

Honiton Community College

School Lane, Honiton, Devon EX14 1QT

Inspection dates 13–14 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Not enough students make good progress. The attainment and progress of different groups of students and achievement across different subjects are inconsistent.
- The proportion of good and outstanding teaching is not high enough.
- Teachers do not always have high enough expectations for their students and do not challenge them in their learning. Best practice in teaching is not shared well.
- Leadership and management require improvement because the actions needed to improve teaching and achievement have not been taken quickly enough.
- Some teachers do not use marking well enough to allow students to improve their work.
- Some subject leaders do not fully hold their teams to account for the quality of teaching and students' progress.
- Some students known to be eligible for free school meals have made slower progress than others in mathematics and English.

The school has the following strengths

- Students' behaviour is good. They are attentive in lessons and work hard. They behave sensibly around school at all times.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is of a high quality.
- The governing body challenges and holds the school to account in positive ways.
- Teaching in the sixth form is good and students make good progress in many subjects.
- Students' achievement in vocational courses in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form is good.
- The curriculum caters well for the needs of all students.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 29 lessons, of which seven were joint observations with senior leaders. Inspectors also made a number of additional visits to assemblies and tutorial sessions and carried out short visits to classrooms across a range of subjects.
- Discussions were held with the headteacher, senior and subject leaders, pastoral leaders and the Chair and one other member of the Governing Body.
- Inspectors spoke to students in lessons, at breaks and at lunchtimes. They also met with various groups of students.
- The inspection team looked at a range of documentation, including the school’s checks on how well it is doing, the school improvement plan, and statistical information about students’ progress, achievement, behaviour and exclusions. They looked at the work of a wide range of students.
- Inspectors looked at the school’s documentation relating to the management of the work of staff, training arrangements for teachers and other staff, lesson observations, and arrangements for the safeguarding of students and for governance.
- Inspectors took into account the 85 responses to the online questionnaire Parent View and the 60 responses to the staff questionnaire, as well as a letter from a parent.

Inspection team

Christine Young, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
David Howley	Additional Inspector
Terry Payne	Additional Inspector
Malcolm Davidson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Honiton Community College Academy Trust converted to become an academy school in July 2011. When its predecessor school, Honiton Community College was previously inspected by Ofsted in June 2011 when it was judged to be good. The school uses its predecessor title of Honiton Community College.
- Honiton Community College is an average sized, mixed, 11 to 19 comprehensive school.
- Almost all students are of White British heritage and the percentage of students from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language is lower than the national average.
- The proportion of students eligible for the pupil premium is below average. (This is additional money allocated by the government for looked after children and those known to be eligible for free school meals and other groups).
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs supported by school action is above the national average as is the proportion of students supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs.
- Students do not attend any off-site alternative provision.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum levels expected for students' attainment and progress for secondary schools.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching so that pupils make consistently good progress in all classes by:
 - sharing the existing good and outstanding practice effectively across the school to enable teachers to learn from each other and raise their expectations of what students can achieve
 - giving every student suitably challenging work so that they all have to put more effort into their work
 - ensuring that all staff provide high-quality marking and feedback so that students know how to improve their work.
- Improve leadership and management by making sure that all subject leaders take more direct responsibility for their departments, particularly for improving the quality of teaching and in holding teams to account for the progress of the students in their subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement because students, including those from minority ethnic groups and those who speak English as an additional language, do not make consistently good progress in all subjects. The attainment on entry to the school of the students who left in 2013 was significantly below the national average. In 2013 the percentage of students gaining five or more GCSE A* to C grades, including English and mathematics, was significantly below average.
- In 2013 there was considerable variation between the results for different groups of students and across subjects. This shows that the progress requires improvement in order to become consistently good.
- Evidence from the school's records about current Year 11 students, whose prior attainment is broadly average, shows that attainment is improving. Although attainment in mathematics is lower, evidence from the school's most recent tracking indicates that attainment in English is rising rapidly.
- Students enter the sixth form with attainment below the national average. In 2013 students' achievements were broadly average; however, their progress and attainment in vocational subjects were above average.
- The school does not enter students early for GCSE.
- Students for whom the school receives additional funding through the pupil premium are taught in small groups and benefit from extra additional resources and help. In 2013 the progress made by these students in English and mathematics was slower than others in the school. Evidence from the school's most recent tracking indicates that the gap in their performance in English is narrowing rapidly and is about one GCSE grade behind their classmates. The gap in students' progress in mathematics is beginning to narrow but at a slower pace indicating that students are one and a half GCSE grades behind their classmates.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs receive extra help and support when they need it. In 2013 the performance of this group was below average. However, there is a clear indication from the school's most recent tracking that these students are now beginning to make good progress and their achievement is now broadly average.
- Year 7 students eligible for extra support in reading from the government's catch-up funding are being well supported through targeted provision, including small-group work and one-to-one tuition. As a result they are making good progress in improving their literacy skills.
- The school has introduced a successful literacy programme across the school, which is having a big impact on improving students' literacy skills. Every week all students are given time specifically to read. This 'drop everything and read' programme is very successful and the impact is evident in the increase in students' reading ages and their improved literacy skills. All departments in school implement literacy support for students.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching requires improvement because although it is improving, it has not consistently been good across all subjects.
- The quality of teaching requires improvement because some teachers give work that is either too easy for some students, for example, not challenging enough for the most able.
- The marking in books seen by inspectors varied from being very strong, personalised to each individual with a clear focus on progress and improvement, to more basic marking which was less informative with little guidance on how to improve. As a consequence some students were unable to fully develop their learning effectively and make good progress. Marking was particularly good in English.
- In lessons where teaching is good or better, students eagerly grasp all opportunities to work according to any methods adopted by teachers and relish sharing information and helping each

other to learn. In these lessons, teachers frequently refer to how well students are doing and activities ensure all students are able to make good progress.

