

College Hall

West Road, Wokingham, RG40 3BT

Inspection dates 11–12 December 2014

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|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|
| Overall effectiveness | Previous inspection: | Good | 2 |
| | This inspection: | Good | 2 |
| Leadership and management | | Good | 2 |
| Behaviour and safety of pupils | | Good | 2 |
| Quality of teaching | | Good | 2 |
| Achievement of pupils | | Good | 2 |

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Teachers work well with individual students to enable them to make good progress in their studies.
- The headteacher and other leaders, including the management committee, have brought about improvements in the quality of teaching and students' achievements, attitudes, behaviour and safety. This has led to more rapid progress for students.
- Teaching is consistently good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and excellent relationships with students. They plan lessons carefully so that all students make progress.
- Behaviour is good. Due to the skilful way teachers manage students' behaviour, students stay focused on learning during lessons. They behave well outside lessons.
- Students are kept very safe. They are well supervised at all times. They know about various kinds of risk and how to avoid them, including when using social media.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not ensure that students follow up on the advice they are given about how to improve their work.
- Students do not have sufficient opportunity to apply their mathematical skills in subjects other than mathematics.
- Marking does not give students enough guidance about spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed eight lessons, three of them jointly with the deputy headteacher.
- The inspector looked at students' work, including the frequency and quality of marking and the progress students make, and individual case studies of the work of students.
- Meetings were held with two groups of students, three members of the Management Committee, including the Chair, and senior and middle managers.
- The inspector took account of the school's survey of parents and 15 staff questionnaire responses.
- The inspector observed the school's work, and looked at a number of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and development plan, information on students' current progress and records relating to monitoring, behaviour and attendance, and safeguarding.

Inspection team

John Mallone, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- College Hall is an average-sized pupil referral unit for secondary-aged students.
- It provides education for students with behavioural, social and emotional difficulties who have been permanently excluded from their mainstream school or who are at risk of permanent exclusion.
- It provides short-term education for students in Years 7, 8 and 9. Because of the small numbers in each of these year groups, students are taught in a mixed-age class. Currently, there are no Year 7 students on roll.
- Students in Years 10 and 11 often complete their compulsory education at College Hall. There are several classes for these year groups, including a mixed-age class. Some students whose education takes place in The Cottage, an annex on the same site, initially attend part time due to medical needs.
- At the time of the inspection 80% of the students had joined the school since the start of the term and 30% since half term.
- The school runs an outreach service which supports students with behavioural problems in mainstream schools.
- Over the longer term, approximately two thirds of students have been boys. At the time of the inspection there were equal numbers of boys and girls.
- Almost all students are White British.
- About a third of students are eligible for the government's pupil premium, which provides additional funding for those who are looked after and those known to be eligible for free school meals. This is greater than the national average.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the proportion of teaching that is outstanding and increase rates of progress for all students by:
 - ensuring that students respond to teachers' spoken and written advice about how to improve their work
 - ensuring greater consistency in the way teachers mark for spelling, punctuation and grammar
 - extending the opportunities for students to apply mathematical and problem-solving opportunities in subjects across the curriculum.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, along with other leaders in the school, has created an inclusive ethos where students are made to feel part of a family. This has had a very positive impact on students' behaviour and attitudes to learning. Leaders have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and the areas it needs to develop. They have put in place effective plans which have led to an improvement in the quality of teaching. This has brought about improved progress for students.
- Daily staff meetings before and after school ensure that staff keep a sharp focus on the behaviour and attitudes of students, and are able to foresee potential problems before they arise.
- Students are set challenging targets which are based on their levels of attainment when they enter the school. They are expected to make progress in line with all students nationally and most of them do. Progress against these targets is reviewed regularly. Those who are falling behind are given extra help, so that they can catch up. As a result, students make good progress.
- Middle leaders make a good contribution to the school. They take responsibility for students' progress in literacy and mathematics and put in place extra teaching support for those who need it. As a result, progress in both these areas is good.
- The school has a broad and balanced curriculum. For those students who attend the school for short periods in Key Stage 3 there is a core curriculum of English, mathematics and science. In addition there is a special programme which aims to develop self-esteem and confidence about learning so that students can return to their mainstream school. In Key Stage 4, all students take the core subjects at GCSE level and there is a range of optional vocational subjects tailored to the needs and abilities of individual students. This flexibility has helped maintain students' engagement and enabled them to gain useful qualifications. The programme of personal, social, moral and spiritual education prepares students well for life in modern Britain.
- The provision of independent careers advice and guidance is very responsive to students' needs. As a result, hardly any students leave school without going on to further education or training, or getting a job.
- The school has received help from the local authority which has contributed to the improvement in the quality of teaching.
- The pupil premium funding has been used well to provide extra support for disadvantaged students. As a result there is little difference between their achievement and the achievement of others in the school.
- Parents, staff and students are appreciative of the family atmosphere in the school and the way that it contributes to building positive attitudes to learning. They agree that the school is a very safe place.
- The school strongly promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination firmly on the rare occasions that incidents arise.
- The school meets the current statutory requirements for safeguarding.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The members of the Management Committee make a strong contribution to the school. They show a detailed knowledge of their duties and responsibilities and participate fully in developing the school's strategic vision. They challenge and support the other leaders in the school in balanced measure and work closely with the local authority, helping to secure funding for the school's development. They are clear about the school's strengths and the areas it still needs to develop. They know about the quality of teaching and how it has been improved. They oversee the performance management process well, including that of the headteacher. They are aware that when teachers fail to meet their targets, they will not receive pay rises. They have a good grasp of how much progress students are making, including those in receipt of the pupil premium. They are proud of the way that the school educates and looks after those in its care.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good.
- Students develop positive attitudes to learning. They take pride in their work and are keen to improve it. They are respectful towards teachers and other staff and readily carry out their instructions. As a result,

lessons proceed smoothly and progress is good.

