

# Ifield Community College

Crawly Avenue, Ifield RH11 0BD

## Inspection dates

2–3 March 2016

## Overall effectiveness

**Requires improvement**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
16 to 19 study programmes	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This a school that requires improvement

- Pupils' rates of progress were lower than those seen nationally in 2015. Overall, attainment was too low in English and mathematics.
- Teaching is too variable across subjects to ensure that pupils make consistently good progress.
- Leaders have not ensured that the attendance of disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs or disability is high enough.
- Leaders at all levels do not make good enough use of the information they have about pupils to plan improvements for different groups.
- Not enough is expected of lower-ability pupils and they do not make the progress they should. Teachers do not demand high enough standards from these pupils.
- Safeguarding is effective but leaders need to ensure that this culture is better promoted.
- Staff absences and the challenge of recruiting staff of a high enough calibre have led to inconsistencies in outcomes for pupils.
- Leaders of the 16–19 study programme do not use the information they have about pupils sharply enough to support progress.

### The school has the following strengths

- The Principal has determinedly led a shift in culture and expectations at the school. Governors, staff, parents and pupils now feel they have a part to play in raising standards.
- Teaching is improving and in some subjects, such as English, mathematics and history, it is consistently good.
- Pupils behave well. They are keen to learn and want to improve their work. Pupils are cooperative and respectful.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, so that it matches the best practice in the school by:
  - ensuring that all teachers use information about pupils to help them plan lessons that meet all pupils' needs
  - ensuring that all groups of pupils make good progress
  - training teachers effectively to develop their skills, such that they demand more of least-able pupils.
- Ensure that governors, and leaders at all levels, are skilled in using information about pupils' progress to enable them to:
  - plan strategies to close gaps for disadvantaged pupils, those who have special educational needs or disability and White British groups.
  - target interventions specifically and evaluate the impact they are having
  - target resources to improve attendance for all pupils.
- Ensure that the school's safeguarding culture is brought to the fore by:
  - ensuring that the school's effective work on safeguarding is reflected on the school's website
  - reviewing how safeguarding procedures are shared with relevant staff.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management requires improvement

- Leaders have not secured good enough progress for all pupils. Disadvantaged pupils, those who have special educational needs or disability, and White British pupils do not do as well as their peers. In some subjects, such as modern foreign languages, pupils do not do as well as they should from their starting points.
- Leaders have not ensured that all staff, and especially those with leadership responsibilities for pupils' progress, are secure in their use of the information held about pupils. As a result, teachers do not always plan effectively for pupils to make strong progress, and this means some groups of pupils are being left behind.
- Leaders of the 16–19 study programme and special educational needs are not analysing information about pupils skilfully to give them precise information about which pupils should be doing better. As a consequence, they are not analysing trends and patterns to help these pupils improve.
- The quality of teaching is too variable and not enough pupils make the progress of which they are capable. However, the situation is improving as leaders have ensured high-quality training and support to improve teachers' skills and knowledge. Recent new appointments are having a positive impact on the leadership of subjects such as science and mathematics.
- A strong system of monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching has been implemented by leaders. This system is beginning to make a difference and teaching is improving. Allied to this is a new appraisal system, which includes a target to improve pupils' progress. Leaders have ensured that procedures are transparent, equitably applied and understood by all staff.
- Leaders, following the example set by the Principal, are candid and open in their evaluation of the school. They are clear-sighted about the school's strengths and weaknesses and determined to see improvement for all pupils. Procedures and policies are now planned together and shared, and a spirit of honest self-reflection characterises the Principal's approach and infuses the staff. Leaders have wisely sought external support: middle leaders and teachers have benefited from close working with a neighbouring school.
- Middle leaders are enthusiastically setting about taking responsibility for improving the work of their teams, under close guidance from senior leaders. They are clear about their roles, because of a recent restructuring, and responsibilities, because of a resetting of expectations. Middle leaders use helpful systems to monitor and evaluate the difference they are making.
- The newly implemented behaviour system has been a success. As a result of this work, leaders have brought about a decline in exclusions across all year groups. The school's evidence also indicates a significant decline in the number of disruptions in lessons, such that these have now been almost eradicated.
- Parents and carers now feel much more welcome at the school because leaders have developed a range of ways to help parents become more involved in their sons' and daughters' education. For example, the school now holds progress review days during the school day, as well as traditional parents' evenings. Evidence from parent surveys indicates that parents have confidence in the leadership of the school.
- Pupils have a strong sense of right and wrong. This is developed through the taught curriculum as well as theme days such as 'kindness day' or 'staying safe day'. Leaders have promoted strong provision to ensure that pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Pupils told inspectors they feel very safe at the school and their parents agree.
- Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is a strength of the school. Frequent opportunities are taken by staff to enhance pupils' understanding. In a drama lesson, pupils were considering persecution through case studies of Martin Luther King and Stephen Lawrence, while in religious education pupils were engaged in a mature and reflective debate about end of life issues.
- The school's curriculum is broad and balanced providing pupils with a well-blended range of vocational and academic options. The school's science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) curriculum is a notable feature. Pupils have opportunities to be involved in a wide range of activities, both in and beyond school, such as computer coding, taking part in chemistry classes at Brighton University and women in engineering projects. This provision is linked closely to the school's careers and guidance work and ensures that pupils are well informed about future employment and education routes. A good range of extra-curricular activities help promote pupils' wider learning.

