

Inspection of Ivybridge Community College

Harford Road, Ivybridge, Devon PL21 0JA

Inspection dates: 14–15 January 2020

Overall effectiveness	Good
------------------------------	-------------

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Sixth-form provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The previous 'outstanding' judgement reflected the school's overall effectiveness in October 2013 under the relevant inspection framework at that time.

The new judgement of 'good' reflects the current inspection framework as well as any changes at the school since the last inspection.

The school has not been inspected for six years, which is longer than the five-year maximum interval between inspections. Changes in school effectiveness may have happened at any point in that period. The long time between inspections is because the law changed in 2011; it made outstanding schools exempt from routine inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Through the curriculum, pupils develop strong knowledge and skills in a breadth of subjects. Leaders have established a wide array of subjects, such as criminology, sociology, drama and dance. Pupils embrace the opportunities at the school to enrich their knowledge and understanding of the world through clubs and activities. For example, pupils enhance their skills and techniques in gymnastics, drama and music to a very high level.

Pupils are proud to attend Ivybridge. There is a calm, purposeful learning environment throughout the school. In class, pupils are attentive, aspiring to achieve well. There are rare instances of pupils misbehaving during breaktime and lunchtime. Most pupils state that bullying is not an issue at the school. Pupils told inspectors that staff resolve issues quickly if they occur.

Sixth-form students are very appreciative of the opportunities offered at the school. The curriculum enables them to study a breadth of subjects as well as prepare them for life beyond school. Students volunteer for charities and gain valuable work experience.

The support for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is variable. Leaders have revised the provision for pupils with SEND extensively and it is embedding throughout the curriculum.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders are very reflective. At all levels, they drive improvements to the quality of education with commitment and understanding. Governors share leaders' quest to ensure the academic, social and emotional success of all pupils.

Leaders have constructed a very broad curriculum. This is tailored to meet the evolving needs and interests of pupils. Leaders are accurate in their identification of areas to improve and act swiftly and appropriately. Curriculum leaders are well supported to revise the teaching and learning of their subjects. The mathematics and geography curriculums are examples of excellence. In these subjects, pupils develop exceptionally strong knowledge and achieve well above national figures at the end of key stage 4. However, leaders know that a few subject curriculums could be further strengthened to ensure that they meet these exacting standards. For example, leaders have revised the modern foreign languages curriculum to strengthen pupils' knowledge at key stage 3 with emerging success.

Leaders are improving the quality of teaching and learning. Staff receive high-quality training, enabling them to reflect on and hone their teaching. Pupils recognise this in the teaching they receive. Pupils take pride in their work. Teachers address pupils' misunderstandings well. Teachers focus on securing pupils' knowledge and skills so that they can move on to more complex concepts.

Leaders have created an exciting suite of extra-curricular options. Parents and carers, in the online questionnaire Parent View, were overwhelmingly positive about this provision. Leaders reflect on and improve this provision year on year. Pupils can select from a range of activities, such as trips to the battlefields in Belgium or London theatres. Pupils also experience the natural wonder of Dartmoor through outdoor learning. Sporting opportunities are manifold. Leaders and staff ensure that all pupils have access to sport. For example, gymnasts of all abilities have many opportunities to develop their skills

Leaders and staff prioritise reading across the curriculum. The library is well-resourced, and pupils enjoy reading.

Leaders are acutely aware of the potential barriers facing disadvantaged pupils. They tailor support so that pupils can access the curriculum successfully and confidently. Sixth-form students mentor Year 11 disadvantaged pupils to raise aspirations and help them with their study skills.

Leaders have identified inconsistencies in the provision for pupils with SEND. They have revised the ways in which leaders, teachers, parents and pupils work together. As a result, leaders are resolving the inconsistencies in the quality of education for pupils with SEND.

In the sixth form, students can study a wide range of subjects. The quality of teaching and learning is enabling students to achieve well. Students receive highly effective guidance regarding their next steps into higher or further education, work or apprenticeships. Consequently, the proportion of sixth-form students entering work or continuing in education is above the national figure.

The curriculum supports pupils' social and emotional development well. Pupils learn about the importance of democracy and citizenship. Many pupils take on important roles and responsibilities. Leaders pay great attention to the well-being of pupils and staff. Pupils discuss issues of great political and social relevance such as social media and addiction with insight. Staff told inspectors that they felt well supported in the school and were proud to work there.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders are vigilant in ensuring the physical and emotional safety of pupils. They provide staff with up-to-date safeguarding training to help them identify whether a pupil may be at risk. Staff pass any concerns about pupils' well-being to safeguarding leaders swiftly and appropriately. Leaders are tenacious in ensuring that pupils at risk receive the best possible support. Leaders keep detailed records of their work, enabling them to track actions to help keep pupils safe.

Leaders make sure that the school's recruitment procedures are fit for purpose. Pupils feel well cared for.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some subjects, curriculum changes have not been implemented as effectively as in others. This means pupils' learning can vary across the curriculum as a whole. Leaders need to ensure that the teaching and learning in all subjects are as coherent and well sequenced as in mathematics and geography.
- The provision for pupils with SEND is too variable. This has an impact on some of these pupils' learning. Leaders need to ensure that teaching supports the best possible education for pupils with SEND more consistently.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	136336
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10119176
Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	2,448
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	400
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Iain Grafton
Principal	Rachel Hutchinson
Website	www.ivybridge.devon.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	15–16 October 2013

Information about this school

- Ivybridge Community College is larger than the average-sized secondary school. It is part of the Westcountry Schools Trust.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We deemed the inspection a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

- We held meetings with the principal, senior and subject leaders, six members of the governing body (including the chair of governors), the chair of the board of trustees and the chief executive officer of the Westcountry Schools Trust.
- We evaluated the quality of education by looking in detail at the teaching of English, mathematics, science, art, geography, history and modern foreign languages. We discussed the curriculum design with leaders, conducted lesson

visits, scrutinised pupils' work and spoke to pupils and teachers about the respective subject curriculums.

- We evaluated the effectiveness of safeguarding at the school. The school's single central record was reviewed. We met with the designated safeguarding lead, scrutinised safeguarding documentation (including a sample of case files), and spoke to pupils and staff.
- We met with pupils to discuss their views and talked informally to pupils about the school.
- We listened to pupils read and discussed their views of reading.
- Inspectors considered the views of 267 parents who responded to the Ofsted parent survey.
- Inspectors spoke to teachers during the inspection to gather their views about the school.

Inspection team

Susan Aykin, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Matthew Collins	Ofsted Inspector
Colin Logan	Ofsted Inspector
Benjamin Houghton	Ofsted Inspector
Matthew Barnes	Her Majesty's Inspector

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 children looked after, 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.

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/, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2020