

Shirley High School Performing Arts College

Shirley Church Road, Croydon, Surrey CR0 5EF

Inspection dates

16–17 January 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- Pupils' overall progress by the end of key stage 4 is well below the national average. Too many pupils leave the school without good grades in English and mathematics.
- In 2017 and 2018, disadvantaged pupils in Year 11 made much less progress than their peers in other schools.
- The effectiveness of teaching is not improving quickly enough, particularly in mathematics. Achievement in mathematics remains weak.
- Evaluation of the quality of teaching by leaders is overgenerous. In subjects with weak outcomes, leaders have not provided effective support.
- Teachers do not insist on high standards of spelling and presentation. This means that basic spelling errors are repeated.
- Expectations of pupils are not high enough, particularly for the most able. As a result, they are not routinely challenged.
- In too many lessons, time is not used effectively, particularly at the beginning of lessons. Where this is the case, teaching lacks challenge, and pupils make less progress.
- Questioning does not consistently stretch pupils. This is because teachers do not probe pupils' understanding or attempt to deepen their thinking.

The school has the following strengths

- This is an inclusive community where pupils feel safe and happy. Leaders' arrangements to safeguard pupils are effective.
- Students in the sixth form make good progress and are well supported in their applications for university and employment.
- The school's personal development curriculum, supported by the assembly and tutor programme, is very effective. It prepares pupils well for life in modern Britain.
- Attendance is above the national average. Systems to support behaviour are effective and have led to a reduction in the number of behavioural incidents. Exclusions are rare because pupils at risk of exclusion are well supported.
- The performing arts continue to make a rich contribution to the school's culture and ethos. Pupils enjoy music, drama and dance lessons, as well as the performances and shows that take place throughout the year.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve leadership and management by ensuring that:
 - governors and leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment
 - lines of accountability are clear so that prompt and effective support is provided in subjects where pupils do not make enough progress, such as mathematics.
- Improve pupils' outcomes by ensuring that:
 - support for disadvantaged pupils enables more of them to leave with good achievement in English and mathematics
 - most-able pupils are routinely challenged in lessons so that they can achieve well across the curriculum
 - pupils make good progress in mathematics at key stages 3 and 4.
- Improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school by ensuring that:
 - teachers have high expectations of all pupils and make good use of time, so that pupils spend more time on demanding work
 - teachers insist on high standards of spelling and presentation
 - teachers use questioning to check the understanding of all pupils and to deepen pupils' thinking.

An external review of governance 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

- Leaders' evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning is overgenerous. It does not pay enough attention to outcomes in each subject, particularly at key stages 3 and 4.
- Leaders have a clear understanding of the purpose of the pupil premium grant and can account for their spending of it. However, this additional funding has not led to improved outcomes for disadvantaged pupils.
- Where standards in subjects have declined, leaders have not successfully supported middle leaders to bring about improvements in outcomes. Staff training and development do not consistently lead to better teaching and learning.
- Pupils do not make good progress in mathematics at key stage 3. Leaders are reviewing the amount of time allocated to each subject at key stage 3 to ensure that pupils are adequately prepared for key stage 4, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- Leaders' actions to improve standards of behaviour are paying off. The number of behavioural incidents has declined, as well as the number of internal seclusions and fixed-term exclusions. Permanent exclusions are extremely rare.
- Leaders show a deep commitment to nurturing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They have created an inclusive culture where pupils show high levels of respect for themselves and each other.
- Leadership and line management of the sixth form is very effective. Leaders are ambitious for students and possess very good knowledge of each student in the sixth form.
- Leaders oversee a vibrant extra-curricular programme. Pupils value this provision and take particular pride in the regular concerts and shows. Participation in lunchtime and after-school clubs is not routinely monitored and evaluated, so leaders cannot be sure that these activities are accessed by all groups of pupils.
- Leaders communicate effectively with parents and carers. Parents believe strongly that their children are happy at the school. Parents and pupils value the school's nurturing and inclusive culture.

Governance of the school

- Governors do not provide rigorous challenge to school leaders. Governors have accepted leaders' overgenerous assessment of the quality of teaching, learning and assessment.
- Governors acknowledge the recent decline in pupils' progress and achievement at key stage 4. However, their analysis of this has not been thorough. This is because it has not focused on pupils' performance in different subjects. Governors have not taken effective action to improve standards.
- The governing body has not paid enough attention to pupils' achievement in key stage

3. As a result, weak progress is not addressed effectively by school leaders.

- Governors make a positive contribution to the school's culture and ethos, for example by meeting with student leaders. Governors have a good understanding of the local context and support the school in enabling pupils to stay safe, in school and in the community.
- The chair of governors has assigned governors to liaise with individual senior leaders, which helps them to develop a better understanding of the school's priorities for improvement.