- Outside lessons, students behave respectfully to one another and to adults. There is a family ethos in the school, for example at lunchtime, when students and staff sit round a table and eat and talk together. Afterwards, students help clear away and tidy up without needing to be asked.
- Students look after their environment well. No litter or graffiti were seen on inspection and the attractive wall displays are well cared for.
- Students are well aware of different kinds of bullying. Bullying is very rare. When it does occur, the school deals with it promptly and effectively. The school's own records show a large reduction in the number of incidents. Racist and homophobic name-calling is very rare.
- The attendance of students improves strongly when they join the school compared to previously. Overall levels of attendance have risen year-on-year. The attendance of those who were persistent absentees in mainstream schools has also improved.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good.
- Parents, students and staff all say that the school is a very safe place. Students are very clear about the various kinds of risk they face at school and in the wider world. They are particularly conscious of the dangers associated with the misuse of drugs and alcohol. The school has worked well to ensure that students guard against the dangers of extremist propaganda. Students are also well aware of the risks of putting personal information on social media.
- The site is very secure and all visitors are required to identify themselves before they enter the premises. There are strict vetting procedures in the appointment of staff.

The quality of teaching is good

- The quality of teaching has improved and is now consistently good across the school.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have high expectations of how students should behave in lessons and work skilfully to keep them engaged in their work. This has brought about good attitudes to learning and led to good progress.
- Teachers and teaching assistants have good subject knowledge and respectful relationships with students. This gives students the confidence to meet the challenges set for them in lessons. As a result, progress is often quick.
- Teachers plan lessons well. They break work down into appropriately sized steps, so that it is easier for students to make progress without feeling that the challenge is too great.
- Teachers use questioning well to check students' understanding. They make frequent adjustments to lessons and guide students on an individual basis. As a result, work is aimed at the right level for each student and none gets left behind.
- Teachers use a range of resources to engage students and maintain their interest. For example, in a Key Stage 4 media studies lesson, students were shown clips from a film and discussed the different kinds of shot used. As a result, when they came to design their own short film sequences, they were better able to understand the effect of these different techniques.
- Teachers usually mark work with clear advice about ways students might make improvements. However, they do not consistently ensure that students respond to these suggestions. As a result, progress is less rapid than it might be. Teachers mark work closely for capital letters and full stops. There is less consistent marking of other forms of punctuation and of spelling and grammar. This means that students are not progressing quickly enough towards the levels of literacy needed in public examinations and in life beyond school.
- The teaching of numeracy is too limited to mathematics lessons. An example of basic arithmetic being used in a science lesson was seen during the inspection, but examination of students' work shows that this type of application is not widespread. Approaches to problem solving were seen on inspection, but these also are too limited.

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students join the school with low levels of prior attainment. They have often missed much schooling and

have developed poor attitudes to learning. When they leave the school at the end of Key Stage 4 they have made good progress, broadly in line with national rates for English and mathematics, and achieve qualifications which are useful to them in the next stage of their education, training, or employment. This includes students who attend The Cottage due to medical reasons.

- In 2014 students were entered early for mathematics GCSE, but then re-entered at the end of Year 11. They were not adversely affected by this. Early entry no longer occurs as the school sees little advantage to the students in doing this.
- Students currently in the school are making good progress, so that they are likely to achieve examination results similar to those of 2014.
- The most able students achieve well. Thanks to the individualised attention of their teachers and other staff, they make better progress than other students in the school.
- The achievement of the very small numbers of disadvantaged students is similar to that of others in the school in both English and mathematics. There is a gap between the achievement of these students and other students nationally. In 2013, as a result of their disrupted education, their poor attitudes to learning in their previous schools and the relatively short amount of time they had spent in the school, this gap was over two and a half grades. Due to the increasing success in engaging these students and improving their behaviour and attitudes to learning, the gap in achievement between this group and other students nationally reduced in 2014 nearer to two grades in both English and mathematics.

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

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| Unique reference number | 131769 |
| Local authority | Bracknell Forest |
| Inspection number | 448063 |

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

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| Type of school | Secondary |
| School category | Pupil referral unit |
| Age range of pupils | 11–16 |
| Gender of pupils | Mixed |
| Number of pupils on the school roll | 31 |
| Appropriate authority | The Management Committee |
| Chair | Martin Gocke |
| Headteacher | Marion Bent |
| Date of previous school inspection | 11–12 July 2012 |
| Telephone number | 01189893378 |
| Fax number | 01189893381 |
| Email address | admin@collegehall.org.uk |

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