

Woodlands Education Centre

Park House Farm Way, Havant, Hampshire PO9 4AJ

Inspection dates

11–12 October 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	Require improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Leaders have not been effective in making all the improvements required at the time of the previous inspection, due to changes in staffing.
- Actions to tackle weak teaching have not been decisive enough; as a result, teaching across the school still requires improvement.
- Leaders do not share their skills and knowledge with each other sufficiently well to have a positive impact on pupils' achievement.
- Teaching does not challenge pupils to achieve as much as they could.
- Systems to assess and track pupils' progress are not implemented consistently well, and therefore expectations are often too low.
- Additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is not used effectively.
- Outcomes for pupils over time are not sufficiently good in the key areas of English, mathematics and science.
- Attendance is low compared to all secondary schools nationally.
- While the school equips pupils with skills for life and the next stage of their education, it does not offer a broad enough range of academic and practical subjects.
- Leaders and members of the management committee do not take sufficient account of the views of parents and pupils. This is because the school does not have effective systems in place to collect these views.

The school has the following strengths

- The recent appointment of new assistant headteachers has increased the pace of change. The headteacher now has the necessary support to make the improvements that are needed.
- The management committee members have a wide range of skills and expertise that allow them to challenge leaders to make the necessary improvements.
- Leaders are successful in ensuring that more pupils are positively reintegrated into mainstream schools following their time at Woodlands.
- While behaviour still requires improvement, pupils, staff and the local authority report that it has improved significantly in recent months, due to higher expectations from leaders. Pupils are now ready to learn and be challenged.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management so that it is at least good by:
 - ensuring all leaders work together regularly, making better links between their areas of responsibility, so that there is a positive impact on pupils' achievements and well-being
 - rigorously addressing the remaining weaknesses in teaching
 - developing the curriculum so that it meets the academic, as well as practical, social and emotional needs of all pupils
 - making sure that plans for improvement are tightly focused on the expected outcomes for pupils, based on their different starting points
 - developing a clear strategy to spend additional funding for disadvantaged pupils (especially children looked after by the local authority) when it is received so that it improves the academic outcomes and aspirations of these pupils
 - finding suitable opportunities to regularly seek the views of pupils and parents about the quality of the school's provision.
- Rapidly improve teaching, learning and assessment so that it is at least consistently good by:
 - ensuring that assessment information is used well to plan challenging tasks for all pupils
 - building on pupils' improved behaviour so that lessons include opportunities to develop, consolidate or apply their knowledge, skills and understanding well.
- Raise aspirations and improve outcomes for all pupils, including the most able and/or disadvantaged pupils, by:
 - setting challenging targets based on their starting points
 - insisting that all teachers have the highest ambitions for all pupils
 - ensuring pupils attend regularly so that they are able to make good progress in their learning, including when attending alternative provision.

An external review of the school's use of the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and management may be improved.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The headteacher has not shared his ambition for pupils sufficiently well with the school community. Improvements to the quality of teaching have been limited. This is because the headteacher's time and energy have been focused on managing numerous staff changes and a rapid decline in pupils' behaviour since the previous inspection.
- The recent appointment of two new assistant headteachers has helped to stop the decline in pupils' behaviour. With the headteacher and the other assistant headteacher, there are now four experienced and capable senior leaders who each have a depth of knowledge and many individual strengths.
- Each senior leader has made clear recent improvements in their area of responsibility; however, they are not yet working together closely enough for this to lead to improved outcomes for pupils. For example, leaders responsible for attendance and teaching and learning have not made the link between pupils' non-attendance and lack of progress.
- Recent developments and leaders' increased understanding about the importance of setting ever-higher ambitions are starting to address remaining weaknesses in teaching. However, leaders' current written plans for improvement do not focus sharply enough on improving the progress that pupils make from their starting points.
- The curriculum does not provide a wide range of subjects; for example, there is no formal teaching of humanities and science has only just become compulsory at key stage 4. Aspirations in terms of academic achievement are not high enough. However, the curriculum has strengths in relation to preparing pupils for the next stage of their education and for life in modern Britain. This is because it places a high level of importance on pupils' social, moral, cultural and emotional development.
- Historically, the school has neither claimed nor received funding for its disadvantaged pupils from their other schools. Similarly, the school has not claimed all the available funding for children who are looked after by the local authority. This means that leaders have not planned and implemented a clear strategy to spend this money to raise standards for disadvantaged pupils.
- Self-evaluation is accurate. Leaders know that there is a lot of work to do and are taking the right steps quickly, following a period of turbulence. Each of the assistant headteachers has had a recent impact on making improvements in their area of responsibility. For example, they have individually: led a rapid crackdown on poor behaviour and set higher expectations, introduced an assessment centre to get to know new pupils exceptionally well, and, finally, led and managed the effective use of home tuition and small-group work for the most vulnerable pupils.
- Improved links with the Havant Federation provide more opportunities for teachers to receive training and professional development with mainstream colleagues.
- Staff can see the improvements that leaders are making and broadly support them. However, leaders do not do enough to find out what pupils and parents think about the school, and how it can be improved.
- The local authority provides extensive support to the school. Some of the impact of this work on improving teaching has been lost due to previous issues with staffing and

behaviour. The support is planned to remain in place as leaders continue to make improvements.

