expect.
- Teachers mark students' written work regularly and accurately and most give helpful comments about strengths and weaknesses and what students need to do to improve. However, in a few cases, comments are too general to be helpful; in others, there is insufficient opportunity for students to act upon the teachers' advice and improve their work.

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

- The school is calm and friendly. Staff and students get on particularly well in an atmosphere of mutual courtesy and respect. Students are proud of their school and this is reflected in how they wear their uniform and in their courteous treatment of visitors.
- Students arrive to lessons on time and ready to learn. Their behaviour in class is nearly always good and sometimes it is outstanding. On the very few occasions when students' behaviour requires improvement, this is usually because of weaker teaching.
- There are clearly understood systems for managing behaviour in the school and students value this. In addition, the school provides short-term support for any student who is finding aspects of school life difficult. One result of this is that rates of exclusion are well below national averages. The school has been very effective in improving the conduct of the few students whose behaviour has been unacceptable.
- Students feel extremely safe in the school and say that bullying is rare and, if it does occur, it is dealt with very effectively. They have a good understanding of the different types of bullying such as cyber bullying. Almost all parents and carers who responded to Parent View felt that their child was safe in school and that the school deals well with bullying.
- Effective systems are in place for reducing student absence and these are having an impact. For example, a member of the school's leadership team now works directly with heads of house to improve the attendance habits of a particular group of students and the school makes effective use of a family liaison worker. However, a significant minority of students still do not attend school regularly enough and this affects the progress that they make.

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

- The Principal, well supported by his leadership team, many of whom are new to their posts, has successfully communicated with staff his firm commitment to raising levels of aspiration across the school community. 'CARBS' (Consistency, Aspirations, Respect, Belief and Standards) has become a touchstone for the school community. As a result, there is a shared belief that the school will achieve excellence. Leaders know their school well and have accurately identified what needs to be done to improve still further.
- There is an unremitting drive to improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently outstanding. Staff performance is managed well and pay rises are linked to the targets set for teachers and the progress of the students that they teach. There is an effective programme of

staff training enhanced through an informal partnership with three local academies. As a result, students achieve well, even though leaders have not yet completely eradicated weaker practice.

- The school's curriculum is well matched to students' interests and abilities. Three routes to qualifications are offered and for some more-able students it is possible to study AS levels in Year 11. Links with local further education providers ensure that other students can access a wide range of vocational courses appropriate to their interests. Teaching is typically outstanding in the school's specialist area of sport and there is a rich offer of after-school clubs and activities.
- The social, cultural and moral development of students is a strength of the school. Students have the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of trips both cultural and social. They actively support a number of charities including the Teenage Cancer Trust, Macmillan Nurses and a local hospice and a small group visit Gambia each year to work alongside some of the poorest communities in the country. The school also welcomes European students into the sixth form and this adds to its cultural richness.
- The school is a harmonious community. There is a strong commitment from leaders at all levels to promote equal opportunity and ensure that there is no discrimination.
- Safeguarding arrangements, including those for students who attend some off-site provision, are thorough and meet requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Members of the governing body are ambitious for the school's success and are committed to its vision of high aspiration. Their engagement in relevant training has meant that they are able to ask challenging questions of the leadership team, for example, whether 'banding' is the most effective system for securing success for all abilities. Through their committee structures, their links with key areas of the school and their 'shadow a student day', governors have developed a good understanding of the quality of teaching to make informed decisions as to teachers' salary progression. They have frequent updates on students' progress which, together with their attendance at training on school achievement data, have enabled them to gauge how well the school is performing compared with other, similar schools. Governors have a robust and expert oversight of school finances and hold leaders to account for the impact of pupil premium spending on the progress of free school meal students and those in local authority care. They ensure that safeguarding and child protection procedures meet statutory requirements.

## 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>	138472
<b>Local authority</b>	East Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	413400

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,136
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	146
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sue Weiner
<b>Principal</b>	Phil Matthews
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Telephone number</b>	01323 841468
<b>Fax number</b>	01323 848900
<b>Email address</b>	hcc@hailshamcc.e-sussex.sch.uk



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