- Leaders effectively target pupil premium funding (extra government funding) to support pupils' learning and behaviour, although this would benefit from a consideration of how pupils with low attendance rates can also be supported.
- **The governance of the school**
  - Prior to the arrival of the current Principal, governors held a minor role, endorsing the decisions of the then headteacher. Now, owing to a more collaborative culture and spirit of openness, the governors are much better equipped to challenge and support leaders. As a result, they now use the helpful information the school provides to hold leaders to account.
  - Governors are a dedicated and committed group. They freely acknowledge their strengths and areas requiring development, and are determinedly improving their skills in scrutinising information and widening their knowledge. Consequently, governors are now much more effective and governance has strengthened.
  - Governors are clear about the allocation of pay awards and how the process is linked to pupils' progress. Governors know where the strongest and weakest teaching in the school is found.
  - While they have a general knowledge of how the pupil premium is spent, governors acknowledge that they do not have a precise enough understanding of the difference it is making for individual pupils.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Procedures to keep pupils safe are robust and staff take the right actions to support vulnerable pupils. Staff are appropriately trained and know how to keep pupils safe. However, some of the school's work would benefit from an updated approach. Leaders should ensure that the culture that is evident in the school is clear, for example, by ensuring that the website reflects the school's practice.

### **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment** requires improvement

- Teaching is not consistently good across all subjects, including science, geography and citizenship. A lack of high expectations for least-able pupils has led to slow progress. While there are now strong signs of improvement in teaching, there are too many instances of weaker practice. This results in too much variation for pupils, especially when temporary staff are covering for absent colleagues or unfilled vacancies.
- A new system for tracking pupils' progress is embedding, but the information it gives teachers is not being used to help pupils improve. Teachers do not take enough account of pupils' prior learning or steps needed to reach their goals. This means that some disadvantaged and White British pupils, and those who have special educational needs or disability, do not have their learning sufficiently well structured to ensure that they progress rapidly.
- At times, teachers do not check frequently enough pupils' understanding; this means that teachers do not pick up pupils' misconceptions and this slows their progress. In addition, teachers too often allow poor-quality work to go unchallenged.
- Most teachers give pupils feedback on their work in line with the school's policy. This is evidently helping pupils make strong gains in their knowledge and was seen to be particularly effective in history and English. However, this practice is not consistent and not all teachers insist that pupils act on the advice they are given in a timely way. As a consequence, pupils miss out on opportunities to develop their knowledge.
- Sometimes teachers do not make the purpose of activities clear and this means that pupils are not clear about the links between what they are doing and what they are learning. This is particularly the case for least-able pupils.
- Relationships are strong and teachers have developed pupils' self-confidence through a supportive climate. Teachers display strong subject knowledge and this enthuses pupils. Pupils respond well and appreciate the help their teachers give them.
- In the most successful lessons, teachers use questioning skilfully to deepen pupils' knowledge and check their understanding. However, the impact of questioning is variable. In some classes, teachers ask questions which do not encourage pupils to speculate, or require a one-word response which does not develop pupils' thinking.
- Teaching in the 16 to 19 study programme is generally effective. Teachers modify their lessons to pick up on questions raised by pupils or in response to poorly answered test questions.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare requires improvement

