

Inspection of Brighton Hove and Sussex Sixth Form College

Inspection dates:

6 to 9 December 2022

Overall effectiveness

Outstanding

The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Education programmes for young people	Outstanding
Provision for learners with high needs	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

Information about this provider

Brighton Hove and Sussex Sixth Form College (BHASVIC) occupies a single site in Hove, very close to Brighton City Centre, offering a broad range of A-level subjects and vocational courses.

BHASVIC recruits its growing number of students from over 60 different schools, with approximately half of the students coming from Brighton and Hove, and the remainder from the wider Sussex community. It primarily offers advanced-level courses to full-time students aged 16 to 18.

At the time of the inspection, there were approximately 3,420 full-time students aged 16 to 18. Of these, 2,592 students study purely A-level courses, 42 study vocational programmes and 747 study a mixed programme, with a combination of the two. Thirty-nine students study English as a second language. There were 13 students with an education, health and care plan and three current students in receipt of high needs funding. Eighteen students are children looked after.

What is it like to be a learner with this provider?

Students are courteous and highly respectful of their peers and teachers and enjoy the college community environment. Students understand very well how these values contribute to the positive and inclusive culture at the college. As a result, all students feel that they have the opportunity to express their views, and they value and benefit from listening to the views of others. They are well prepared for life in the diverse local community.

Students behave in a consistently exemplary way, both in lessons and around the campus. Students are highly motivated by the inspiring teaching they receive. They attend their sessions on time, arrive ready to learn and participate extremely well in lessons. Consequently, students enjoy their learning, and attendance rates are high.

Students value the challenging curriculum and the highly effective teaching that enables them to learn valuable new knowledge, skills and behaviours. Students have a warm rapport with their teachers, who they find approachable, which puts them at ease. Consequently, students are able to speak up and to take risks by sharing answers to questions despite recognising that they may not be correct. Students apply their learning successfully in their assignments and course work and achieve ambitious targets.

Students develop excellent independent working skills and take responsibility for their own learning. Students regularly study and complete work outside of lessons, manage their time effectively and know how to evaluate their own work. Consequently, students make rapid progress in their courses.

Students benefit from a stimulating and highly supportive environment that is extremely conducive to learning. Teachers provide highly effective extension sessions, which are attended very well by students. As a result, the large majority of students achieve high outcomes and move on to positive destinations, including highly competitive universities, apprenticeships or employment.

Students rightly feel safe at college. Staff and students do not tolerate bullying and harassment and know how to report concerns if necessary. Students are confident that any concerns raised would be dealt with promptly.

Contribution to meeting skills needs

The college makes a reasonable contribution to meeting skills needs.

Leaders and managers collaborate well with partners to ensure the qualifications they offer contribute to meeting local and national skills needs. They work with the chamber of commerce to identify skills needs, with Brighton and Hove City Council on the city skills recovery plan and with local education providers to ensure there is no duplication of existing specialisms. Leaders have introduced courses to meet emerging needs in the locality, such as English as a second language for young

refugees and asylum seekers. As a result, the curriculum offer is sensible and planned to meet the needs of young people.

Leaders develop effective education and employer partnerships to offer training around emerging skills needs. For example, leaders work collaboratively with other providers as part of the greener Sussex project to develop a range of qualifications for the green economy. A substantial number of students complete an additional level 3 qualification in carbon literacy. As a result, students develop additional skills to meet the evolving demands of their future careers.

Students benefit from university links established by leaders that enable them to actively take part in opportunities such as university taster days, career talks and master classes. These activities build students' confidence and support their next steps, as the vast majority move on to university.

Leaders do not work consistently with employers to inform and evolve the implementation of the curriculum. Leaders and teachers are nevertheless developing relationships with local employers in many curriculum areas to advise students about skills gaps and future career opportunities. For example, a local physiotherapist organisation visits the college twice a year to provide careers talks to students, highlighting skills gaps and hard to recruit roles locally. The students who benefit from these interactions value the sessions and feel more informed about their possible next steps.

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

Leaders are inclusive in their entry criteria despite being oversubscribed. Teachers select local students based on their career ambitions and course choices. As a result, leaders are providing opportunities for students of all abilities and supporting them to achieve well.

Leaders and teachers sequence the curriculum logically and effectively so that students can build on their learning progressively over time. For example, A-level English literature students start with an accessible text that is easy to relate to. This introduces literary terminology before progressing on to more complex and demanding texts, such as the Jacobean play 'The Duchess of Malfi'. As a result, most students make sustained progress and develop their knowledge and confidence quickly.

Teachers communicate new concepts skilfully to help students understand and remember new information quickly and successfully. For example, chemistry students make effective use of the 'Learning Hexagon', with which they visualise the connection of key concepts through the idea of interlinking hexagons. Students create a deep, nuanced understanding of the relationships between complex course content. As a result, students are developing an extensive understanding of the subject over time.