Governance of the school

- Governance by the management committee is a relative strength of the school. Members of the management committee have relevant skills, are astute and challenge school leaders to make necessary improvements. Visits to the school by members of the committee focus on the right things, such as safeguarding and the quality of teaching. Members provide precise feedback to leaders about what needs to be improved further.
- Members of the management committee are aware that the school's curriculum lacks breadth and that they need to be more insistent on obtaining information from leaders about the progress that groups of pupils are making from their starting points.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Within the school there is a culture of safety because each pupil is known as an individual and has an adult they can talk to about any issues that are challenging or worrying them. Pupils grow to trust the staff and know that they will help to keep them safe.
- Those adults who are responsible for safeguarding lead regular and timely training for other staff and ensure that there is a good partnership with other agencies. Leaders are not afraid to challenge partners from other agencies when they believe their decisions are not in the best interests of a Woodlands pupil.
- Case studies show that those pupils who are at most risk, including from child sexual exploitation and extremism or radicalisation, are well protected by staff. Records for these pupils are detailed and well organised, and comply with statutory requirements.
- While inspectors were assured that all pupils are safe at school and at any alternative provision, some record-keeping and administrative procedures relating to the welfare of pupils, school trips and staff training could be improved to demonstrate that this is always the case.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching often focuses on compliance in terms of completing simple tasks rather than moving learning forward by developing and extending pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Inspectors observed a lack of challenge in many of the lessons that they visited. Pupils' workbooks confirmed that this is typical, especially for the most able pupils.
- Pupils also told inspectors that their work is not challenging enough, especially if they are hoping to catch up with their peers when they return to mainstream settings.
- Teaching in mathematics sometimes relies on pupils having to complete too many similar questions or calculations. There are not enough opportunities to solve challenging problems.
- Despite extensive support from local authority consultants to help improve teaching, especially in English and mathematics, it is still not consistently good.

- The school has historically collected a lot of assessment information; however, it is not used precisely to plan suitable learning tasks for pupils. Neither is it used to set pupils challenging targets based on what they achieved before they joined Woodlands.
- Current systems to track how well pupils are doing are not used consistently well by teachers and do not set high enough expectations. As a result teaching is not enabling pupils to make good progress.
- There are positive and encouraging relationships between teachers and pupils throughout the school. Many of the lessons seen by inspectors were good-humoured. On the whole teaching is stronger in English than in mathematics and science. An initiative to improve reading is encouraging some boys to read more frequently and apply their skills in other lessons. However, not all teachers encourage this consistently.
- The very new addition of an assessment centre has the potential to help improve the quality of teaching. When pupils join the school they now have assessments over a two-week period to find their strengths and gaps in knowledge. The first pupils to use and leave the assessment centre have settled into the main school well because teachers have a secure understanding of their ability.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare requires improvement.
- Plans intended to keep pupils safe are rigorous. Risk assessments for visits, such as the one to Brighton that took place during the inspection, are robust. However, not all risk assessments for alternative provision are sufficiently well tailored to meet the precise needs of the pupils who attend the school.
- The pride that pupils take in their work varies greatly. Some work in books is scruffy and much is incomplete. Conversely, some pupils take great pride in their writing, art work and technology products. Some pupils like the new school uniform.
- Pupils told inspectors that bullying, including the use of racist language, is dealt with well by adults as soon as it happens. They also said that they feel safe in school and know that the boundaries that are put in place by adults are there to help them.
- The school works well with other agencies and uses visiting speakers such as the police, school nurse and a professional footballer to help pupils to take responsibility for their actions in and outside of school.
- Opportunities to play competitive sports such as indoor football with different groups of pupils and teachers during communal breaktimes contribute well to pupils' physical and social well-being. Learning to cook healthy dishes in food technology and work with school nurses to help pupils give up smoking encourages more healthy lifestyles.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Attendance is low and despite a very small recent improvement it remains far below the average for secondary schools nationally. The school's systems to analyse and follow up absence, including at alternative provision, are developing. However, there is not yet a clear link being made by school leaders between the attendance of pupils and

the standards they are able to achieve in their learning.