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- While there has been some improvement in attendance, it is not high enough for certain groups of pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs or disability. Rates of persistent absence are improving in all year groups; individual cases are well known and support plans are in place.
- The school's work on safeguarding is secure but it is not well promoted to those outside the school. Information on the school's website is general in nature and does not give information about the school's own approach to safeguarding.
- Pupils benefit from well-structured tutor time which develops pupils' numeracy and literacy skills, as well as affording them opportunities to discuss current affairs and plan events together, such as charity fundraising.
- The school's 'no phones' policy is adhered to well. Pupils do not use their personal telephones during the working school day. Pupils accept the reasons for the policy, and appreciate how it helps keep them focused on their learning while at school.
- Pupils have opportunities to develop leadership, such as becoming 'transition buddies'. These pupils have received training to enable them to support pupils as they move from Year 6 to start at the school.
- Pupils are aware of keeping healthy, and were engaged in planning activities for a forthcoming 'Sports Relief' event, including menus for healthy lunches.
- Bullying is rare and pupils are confident it would be dealt with swiftly by staff should it occur. Pupils are tolerant and all groups of pupils get along together well.
- Leaders make arrangements to ensure that the small number of pupils who are educated off-site are kept safe. Regular liaison keeps the school well informed about the attendance and behaviour of this group.

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils conduct themselves well around the site, negotiating the narrow staircases with consideration. They are polite and welcoming.
- In the vast majority of lessons, pupils behave very well. They are keen to learn, respectful of adults and their peers, and listen to one another attentively.
- Leaders have ensured that the school's behaviour policy is consistently applied. Pupils are clear about the sanctions and rewards which are used judiciously to promote positive attitudes to learning. There is very little disruption to learning in lessons, and where it does occur it is dealt with swiftly and effectively by teachers. The exceptions to this occur with temporary staff who do not follow the school's systems.
- Pupils wear their uniform smartly. They take pride in their work and their books are neat and well presented. The carpeted corridors are free from chewing gum and litter because pupils respect their environment.
- Different groups of pupils mix well together. They are highly supportive of one another; as one pupil commented, 'We make sure no one is left out.'

## Outcomes for pupils requires improvement

- Pupils' outcomes are not good. In 2015, the examination results at GCSE were not good enough in English and mathematics. Gaps between disadvantaged pupils' progress and others were too wide.
- Lower-ability pupils do not progress quickly enough in science because they are not sufficiently challenged.
- In English, mathematics and many science lessons, progress is improving for most pupils. The school's information indicated that the gaps for disadvantaged pupils are closing and evidence from lessons shows this is the case in the best lessons. However, these gaps are still too wide, especially for pupils whose attendance is low.
- School leaders are aware that some White British pupils harbour low aspirations and are falling behind their peers. Leaders are ensuring that a focus on progress encourages these pupils to aim high, rather than settling for 'good enough'.

- In the best lessons, teachers give pupils precise guidance on what to do to make their work better, and this leads to pupils making rapid progress. Pupils work hard to improve and secure gains in their understanding.
- In lessons and through targeted intervention sessions, pupils with English as an additional language make strong progress as a result of effective support from skilled teaching assistants.
- Pupils who enter the school with low levels of literacy make good progress as a result of sustained and well-structured support to improve their reading skills. They develop secure strategies to help them decode words and further their understanding of language.
- In the past, the school's forecasts, based on tracking, have not been consistently accurate. Leaders are addressing this but not all middle leaders are skilled enough to ensure that teachers are using the information they have to best effect. This is particularly the case in Year 9 where new assessment practice is still embedding.
- Leaders have ensured that a strong reading culture has been developed and this has led to pupils reading widely as well as confidently out loud in class. Many pupils who were reluctant readers now enjoy opportunities to read.
- Provision for the most able is improving as teachers are responding to the leaders' focus on this group of pupils. Improvements in teaching in English have led to high achievements for the most able in Year 11, with 26% of pupils gaining A\* or A grades in a recent GCSE English Literature examination. These pockets of excellence now need to be shared more widely.
- Pupils who attend the school's alternative provision, the Focus Centre, make good progress on their planned programmes. The centre opened this year and it is too soon to show the impact of this provision on pupils' progress once they are integrated back into their lessons.
- The small number of pupils who attend alternative provision at West Sussex Alternative Provision College make reasonable progress on their specialist courses but did not gain good GCSE passes in 2015.
- Pupils are very well prepared to take their next steps. Leaders have developed links with local universities through a widening participation scheme and pupils make visits from Year 8 onwards. A careers fair allows pupils and their parents to find out about a wide range of employment and educational opportunities. Independent advice and guidance are given to support pupils in making appropriate choices, building on the work the school has done to raise aspirations and widen their horizons.