- The quality of teaching in the sixth form is mostly good with some that is outstanding. Teachers provide challenge and support to students where necessary.
- Sixth form students were very positive about the quality of teaching they receive. They particularly appreciated the considerable extra help and support they receive from staff when they are finding work difficult or in the run-up to examinations. They are very well prepared for their next steps in higher education, training or employment.
- The school's caring and welcoming ethos is reflected in the positive relationships between students and staff, This contributes to the typically friendly and purposeful atmosphere in lessons.
- Teaching assistants are often deployed well and provide helpful support to small groups of students and to individuals.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students' behaviour is good because they demonstrate positive attitudes towards their learning and are keen to improve their progress. They are very polite, well mannered, courteous and mature. They are fun to talk to. Those interviewed appreciated the rewards and praise they received for good conduct and achievement and felt that they were valued as individuals.
- The majority of students have very positive attitudes towards their learning. They are eager and enthusiastic in lessons, even when the teaching is uninspiring and dull. Occasionally, where work lacks challenge pupils do not try as hard as they could.
- Students respond very well to the effective systems used to manage behaviour and promote positive relationships.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. Students say they feel safe. They understand risk and have a very good understanding of the different forms of bullying, including cyber-bullying. They say that there is very little bullying in school and express great confidence that any would be dealt with quickly and effectively.
- The sixth form plays a major role in the school through the sixth form executive council. It has played its part in the implementation of many changes in the school including the change in uniform and in creating the school's vision statement. Students take part in departmental reviews and interviews for new staff appointments. They are very good ambassadors for the school.
- Students, including those in the sixth form, take great pride in their school and demonstrate that they have a very clear and moral sense of what is right and wrong. The ethos of the school was powerfully represented in assembly presentations made by students. They take part in fund-raising activities for Cancer Research, The Rhino Protection Trust and the Devon Air Ambulance.
- Attendance is currently above the national average. The proportion of students who are classed as persistent absentees has declined, as a result of the effective work with individual students and their families. Punctuality at the start of the school's day and to lessons is good.
- Attendance in the sixth form is broadly in line with national averages. Retention rates are low.
- The vast majority of parents agree that their children are safe and that behaviour is well managed.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement as teaching and achievement are not yet good. There is too much difference in how well students do in some subjects and best practice is not shared effectively across the school in order that students do as well in all subjects.
- Most subject leaders check the quality of teaching and students' progress in their respective areas rigorously. These leaders often know the weaknesses of their departments and act quickly

to take action to secure improvement or have been willing to take action. This is not always the case and not all middle leaders have the skills and confidence to develop their teams, particularly in relation to improving the quality of teaching.

- The school has introduced more robust ways of managing how well teachers perform. This is accurate and clearly identifies the skills that need to improve. The professional development programme is well supported by the school; there is a strong focus on the development of subject leaders and improving teaching. The quality of teachers' work and students' progress is linked to pay progression and to the Teachers' Standards (national standards for teachers).
- The monitoring of the progress of specific groups of students is undertaken regularly through half termly data checks and tracking. This identifies where the school needs to implement extra support and guidance for students. This is helping to raise levels of achievement and students' progress.
- The headteacher has ensured that all staff, leaders and governors now have a thorough understanding of how well the school is doing and what needs to be done to improve. As a result, self-evaluation is now accurate and this, together with better teaching and improved progress, shows that the leaders have a secure capacity to improve further.
- In 2013 the school increased the number of hours students study English and mathematics. This, together with increased staffing in both departments, is now beginning to have a big impact on the rates of progress students are now making.
- Students make exceptionally good use of the wide range of extra-curricular opportunities that are provided for them which develop clear, personal values and make an impact on school life. These include trips abroad, the Duke of Edinburgh Award, adventure days out, and sporting, artistic and cultural experiences. The school runs a Sports Academy both for the sixth form and the main school for gifted and talented students.
- The school has international links with schools in Strasbourg, Madrid, Shasemene (Ethiopia) and Uganda and students take part in visits to France, Austria, Poland and Germany. Students speak very highly of the chances they are given to explore ideas and take part in activities beyond their lessons.
- The leadership and management of the sixth form are good. The school provides an innovative curriculum that is very successful in meeting the needs of students through the inclusive nature of the sixth form.
- The school's safeguarding and child protection statutory duties are in place and meet requirements.

■ The governance of the school:

- The strong governing body demonstrates a good grasp of the current school performance, including the quality of teaching and students' rate of progress and achievement. It challenges and holds the school to account in positive ways.
- The governing body is aware of how the school spends its pupil premium funding and works with the school to monitor the progress of students eligible for the additional support.
- Regular training and briefings ensure governors have an assured grasp of school performance information.
- The governing body ensures that teachers' performance management is effectively linked to rewards and incentives for good teaching.
- The sixth form are represented on the governing body through an associate governorship position.

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

Unique reference number	113499
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	441120

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Academy Converter
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	822
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	146
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lynda Price
Principal	Glen Smith
Date of previous school inspection	8–9 June 2011
Telephone number	01404 42283
Fax number	01404 44491
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