Safeguarding

- Arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Senior and middle leaders have a good understanding of the needs of their pupils and the local context. Pupils in all key stages said that the school values their safety and well-being.
- School leaders make good use of external partners to provide specialist training and support, such as the 'Prevent' duty training with key stage 5 students.
- Pupils take an active role in sustaining the school's culture of safety and well-being. A significant proportion of sixth-form students are trained to mentor younger pupils. Anti-bullying ambassadors are visible and effective.
- Record-keeping and documentation relating to safeguarding are robust and effective. Leaders and governors responsible for recruitment have received appropriate training.
- Parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, reported that their children feel safe and happy in school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- There is inconsistency in the quality of teaching between different subjects. Strengths in physical education (PE) and the creative and performing arts are not replicated in English, mathematics and science, particularly mathematics.
- In mathematics, pupils' assessment information at key stages 3 and 4, combined with the work they have produced throughout the year, indicates that too many pupils do not make strong progress.
- Expectations for the most able pupils are not high enough. In too many lessons, pupils do not have the chance to produce high-quality work based on their own thinking and understanding.
- Expectations of pupils' spelling are not high enough. Basic spelling errors, including errors relating to key words, are not routinely identified by teachers during lessons. This means that they are repeated by pupils.
- Time is not used effectively in many lessons. Too much time is spent on administrative tasks, such as handing out books and copying objectives. This is particularly the case at the start of lessons. This reduces the amount of time available for more demanding tasks later in the lesson.

- Questioning does not consistently provide challenge for pupils. In some lessons, teachers rely on the contributions of a small number of pupils. In others, pupils are invited by the teacher to pass challenging questions to another pupil. As a result, pupils are able to opt out of dialogue and discussion. When pupils do provide a response, opportunities to develop their thinking are limited. This is because teachers do not routinely probe or deepen pupils' understanding.
- Teaching in PE and the performing and creative arts is effective because routines for learning are well established. As a result, pupils discuss their learning with maturity, and use subject-specific language with confidence.
- Support for pupils in key stage 3 with very low levels of numeracy and literacy is improving, and enables these pupils to catch up with their peers. Teachers and leaders responsible for literacy and numeracy make good use of pupils' performance information and adapt the support provided in line with the progress pupils make.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Teachers and leaders have high expectations for pupils' personal development and have established effective routines to support their welfare. For example, mobile telephones are not allowed in school. Pupils willingly comply with this policy because they recognise the benefits it brings.
- Pupils have confidence in the school's response to bullying. Anti-bullying ambassadors receive effective training, and communicate well with teachers to prevent bullying and support their peers.
- The assembly and tutor programme is carefully adapted to suit different year groups and key stages. Tutor periods are purposeful and valued by pupils.
- Pupils have a good understanding of diversity, and describe the school as a place where they can develop as individuals. They have faith in the guidance that teachers and leaders provide on staying safe, in school and beyond.
- Pupils in all key stages are able to serve their school community, and a good number take up this opportunity. Sixth-form students play a particularly active role in school life, for example by supporting teachers with lunchtime supervision. Approximately one third of sixth-form students are trained to mentor younger pupils.
- Pupils receive effective guidance on careers and higher education. This guidance makes good use of external partners, particularly in the sixth form. Disadvantaged pupils receive good careers support, which ensures that teachers and leaders understand their intentions and provide effective support.
- Some pupils do not take enough pride in the way that they present their work. This prevents them from using their books to support their future learning.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- Attendance has consistently been better than the national average in recent years, and remains high this year. Levels of persistent absence are below the national average.
- Pupils are punctual and move between their lessons in an orderly and purposeful manner. Pupils conduct themselves sensibly at break and lunchtimes.
- Systems to support behaviour are effective. They are understood by pupils and well used by teachers. Trainee teachers feel supported by colleagues and leaders. Disruption in lessons is rare, and there is consistency in the quality of behaviour across year groups and subjects.
- Permanent exclusions are extremely rare. The use of fixed-term exclusions and internal seclusion is declining. Pupils at risk of exclusion are well supported. Recently established on-site provision for vulnerable learners helps to keep pupils in school.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- During the last two years, outcomes at the end of Year 11 have declined. Across the curriculum, pupils make less progress than pupils in other schools. This results in too many pupils leaving the school without good grades, including in English and mathematics.
- Disadvantaged pupils, who make up more than one-third of pupils, make much less progress than their peers in other schools. Their progress is particularly weak in mathematics. This means that the majority of disadvantaged pupils leave Year 11 without a good grade in mathematics.
- Most-able pupils are not routinely challenged in lessons. As a result, they do not make progress towards attaining the highest standards and achieving as well as they should across the curriculum.
- Leaders recognise that outcomes have declined and have taken steps to address this. For example, leaders have modelled successful practices from the sixth form and applied these to key stage 4. However, actions taken to improve standards in mathematics have not had an impact, and progress remains weak in mathematics.
- Students in the sixth form make good progress and reach high levels of attainment from their starting points. Students make especially good progress in applied general qualifications.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the progress of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They use staff training effectively to help teachers support pupils with SEND. However, the impact of this training on pupils' outcomes is not well evaluated.
- Teachers responsible for supporting pupils who start secondary school with low levels of literacy and numeracy provide effective support for these pupils. The impact of this support is carefully monitored and evaluated.
- Reading is promoted throughout the school, including by a group of pupils known as the 'Literary Alliance'. The vast majority of pupils read regularly, including in tutor time.