## 16 to 19 study programmes

## requires improvement

- Leaders of the 16 to 19 study programme are not interrogating the information they have about learners well enough to understand which learners need additional help to improve. The learners are well known and cared for but their academic requirements are not known. This means that the specific needs of learners are not catered for well enough, because leaders do not know how groups of learners are progressing.
- Some learners began A-level courses from relatively low starting points. Not enough has been done to support them to make up ground or identify strategies to help them to keep pace with their peers.
- Strong teaching was seen in English, philosophy and physical education but the quality of teaching, while stronger overall than in the rest of the school, is still variable. Teachers take too little account of learners' prior learning. Learners tend to make stronger progress on vocational courses, although in 2015 100% of learners gained A-level pass grades.
- Leaders know the learners well and have engendered a 'can do' attitude in the sixth form, raising aspirations and building confidence in their abilities. Last year, for example, a learner won the school's first place at Cambridge University, and increasing numbers are being accepted on university courses.
- Individual learners are monitored and their progress tracked but this system tends to be reactive, rather than anticipating needs and planning to avoid dips in performance. Teachers give freely of their time to help learners, and learners are confident that their teachers are always on hand to give extra guidance.
- Most learners are self-assured and independent learners. However, some learners are not getting the structured guidance they require to help them develop the key skills required. For example, some learners are not clear about how to take notes in lessons and leaders need to do more to help learners develop effective study habits.
- Learners have opportunities to develop their leadership through being prefects and members of the school council. They act as role models for younger learners and are smartly dressed in business attire.

- Learners' wider development is enhanced by opportunities to act as sports leaders. Learners are also engaged in a mini-enterprise running their own refreshment concession.
- Fifty per cent of learners who retook English GCSE in 2015 gained at least a grade C. In mathematics, lessons are not always effective as learners are working on problems they do not understand and the lessons do not help them to move forward. Leaders are aware of the problem and there are plans to re-organise these sessions.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	126071
<b>Local authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10009948

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1032
<b>Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes</b>	159
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Angela Daniels
<b>Headteacher</b>	Rob Corbett
<b>Telephone number</b>	01293 420500
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.ifieldcc.w-sussex.sch.uk">www.ifieldcc.w-sussex.sch.uk</a>
<b>Email address</b>	<a href="mailto:office@ifieldcc.co.uk">office@ifieldcc.co.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	9–10 January 2014

## Information about this school

- The school is a larger than average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs or disability is well above the national average.
- An above-average number of pupils are eligible for the pupil premium (extra funding provided by the government).
- A very few pupils attend off-site provision at West Sussex Alternative Provision College.
- The majority of pupils are of White British heritage but there is an above-average percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. More than usual numbers of pupils speak English as an additional language.
- A small number of pupils attend lessons in the school's own alternative provision, the Focus Centre.
- The school did not meet the government's floor standards in 2015, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11.



## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 48 lessons, 11 of which were jointly observed with senior staff. Inspectors visited the school's alternative provision, the Focus Centre.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders and middle leaders, teachers, including newly qualified teachers, pupils and governors, as well as a representative from the local authority and the headteacher of a supporting school.
- A wide range of documents were scrutinised, including safeguarding procedures, the school's information on pupils' performance, records relating to behaviour and attendance, minutes of governors' meetings and self-evaluation policies.
- Inspectors attended assemblies and tutor periods and met formally and informally with pupils. They scrutinised books belonging to a sample of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils.
- Inspectors considered 52 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View.

## Inspection team

Helena Read, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Martin Brown	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Murphy	Ofsted Inspector
Caroline Walshe	Ofsted Inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted). 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.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted)

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 and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, 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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
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 2016

