

Inspection of a good school: Hove Park School and Sixth Form Centre

Nevill Road, Hove, East Sussex, BN3 7BN

Inspection dates:

8 and 9 December 2021

Outcome

Hove Park School and Sixth Form Centre continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils are proud ambassadors of the school. There is a strong community ethos underpinned by positive relationships. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds are valued. They appreciate the support for their welfare and well-being, including their mental health.

Pupils say they feel safe, and they are safe. The school is a calm and orderly place to be. Any incidents of bullying and inappropriate behaviour are dealt with quickly and effectively. The curriculum prepares pupils well for life in a culturally diverse Britain. The student council speaks confidently about overcoming sexism, racism, homophobia and transphobia.

The school's 'Every Child Should' strategy supports the development of the whole child, beyond the formal curriculum. This is highlighted through a wide range of activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. It is also supported through enrichment days focused on topics such as equalities, music and the arts.

Leaders have a strong understanding of the community they serve and do not allow social disadvantage to be a barrier to success. Parents are extremely supportive of the school. They know that their children are happy and safe. One parent wrote 'This was not our first or second choice school, but it is definitely our first choice now.'

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

Leaders and governors have worked together well to ensure that pupils receive a good quality of education. Leaders have a clear vision for the curriculum. Their efforts to improve the curriculum have been effective. They ensure that the curriculum caters for pupils' academic and personal development. Extra curriculum activities and enrichment days provide breadth and wealth to the curriculum.

Leaders have planned an ambitious curriculum that builds knowledge and skills from Year 7 to Year 13 in a logical order. Most pupils study the English Baccalaureate qualification, ensuring breadth and balance. Some areas of the key stage 4 curriculum are covered in Year 9. Leaders make sure that pupils learn the required content of the key stage 3 national curriculum. Option choices are flexible.

Subject leaders constantly review and revise the curriculum to make sure that it fully meets the needs of all pupils. Pupils talk with confidence about their work. Some of the work seen is of a high quality. However, in some books the presentation, quality and quantity of work are inconsistent. Leaders know that the successful implementation of the curriculum is ongoing. They have effective plans to address this.

Staff workload is reasonable and allows time for teachers to carefully plan how pupils will acquire knowledge and skills. Literacy is well supported across all subjects. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They are skilled in using assessment to identify where pupils have missing knowledge. They use assessment well to present their subject in exciting and interesting ways. This helps most pupils to know more and remember more.

There is enhanced provision for pupils with autism spectrum disorder. They attend classes in the main school, where they are suitably supported. Staff carefully tailor the curriculum to meet their needs. Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are achieving better than they did before. The support they receive is developing, but gaps in attainment, attendance and engagement remain.

Careers is taught through tutor time and meets requirements. It supports pupils well in making key choices. At the end of Year 11 about half of the pupils leave to continue their studies at a local sixth form. Others proceed to further education and apprenticeships, but a small number stay on. For these pupils, the sixth form provides a secure and stable place to carry on their studies. Their curriculum is well matched to their needs. They benefit from working in a familiar environment where they are known and where they feel safe.

The personal, social and health education curriculum promotes pupils' personal development effectively. Pupils talk confidently about sessions on equalities, radicalisation, relationships and sexting. Recent content has included visits by local politicians and work with professional sports personalities.

Pupils are expected to be respectful, courteous, helpful and kind at all times. Lessons throughout the school are calm and purposeful. Pupils, especially older pupils, are motivated to learn. Pupils feel safe and well looked after. They say that any incidents of bullying and low-level misbehaviour is dealt with effectively.

Governors are very knowledgeable and very involved. They bring considerable experience to the position. They have received suitable training to carry out their role with confidence. They have a strong understanding of the curriculum and a secure appreciation of safeguarding.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

The single central record is maintained to a high standard. Leaders and governors continually review the school's safeguarding policy and ensure it is pertinent. Leaders work closely with a range of professionals to support pupils and their families. Teachers know what to do if they have concerns. Staff training is regular and of a very high quality.

Pupils say that they feel safe. They are well known to their teachers. They appreciate the advice received on keeping themselves safe, including online safety. They learn about healthy relationships and are well supported in terms of their welfare and well-being. They talk to staff if they have any concerns.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- There is still some variability in the quality of the curriculum's implementation. This means that pupils do not achieve as highly as they could across all subjects. Leaders should ensure that the curriculum is implemented more consistently across all subjects and all years by sharing the very best practice that already exists.
- Disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND are still not achieving as well as their peers. The school has been working hard to narrow the gap, but the pandemic has meant that further work is required. Leaders are aware of what needs to be done and should continue to implement plans to raise pupils' attainment, attendance and engagement.

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 evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, 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 second section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good in February 2013.

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	114607
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	10211528
Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Community
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	1,214
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	49
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Paul Williams
Headteacher	Jim Roberts
Website	http://www.hovepark.brighton-hove.sch.uk/
Date of previous inspection	1 March 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- Hove Park School and Sixth Form Centre is a mixed 11 to 18 school which is situated across two sites. Pupils in Years 7, 8, 12 and 13 are on the Valley campus and pupils in Years 9 to 11 are on the Nevill campus.
- The school has a designated provision for pupils with autism spectrum disorder. The proportion of pupils with SEND is above the national average. The proportion of pupils with an education, health and care plan is well above the national average.
- The school provides part-time and full-time alternative provision for 11 pupils at three registered providers, two other providers and one online provider.
- The school's careers programme meets the requirements of the Baker Clause. That is to say that pupils in Years 8 to 13 receive information about the full range of education and training options open to them, including information about technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

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.
- During this inspection, inspectors carried out deep dives in English, science, history and modern foreign languages. This involved meeting with leaders of subjects, visiting lessons, looking at pupils' work and talking to pupils and staff.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other staff. They looked at the single central record. They reviewed documentation and actions taken to safeguard pupils and support their safety, welfare and well-being.
- Inspectors looked at school policies and curriculum documents. The lead inspector met with governors and spoke to a representative of the local authority. He also spoke to a sample of the alternative providers.
- Inspectors considered 101 responses to the Ofsted online questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View, and a further 95 written responses from parents. They considered the survey responses from 13 pupils and 69 members of staff as well as the school's own surveys.

Inspection team

Paul Metcalf, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Keith Pailthorpe	Ofsted Inspector
Mark Roessler	Ofsted Inspector

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