

# The Hurst Community College

Brimpton Road, Baughurst, Tadley, Hampshire, RG26 5NL

**Inspection dates** 14–15 May 2015

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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

- Teaching and students' achievement have improved well since the last inspection and are now good. Well-planned training and opportunities to share best practice ensure these improvements continue into the future.
- Teachers use a variety of effective approaches to make lessons interesting so that students enjoy their learning and want to do well.
- Last year's GCSE results showed that students made good progress overall. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 is above average.
- Senior and middle leaders and governors share high expectations and a commitment to ensure that every student gains the skills and qualifications they need for life after school. As a result, the school is improving.
- Disadvantaged students now make better progress than in the recent past. The gaps between the attainment and progress of disadvantaged students and others, both in school and nationally, have narrowed over the last three years.
- Students are very proud of their school. They feel safe and well cared for, supporting each other through their good behaviour and attitudes to learning.
- The curriculum is well developed to enable students to achieve the qualifications they need for further education, employment and training.
- Governors have a very good understanding of the school. They take an active part in ensuring it continues to improve at a rapid pace.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers' marking is not always as clear about how students can improve their work. Some teachers do not check that students act upon the advice provided.
- On occasions, students are not set work at the right level to enable them to achieve as well as they could.
- Teachers' range of approaches to promote students' learning is not always sufficiently effective to raise students' achievements to the highest levels.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed students’ learning in 40 lessons, eight of which were observed jointly with members of the leadership team. Inspectors also carried out additional short visits to classrooms.
- Inspectors attended two assemblies. They looked at students’ work in lessons and carried out a detailed scrutiny of their written work across the curriculum.
- Students’ conduct was observed throughout the school day, including at break and lunchtime. Information about their level of behaviour over time was also examined.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, middle leaders and teachers. They met formally with students in four groups and talked informally with others in lessons and around the school.
- Inspectors examined a range of documents, including the school’s evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses and information on students’ current attainment and progress. They reviewed attendance and exclusion records, behaviour logs and the school’s records of bullying and racist incidents. They also checked the governing body minutes, safeguarding logs and planning documents.
- Meetings were held with two governors, including the Chair of the Governing Body, and the school’s improvement consultant from the local authority, to consider the impact of external support for the school.
- Inspectors took account of questionnaires completed by 80 members of staff and 15 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, and the school’s own parent surveys.

## Inspection team

Chris King, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Victoria Kirby	Additional Inspector
Janet Simms	Additional Inspector
Neville Coles	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The Hurst Community College is an average-sized secondary school.
- Almost all students are from White British backgrounds and the proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students is below average. These students are supported by the pupil premium, which is additional funding provided for students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of disabled students and those with special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of students who are eligible for the Year 7 catch-up funding is below average. This funding is for students who did not reach the expected standards in reading or mathematics at the end of Year 6.
- A small number of students spend part of their time following work-related courses at Ashwood Education Centre and The Apex Centre.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.

