

# Inspection of a good school: Hodge Hill College

Bromford Road, Hodge Hill, Birmingham, West Midlands B36 8HB

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Inspection dates:

13 and 14 October 2021

## **Outcome**

Hodge Hill College continues to be a good school.

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

This is a school where leaders expect all pupils to succeed and give them every opportunity to do so. Staff use the school's 'CARE' brand of courtesy, achievement, respect and empathy to help reinforce their high expectations. Relationships between staff and pupils are positive.

Pupils behave well in school. They move between lessons in a calm and orderly way. At break and lunchtimes, pupils play together sensibly in sports activities, such as table tennis. Pupils say that they feel safe in school. They are rightly confident that if problems arise, including bullying, teachers will sort it out.

Pupils achieve well in a range of subjects. Teachers have a strong understanding of what pupils need to know to be successful in their key stage 4 examinations. However, sometimes the curriculum structure in a few subjects does not help pupils to know and remember more long term.

Leaders ensure that pupils have a wide range of experiences at school. There are various extra-curricular clubs and opportunities for pupil leadership roles. Pupils participate in national competitions and events, such as giving a talk at a women's conference.

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

Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. They have a strong understanding of the community they serve and do not allow social disadvantage to be a barrier to success. Teachers, alongside pastoral staff, work hard to ensure that low-level disruption does not interrupt learning.

In most subjects, the curriculum is well planned and sequenced. Subject leaders have thought carefully about the topics pupils study and the order in which they occur. In art and design, for example, pupils are introduced to drawing and printing techniques in Year 7 before moving on to more complex tasks using clay and 3D design in Year 8 and 9.

Teachers are clear about how pupils build on what they know and make connections in their learning. As a result, pupils are enthusiastic about the subject and achieve well. There are similar strengths in the key stage 3 English curriculum. Pupils cover a broad range of texts and study a variety of different topics. In Year 9, for example, pupils look at Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory. Pupils discuss this with confidence and can connect this theory to the texts they are studying.

Reading remains a priority for the school. This year, leaders have introduced an additional English lesson in Year 7 with a focus on reading to help pupils catch up. Pupils also read different books in form time. This is helping to support pupils' interpretations of texts and develop their vocabulary.

There are aspects of the curriculum that are not as strong. Leaders have already started to improve the curriculum in French to increase the number of pupils taking this subject at key stage 4. A small number of foundation subjects are studied in half-yearly blocks in key stage 3. These curriculum structures do not always help pupils to make connections in their learning or know more long term. Pupils study English literature in Year 10 and English language in Year 11 separately, which has a similar impact. In addition, teachers are not covering the key stage 4 curriculum in physical education (PE) as well as they could. Pupils are not actively playing sport on a consistent basis.

Teachers make regular checks on learning to help identify what pupils know and where they require further support. Information from end-of-unit tests is used by teachers to look at where the curriculum could be improved. Pupils value the feedback they receive from their teachers and how it helps them to make progress in their learning.

Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well throughout the school. Teaching assistants are used effectively in lessons to help develop pupils' independence and confidence. Pupils' learning plans are reviewed regularly and amended to ensure that targets are ambitious and help pupils to make progress. Staff are well trained and are provided with all appropriate information to help support pupils with SEND.

Pupils experience a range of activities designed to help prepare them for the future and keep themselves safe. Leaders have worked closely with pupils to find out about their experiences of sexual harassment through a recent questionnaire. This has helped to inform staff training and pastoral sessions with pupils. Leaders have also put in place a detailed careers programme so that pupils are aware of further education or training when they leave school. Pupils receive a variety of talks from external providers about careers, including ex-pupils who can share their experiences of work.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Teachers receive regular training on safeguarding and know what to do if they have a concern about a pupil. The designated safeguarding lead works closely with the pastoral team to provide support to pupils who need it. Leaders have a positive relationship with

external agencies and ensure that any referrals are made in a timely way. Pupils are taught to keep themselves safe through the school's global citizens programme, including information about online safety and how to respect each other. Pupils feel safe in school and know what to do if they have a concern.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- The key stage 4 curriculum in English is not sequenced as well as it could be. Some pupils in Year 11 struggle to recall knowledge about English language from Year 9. Additionally, pupils are not well prepared if they choose to study English literature at key stage 5. Leaders should ensure that the key stage 4 English curriculum is sequenced effectively to help pupils know and remember more long term.
- In a small number of foundation subjects at key stage 3, pupils struggle to remember what they have been taught. This means that they are not well prepared to access further learning at key stage 4. Leaders should ensure that the key stage 3 foundation curriculum is planned effectively to ensure that pupils develop a depth of knowledge and understanding.
- Aspects of the PE curriculum at key stage 4 are not covered well. This means that pupils are not actively playing sport on a consistent basis. Leaders should ensure that that the national curriculum in PE is covered fully so that pupils are encouraged to lead active, healthy lifestyles.

## **Background**

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or outstanding school, because it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that a good school could now be better than good, or that standards may be declining, then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the section 8 inspection as a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in May 2016.

## **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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	103503
<b>Local authority</b>	Birmingham
<b>Inspection number</b>	10199797
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Community school
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1196
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Roy Jackson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Hannah Herrmann
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.hodgehill.bham.sch.uk">http://www.hodgehill.bham.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25 and 26 May 2016

## Information about this school

- The school use two registered alternative provisions.

## Information about this inspection

- 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 focused on the following subjects: English, science, art and design and PE. The inspector examined leaders' plans, visited lessons, looked at pupils' work and talked with pupils about the way these subjects are taught.
- Inspectors reviewed a range of school documents. These included information about behaviour, attendance, the school curriculum and improvement planning. The school website was also checked.
- Inspectors talked to staff and leaders about safeguarding arrangements. They examined how leaders make employment checks on staff and scrutinised further safeguarding records. They also asked how incidents reported by pupils are recorded and analysed.

- Inspectors observed informal times of the day to evaluate safeguarding and pupils' behaviour.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, senior leaders, subject leaders, teachers and pupils. They also talked informally to pupils and staff to gather general information about school life.
- Inspectors considered 54 responses to Ofsted's online survey, Ofsted Parent View, and 12 free-text comments. Inspectors also considered 213 pupils' questionnaires and 43 responses to Ofsted's survey of staff.

### **Inspection team**

Mark Howes, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Claire Price

Her Majesty's Inspector

Graeme Rudland

Ofsted Inspector

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