16 to 19 study programmes

Good

- The sixth form is led and line-managed with tenacity. Leaders possess a good understanding of key stage 5. They combine this with a deep commitment to each student. As a result, the vast majority of students achieve well.
- Progress in the sixth form has exceeded national rates of progress for several years, and this continues. This means that students leave with good grades, which enable them to secure places at sought-after universities and employers.
- Sixth-form students play an active role in school life, for example by assisting leaders with supervision at break and lunchtimes, and mentoring younger pupils. Students receive good training and support to enable them to be successful in this work.
- Sixth-form teachers and leaders are ambitious for their students. They pay close attention to students' career intentions, and support them in achieving them. For example, they enable students interested in medicine to attend lectures at a top London university. Established partnerships with external providers ensure that all students receive effective support for their next steps.
- Expectations of students are high and they are expected to work hard. Students make good use of study periods to work independently, and they are frequently set challenging homework.
- The sixth-form curriculum provides a broad range of courses. Teachers and leaders know each student well. This enables them to provide useful guidance on courses and tailor the curriculum to meet the needs of each student.
- Teachers possess excellent subject knowledge. Students value the personalised guidance they receive from teachers, and the fact that teachers are accessible and supportive outside of timetabled lessons.
- Sixth-form leaders use the 16 to 19 bursary fund to provide effective support for disadvantaged pupils. Leaders' knowledge of all students ensures that all groups make good progress.
- Support for pupils' welfare is effective. The pastoral programme is well suited to the needs and experiences of 16- to 19-year-olds, and students know who to speak to when they require further support.

School details

Unique reference number	137772
Local authority	Croydon
Inspection number	10058865

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

Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,068
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	176
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mike West
Headteacher	Nigel Barrow
Telephone number	020 8656 9755
Website	www.shirley.croydon.sch.uk
Email address	sbm@shirley.croydon.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	19–20 January 2016

Information about this school

- Shirley High School Performing Arts College is an average-sized secondary school. It is an academy, run by Shirley High School.
- Shirley High School is governed by a governing body.
- Two thirds of pupils are from a range of minority ethnic backgrounds.
- A third of all pupils speak English as an additional language.
- An above-average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium funding.

- An above-average proportion of pupils have special educational needs. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is in line with the national average.
- The local authority's secondary hearing resource centre is based at the school. It is managed by the Croydon Sensory Support Service. A small number of pupils are currently on roll at the school as part of the hearing resource centre.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed learning in 51 lessons in all year groups, as well as attending two assemblies and 10 tutor periods.
- Many visits to classrooms were made jointly with school leaders.
- Inspectors met with groups of pupils and students from key stages 3, 4 and 5. Inspectors also spoke with pupils and students informally throughout the inspection.
- Pupils' work was scrutinised in lessons, and, separately, with senior leaders.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders and members of the governing body. Inspectors also met with teachers and pastoral leaders.
- Documentary and other types of information were evaluated, including evidence related to safeguarding, pupils' assessment information and school evaluation.
- Inspectors scrutinised records relating to the quality of teaching and the school's website, including information about extra-curricular activities.
- Inspectors took account of the 66 responses to the online Parent View survey, the 34 responses to the online pupil survey and the 85 responses to the staff online survey.

Inspection team

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Kim McWilliam	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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