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

- Further improve teaching to outstanding and raise students' achievement through the school by:
  - ensuring teachers' marking and advice highlight areas to improve as well as strengths, and that teachers check to make sure that the students' work improves as a result of their advice
  - providing work that allows all students to reach the highest standards of which they are capable
  - ensuring all teaching approaches challenge students' learning in lessons in order to encourage deeper thinking and higher achievement.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher is committed to ensuring that all students make the best possible progress in all aspects of their development. Governors and all staff with leadership responsibilities support him well in this ambition. It has created an atmosphere where teaching and students' good behaviour can flourish.
- The school's view of its own performance is thorough and accurate. It leads to carefully planned actions, as seen in the school's improvement plans, which have been used well to improve performance. Leaders undertake systematic review using information on students' performance and other information. For example, concern about students' achievement in mathematics led to senior leaders making changes; these have clearly made a difference to the progress students made in mathematics in 2014, which was above the national average.
- Subject and other leaders have a clear understanding of their role in raising achievement. They are well supported by senior leaders who value them. This ensures that middle leaders who may need support receive it quickly.
- The leadership of teaching is good and the school places high priority on improving teaching through good quality training. Checks on teachers' performance are more rigorous. Leaders use information from lesson observations to pin point areas to improve, such as teachers challenging students' thinking more deeply on occasions. There is a clear understanding that decisions about promotion and pay rates are based on the impact of teaching on students' progress.
- The school promotes students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education well. This is achieved not only in lessons but also through the participation of a large proportion of students in a varied programme of extra-curricular opportunities. Many students enthusiastically engage in fund-raising activities for various charities.
- The school is particularly strong in giving students opportunities in art, dance and drama and significant numbers of students take part in whole-school productions.
- Those students eligible for the pupil premium and Year 7 'catch-up' funding, and disabled students and those who have special educational needs, are well supported. This is evident in the impact made by a number of strategies including small group work and additional staffing in key areas. The school promotes equality of opportunity, fosters good relationships, and tackles discrimination effectively.
- The school's leaders have devised a curriculum that includes a good variety of academic subjects. Although basic skills are provided for well, on occasions, the work set in some lessons is not always well matched to the needs of more able students. Planning promotes fundamental British values and beliefs. It fosters good relationships and promotes equality of opportunity for all its students. As a result, students are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The school has good relationships with parents. Their views are taken into account and they are regularly kept up to date regarding the progress of their child.
- Safeguarding procedures reflect statutory requirements. They are robust and are effective in keeping students safe. The site is safe and secure, with appropriate levels of supervision. All staff are updated regularly so that they are confident in how to address any safeguarding concerns appropriately and effectively.
- The school's improvement consultant from the local authority has supported the school effectively in its drive to raise students' achievement and improve the quality of teaching.
- Leaders check regularly to ensure that students' progress at the alternative provision is developing well. They also monitor students' attendance and behaviour regularly. The school is working to improve the attendance of some disadvantaged students in the main school, which still has room to improve.
- Good quality advice and guidance are provided whenever students are considering future courses or career choices. In Key Stage 4, students receive effective guidance that helps them to make a successful transition to the next stage of their education, employment or training.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body is well informed. It fulfils its duties diligently, confirming that the school's arrangements for safeguarding students are effective and meet statutory requirements. It ensures that the curriculum is preparing young people positively for life in modern Britain. The governing body checks carefully that the use of additional funds from the pupil premium is improving the achievement of eligible students. It challenges school leaders and holds them to account for students' achievement. It compares the school's performance with that of similar schools and understands the school's key performance indicators. Governors also strongly support the school and its leaders, actively promoting the headteacher's vision for the school's further improvement in the quality of teaching. They manage

the performance of the headteacher and other staff well and ensure that the salary progression is justified by the outcome of students' progress and achievement. Explanation and action from school leaders and managers are called for when performance does not improve as intended. The governing body oversees the management of finance and resources well.

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

### **Behaviour**

- The behaviour of students is good. Students say they enjoy coming to school and they arrive punctually in the morning and for lessons. They come well equipped for their lessons and ready to learn.
- Although attendance has improved since the previous inspection and is now in line with the national average, disadvantaged students do not attend as well. The number of exclusions from school is falling.
- Relationships between staff and students are strong, and students say they appreciate the extra help and support they receive.
- Uniform is worn with pride and students dress smartly, and show respect for the school environment. They are pleasant, polite and courteous and are well behaved around school, socialising well together.

### **Safety**

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is good. All students spoken to said they felt safe in the school.
- Students are clear as to what constitutes bullying or the use of discriminatory language, and they know that any anti-social behaviour is not tolerated. Parents and students say that, on the rare occasions bullying occurs, it is dealt with swiftly and effectively.
- Students have a good understanding of internet safety, and the school's programme for personal and social development makes a strong contribution to students' understanding of how to keep safe.
- Arrangements to support the few students studying off site are good. There are clear arrangements with providers to check the safety and attendance of students.
- Parents and staff share similarly positive views about students' behaviour and safety.