- Many of the pupils who attend Woodlands do so because they find it difficult to manage their own behaviour. Higher expectations from school leaders in the last six months have led to an increase in fixed-term exclusions. Pupils understand that the new rules leading to these exclusions, such as mobile telephones and cigarettes not being allowed in school, are necessary.
- Staff told inspectors that there have been significant improvements in behaviour in lessons in the last six months, and as a result pupils are now ready to learn. This is confirmed by school records of behaviour. Staff feel well supported by school leaders when managing challenging behaviour.
- Adults manage behaviour around the centre well, they are proactive to prevent behaviour from escalating. They calmly and firmly marshal pupils who are not doing the right thing, and consequently the use of physical intervention is very rare.
- Some pupils are increasingly able to reflect on their behaviour when they are calm.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- As pupils join and leave the school at different times it is not possible to compare progress over time to other schools nationally. However, the school does not use the assessment information it does hold sufficiently well to make informed judgements about the progress that pupils make from their different starting points.
- Progress in lessons is variable because assessment information is not used well by all staff to help them plan.
- Pupils' workbooks show that progress in mathematics is slow for different groups of pupils, including the most able pupils. GCSE achievement in mathematics was disappointing in 2016. The majority of pupils did not achieve their targeted grade, even though some of these targets were not sufficiently challenging.
- Science has only just been reintroduced as a core subject. Leaders are beginning to monitor how well pupils are doing in this key subject.
- The progress of disadvantaged pupils is not tracked closely enough by the school's leaders. They have not made effective use of additional funding to support this group.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make variable progress, like their peers.
- When attending alternative provision, pupils are making progress in terms of their engagement with instructors but it is too early to see academic progress or the sustained development of new practical skills.
- In English some more effective teaching is leading to improving rates of progress. GCSE outcomes in English have improved over time, with more pupils now achieving a pass. The most able pupils are entering and achieving passes in English language and literature.
- An increasing number of pupils are now sitting formal examinations, showing that aspirations are starting to rise. For example, all Year 11 pupils have been entered for GCSE English and mathematics in the last two years.
- Outcomes for some of the pupils in practical subjects such as hospitality have continued to improve at GCSE.

- A greater proportion of pupils are successfully returning to their home school following their placements at Woodlands. Similarly, pupils who were previously only tutored outside of school by Woodlands staff are now able to attend the school because of the progress they have made.
- A large majority of pupils who left the school in the summer of 2016 are now following appropriate courses at college, serving apprenticeships or are in employment.

School details

Unique reference number	115840
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10012284

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

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	103
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Headteacher	Martin Hall
Telephone number	02392 442 530
Website	www.woodlandsec.org.uk
Email address	a.gibbs@woodlands.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	8–9 July 2014

Information about this school

- Woodlands Education Centre is a pupil referral unit for boys and girls aged 11 to 16.
- The majority of pupils are dual registered at other secondary schools within the Havant area. Less than one tenth of the pupils are registered only at Woodlands because they have been permanently excluded from one or more other schools.
- At the time of the inspection just over a third of pupils were being educated in the main 'centre' of the school because they are at risk of permanent exclusion or have been permanently excluded. These pupils are taught by subject specialists.
- A different group, comprising around a third of pupils, attend a separate unit in a different part of the building for pupils who are emotionally vulnerable. These pupils attend part-time and are generally taught by the same teacher for all subjects on a daily basis.
- The remaining pupils are either taught individually off-site by the school's own tutors or are currently attending the school's new intervention and assessment unit as they have only been referred to Woodlands recently.

- The school uses part-time alternative provision for some pupils at South Downs College, Park Community Enterprise Apex Centre, Fareham College, Chichester Harbour Conservancy and Billie's Lake at the Acorn Centre.
- Pupils have individual timetables according to their needs and many only attend the school part-time while they are reintegrated into education.
- Over half of the pupils are disadvantaged and more than one in 10 are cared for by the local authority.
- The school is a member of the Havant Federation.
- Since the previous inspection 10 of the 13 teachers are new, including two assistant headteachers who joined the school in April 2016.
- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in lessons throughout the school and also made a number of shorter visits to classrooms. All of the observations were carried out with the headteacher or one of the assistant headteachers. Inspectors also looked at a representative sample of pupils' work from the last year.
- Her Majesty's Inspector met with the chair and four other members of the management committee and also met separately with a representative of the local authority. Inspectors also held meetings with the headteacher, assistant headteachers, the staff responsible for safeguarding and attendance, a group of subject leaders and a newly qualified teacher.
- An inspector met with a small group of pupils formally and another heard pupils read both in lessons and separately. Inspectors also spoke with pupils informally around the school. None of the pupils completed the online survey.
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of school documentation, including documents relating to safeguarding, attendance, the achievement of pupils, the work of the management committee and the quality of teaching.
- There were insufficient responses to the online Parent View questionnaire. Inspectors did note one free text comment from a parent and an email sent to Ofsted by a parent shortly after the inspection.
- Inspectors considered two responses to the staff survey. Her Majesty's Inspector also took account of four emails he received from members of staff shortly after the inspection.

Inspection team

Lee Selby, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Jenny Boyd

Ofsted Inspector

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