Leaders ensure that staff are suitably experienced and qualified to support all students. For example, managers train staff to provide specialist support for children looked after and students with high needs. Where leaders identify additional gaps, they employ skilled professionals rapidly. Support staff work well with teachers to ensure they are fully aware of students' needs and that they implement the strategies required to support them. As a result, the vast majority of disadvantaged students make progress in line with, or better than, their peers.

Teachers use questioning skilfully to challenge students, including those with high needs, to explore their deeper understanding of the subject and extend and develop their answers effectively. For example, in a Spanish A-level class, a teacher highlighted the lower-level answers but then encouraged students to give the more comprehensive answers that lead to higher marks. Students respond to this well and rapidly develop their analytical skills.

Teachers monitor students' progress effectively. Teachers provide feedback that helps students know what they need to do to improve. They use highly effective support plans with clear targets and provide valuable support sessions to bring about rapid improvement for students. The vast majority of students, including those with high needs, complete their qualifications successfully, and most gain high grades.

Teachers ensure students produce work of high quality and can demonstrate a sophisticated level of understanding. For example, students studying A-level graphic design develop strong skills in using different graphic packages to produce complex animations for printed and digital posters, leaflets, presentations and magazines. Students' work in many cases exceeds expectations and is produced to an industry standard.

Leaders provide sufficient opportunities for students to become active citizens. Leaders work with the regional 'Citizen UK' organiser to build suitable alliances between many local institutions and communities. For example, the local member of parliament visits the college to speak about current affairs and encourage students to become informed citizens. As a result of these activities, students develop a strong understanding of wider society.

Teachers provide valuable opportunities for students to further develop their skills beyond their vocational or academic qualifications. Students studying sport science benefit from visiting a university to use state-of-the-art facilities and be inspired by future learning opportunities in higher education. Students studying A-level chemistry receive effective support to prepare for activities, such as taking part in the Cambridge chemistry challenge. This builds their confidence in applying for courses at Oxbridge and other Russell Group universities. Many students progress to highly competitive courses and universities.

Leaders and managers provide a wide range of enriching extra-curricular activities for students, which include student- and teacher-led clubs and societies. For example, leaders work with local charities to provide students with activities to gain

skills, network and develop their links with specialist employers in the creative and musical industries. Leaders ensure that student participation in these activities is very high, particularly among those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Students benefit from these activities, as they allow them to greatly broaden their personal development and contribute to their community.

Leaders and managers ensure that all students receive effective careers advice and guidance and are prepared for their next steps after college. For example, students receive one-to-one career guidance sessions and attend careers fairs, which help them to understand progression opportunities to university, employment and apprenticeships. Staff use this information very well to place learners in tailored tutorial groups, which focus on universities and college admissions, Oxbridge, medical careers, visual arts and employability and enterprise. The student support, experience and guidance team along with curriculum staff also make very good use of an active and growing alumni, who return to share their experiences. As a result, students are well informed about the breadth of opportunities that are available to them upon completion of their current studies.

Leaders value staff well-being and promote a positive culture of clear and open communication and trust. Leaders promote an ethos of 'high challenge, low threat'. Leaders support staff to develop their pedagogical practice and empower them with the flexibility to plan and teach the curriculum in a way that meets the needs of their students. Staff take pride in their work and are proud to be a member of the BHASVIC community.

Governance is highly effective. Governors are skilled and have very strong and relevant experience, which they bring to their roles. They understand the college's many strengths and challenge leaders appropriately to ensure continued improvements. They have enhanced governance obligations to guarantee they are meeting their statutory responsibilities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders and governors ensure a positive culture of safeguarding. The safeguarding team are appropriately qualified to carry out their responsibilities and have grown to meet the demands generated from increases of referrals post pandemic. Leaders ensure effective processes and practices are employed to ensure students are safe and are provided with the appropriate support through external agencies. Designated teachers support children looked after very well. Leaders ensure that all staff complete safeguarding training and are regularly updated on developments through staff briefing and meetings. Teachers provide students with valuable learning opportunities on topics to keep themselves safe, but not all students recall fully their learning on local risks. Leaders and managers recruit staff safely.

Provider details

Unique reference number	130669
Address	205 Dyke Road Hove East Sussex BN3 6EG
Contact number	01273552200
Website	www.bhasvic.ac.uk
Principal, CEO or equivalent	William Baldwin
Provider type	Sixth Form College
Date of previous inspection	9 October 2012

Information about this inspection

The inspection team was assisted by the deputy principal, curriculum and quality, as nominee, and the assistant principal, student services, as skills nominee. Inspectors took account of the provider's most recent self-assessment report and development plans, and the previous inspection report. The inspection was carried out using the [further education and skills inspection handbook](#) and took into account all relevant provision at the provider. Inspectors collected a wide range of evidence to inform judgements, including visiting learning sessions, scrutinising students' work, seeking the views of students, staff and other stakeholders, and examining the provider's documentation and records.

Inspection team

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