## **The quality of teaching** is good

- The quality of teaching is good and over time, it results in students' good progress throughout the school.
- Teachers know their subjects and their students well. They make sure that if any students are unclear about what they are doing, they are helped to see the value of what they are being taught.
- Most teachers have high expectations of their students, who respond by working hard. English and mathematics are taught well and ensure there are opportunities to reinforce students' literacy and numeracy skills in a wide range of subjects. Reading is promoted well across the school.
- Teachers make good use of the training and support given by school leaders, and they share their best practice between them on a regular basis.
- Students are very positive in their comments about lessons. They find them interesting and enjoy the homework they are regularly set. Some students do not find work to be as challenging and engaging as it could be.
- Teachers are very aware of the needs and potential barriers to learning of different groups of students in their classes. This includes disabled students and those who have special educational needs as well as disadvantaged students. Teachers make good use of support staff to assist these students and others in their learning.
- Some teaching does not always use a range of effective methods, such as challenging questioning, to accelerate students' progress or encourage their deeper thinking.
- Students' work is marked regularly and mostly follows the school's marking policy in giving students helpful information about what to do to improve. However, this is not yet the case throughout the school. Discussions with students and a scrutiny of their books reveal that some teachers' marking highlights only strengths and lacks clear advice and guidance about how to improve. As a result, students' work does not always improve as quickly as it could.

## **The achievement of pupils** is good

- Achievement has improved since the previous inspection as the impact of changes made by senior leaders

has become evident. The school's information about current students' progress and a scrutiny of students' books show that progress is good and improving further.

- Students make good progress and leave the school with standards above those found nationally. In 2014, 72% of students gained five GCSE qualifications including both English and mathematics. As a result of the school's early entry of students into examinations this is not reflected in nationally published performance information.
- The school carefully uses an early entry policy in some subjects like English. Where they do, progress is maximised for those students.
- Students' progress in mathematics and English is good. Students develop particularly good literacy and communication skills across the curriculum. The Year 7 catch-up funding is very well used to provide expert support for those who start with weaker literacy skills. This includes students working intensively in a 'nurture group' to improve their basic skills. Reading is actively promoted, and the well-resourced and well-managed library is at the heart of the school's success in encouraging a love of books.
- School leaders recognised that gaps between the attainment of disadvantaged students and others were wide at the time of the last inspection. As a result of carefully targeted support, the gaps between their attainment and progress and that of their peers, both in the school and nationally, are now narrowing. In 2014, the attainment of disadvantaged students in English was behind that of their classmates by half of a grade compared to a grade in 2013; they were in line with their peers nationally compared to a grade behind in 2013. In mathematics, the gap narrowed in school from one and a half grades in 2013 to around one grade in 2014. Compared to their peers nationally the gap has narrowed from over one grade to two thirds of a grade in 2014. The progress of disadvantaged students in both English and mathematics was below other students nationally in 2013. In 2014 disadvantaged students made much better progress in English than other students nationally and in mathematics the gap has narrowed significantly.
- The school is committed to equality of opportunity and all groups of students, including disabled students and those who have special educational needs, make good progress across a wide range of subjects. This is because their specific needs are quickly identified and met with high-quality additional support.
- The very small number of students who attend courses with other providers make good progress. They learn skills that enable them to go on to further training, education or employment.
- The learning of the most able students is in line with their peers in most subjects, but some are not always challenged to do their very best by the work set. The percentage of students making accelerated progress in English and mathematics is above the national average.

## 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>	116422
<b>Local authority</b>	Hampshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	462436

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	940
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dr Norman Godfrey
<b>Headteacher</b>	Malcolm Christian
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21–22 May 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	0118 9817474
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