

Inspection of Brockhill Park Performing Arts College

Sandling Road, Saltwood, Hythe, Kent CT21 4HL

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 October 2021

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 Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils benefit from an aspirational curriculum, including in the arts and the opportunity to study three science subjects. They enjoy an extensive range of enrichment and extra-curricular activities, as well as opportunities to study rural science at the school's award-winning farm.

Pupils are safe and feel safe because of the well-considered safeguarding arrangements. The pastoral curriculum actively supports pupils' welfare and well-being. Pupils are proud ambassadors of the school. Behaviour in class and around the school is good. Pupils look after one another and show respect for other's opinions.

Pupils are polite and demonstrate positive attitudes to their work. They confirm that bullying is rare and, if it does happen, it is dealt with immediately. Pupils are rightly proud of their community service and their achievements through The Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme.

The school maintains very strong and beneficial links with local industries and universities. This ensures pupils are well supported in their career aspirations. The academic sixth form offers an ambitious, relevant and well-planned curriculum. Expectations are high and students receive support and encouragement so that nearly two thirds of them go on to a university of their choice.

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

Leaders and governors have high expectations of all pupils. Senior leaders have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Self-evaluation and development planning are incisive. Governors enhance their good knowledge of the school through their visits and discussions with staff and pupils.

The curriculum is ambitious. Breadth of learning is offered through the performing arts specialism, as well as the 'Great Outdoors' provision which makes good use of the school farm. Depth of learning is ensured through effective mapping of content in subject planning. Teachers' subject knowledge is very strong, so the curriculum is generally taught well. Their checks on what has been learned make sure that pupils retain important knowledge and, as a result, achieve well. This is particularly true in subjects such as English, science, drama, and personal, social and health education (PSHE). However, in a few subjects, leaders are still working with staff to refine and strengthen the delivery of the curriculum and the ongoing assessment of pupils' learning.

The curriculum is designed effectively to cater for and support all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These pupils achieve as well as their peers. This is because they are well known and supported successfully through regular reviews, peer mentoring, counselling and a carefully considered timetable.

Leaders encourage pupils to study a wide range of subjects, including those that count towards the English Baccalaureate qualification. However, the extensive range of subjects on offer means that the take-up of modern foreign languages is not as high as leaders would like.

The school makes very good use of the available library space to encourage reading, especially for pupils in key stage 3. Reading and writing are actively encouraged across all subjects, especially history, geography, citizenship and PSHE. Mathematics is promoted in science, geography and technology, as well as the tutorial programme.

Alternative provision is entirely appropriate and suitably monitored. Vocational courses in construction and hairdressing are provided for pupils, who benefit considerably from such provision. Placements are meticulously checked to ensure they are registered. The school undertakes regular checks on safeguarding, attendance, staffing and pupil progress.

Most pupils behave well around the school site, showing respect and good manners to teachers, visitors and each other. Leaders' work to improve behaviour has resulted in a reduction in exclusions and behaviour incidents. However, disadvantaged pupils are still excluded more than their peers. The school has developed a number of strategies to better engage these pupils, including subject support, individual counselling and raising aspirations.

Pupils' broader development is supported well through the PSHE, citizenship and assembly programme. The curriculum supports pupils' spiritual and cultural development as well as their understanding of British values. Leaders and staff strongly promote equality of opportunity, as well as tolerance and the acceptance of diversity.

The careers programme is comprehensive and carefully planned, and pupils receive high-quality advice. Pupils hear about a range of career pathways. Courses in other educational institutions are actively promoted. The school successfully enlists the support of former students to talk to pupils about career choices.

Staff are proud to work at the school. They say that they feel motivated, respected and well managed. Staff say that leaders consider their workload, and they feel well protected from bullying and harassment.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The welfare, well-being and safety of all pupils is a priority for the school. All staff receive regular and applicable safeguarding training. They know how to identify risks and what to do if they have any concerns.

The single central record is well constructed and efficiently maintained. Designated safeguarding leads have a secure understanding of their roles and responsibilities. There is an experienced team in place. Safer recruitment practices are embedded in the school.

Pupils confirm that they feel safe and know who to go to with any concerns. They say they receive good advice about safeguarding, especially online safety, relationships, sexual harassment, sexting and mental health.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some subjects are not taught as well as others in the school. This means that pupils do not achieve as highly as they could across all subjects. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is delivered as intended across all subjects, and assessment of pupils' learning used consistently well.
- The number of exclusions and behaviour incidents for disadvantaged pupils is still higher than that of their peers. Leaders need to continue to improve this group of pupils' engagement and raise their aspirations. The progress made to date should be continued to reduce the number of exclusions and behaviour incidents even further.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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	137458
Local authority	Kent
Inspection number	10199770
Type of school	Secondary
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	1391
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	183
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Marion Emptage
Principal	Sonette Schwartz
Website	http://www.brockhill.kent.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	17 and 18 May 2016, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Brockhill Park Performing Arts College is a single-academy trust.
- The school provides part-time alternative provision for some of its pupils. A small number of Year 10 pupils also attend part-time vocational classes at other providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: English, drama, science, geography and PSHE. For each deep dive, inspectors met with subject leaders, looked at curriculum plans, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. The lead inspector met with governors and held a telephone discussion with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors met with the executive principal, principal, middle leaders and other staff. They reviewed curriculum documents, policies and other school documents. Inspectors also spoke with pupils and staff.
- To inspect safeguarding, inspectors reviewed school policies and procedures, the school's record of recruitment checks and other documents.
- Inspectors considered the 73 responses from parents to Ofsted's online survey, Parent View, and the 63 written responses from parents. Inspectors also considered the survey responses from 98 members of staff and 96 pupils.

Inspection team

Paul Metcalf, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Rodin	Ofsted Inspector
Ann Fearon	Ofsted Inspector
Eliot Hodges	Ofsted Inspector
Paul Murphy	Ofsted Inspector

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