

Inspection of College Hall

West Road, Off Old Wokingham Road, Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 3BT

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 July 2023

Overall effectiveness

Inadequate

The quality of education

Inadequate

Behaviour and attitudes

Inadequate

Personal development

Inadequate

Leadership and management

Inadequate

Previous inspection grade

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils do not learn well in this school. They experience an unambitious and narrowed education which does not help them build knowledge. Pupils are not able to work towards a broad range of qualifications which will help them in their future education and employment.

Pupils' expectations of their learning and behaviour are low. This is because there is a lack of clarity about what is expected from pupils. Many pupils do not show respect, they often use offensive language and frequently do not follow instructions. There are some pupils who want to learn. Unfortunately, their learning in lessons suffers because staff do not challenge the disruptive behaviour of others.

The attendance of all pupils in the provision is poor. This is not improving because pupils and their families are not receiving the right support. The school does not make checks on pupils' safety and well-being when they are absent.

When pupils do attend, their special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are not provided for properly. Many pupils access support in alternative provisions. However, the school has not made the checks required and therefore does not know whether pupils' needs are met at these provisions and, more concerningly, whether pupils are safe.

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

There are low ambitions for what pupils will achieve because the school does not yet know what success for pupils looks like here. The lack of an established curriculum narrows the learning opportunities that pupils should have. There are some subjects where leaders have thought about what pupils need to know. However, this learning is not sequenced clearly, and, subsequently, pupils do not build their knowledge over time. While other learning activities are planned for pupils, these are not ambitious or part of a sequenced whole-school curriculum. These activities neither enhance pupils' personal development nor give them the knowledge they need to access future learning. Rather, they seek to distract pupils and occupy their time.

Teachers do make some use of assessment to check what pupils have learned. However, this is not precise enough to spot gaps in knowledge, especially in reading. While leaders know that most pupils have difficulties with their reading, the school has not checked exactly what these difficulties are. Staff are not trained to support the weakest readers. Due to this, there is not sufficient support to help pupils learn to read accurately and confidently.

All pupils in the school have SEND. Despite this, there is little in place to meet these pupils' needs. This is because the school has not accurately identified what each pupil's additional needs are. Pupils do not have support plans and staff do not check the impact of any help that pupils do get. Teachers have not received the training so

do not have the knowledge to make adequate changes to activities so that all pupils can achieve well.

There is no clear behaviour policy in place at the school. While pupils sign a code of conduct, many do not follow it. Staff do not challenge poor behaviour effectively, partly because the school is not clear about the approach staff should use.

Therefore, pupils do not have positive attitudes to learning. This is made worse by the lack of an engaging and well-taught curriculum.

Collectively, pupils attend school for less than half the time they should. This means that any gaps in knowledge they have are getting wider. While leaders want pupils to attend school more often, there has not been robust action taken to improve rates of attendance in the school. On top of this, the school has been closed at various points in the school year due to staffing difficulties. This is likely to have made the situation worse for families who already find it difficult to encourage their child to go to school.

Leaders have made sure that there is a comprehensive personal, social, health and economics education (PSHE) curriculum in place for pupils. Consequently, pupils are taught about concepts like healthy living and relationships and how to be safe in the community. They learn about careers from Year 7 onwards and all pupils access independent careers advice and guidance. However, there is no coherent plan in place to support pupils' wider character development. Opportunities for pupils to learn about different cultures and traditions are scarce. Moreover, pupils do not experience any other activities that help them to become positive citizens in their community. As a result, pupils are not well prepared for adulthood or for life in modern Britain.

Staff want what is best for the pupils but do not have the guidance or training to provide this. Leaders are equally well meaning and do care about the pupils. However, due to a lack support and experience, the school does not provide pupils with an acceptable quality of education. The new management committee have begun to make effective decisions for the school. This includes the appointment of a new interim headteacher due to start in September.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are not effective.

Staff have been trained to identify signs that a pupil may be at risk. They use the school's recording system well to raise concerns quickly. Safeguarding leads respond to these concerns rapidly and effectively. This is clear to see in the detailed safeguarding records that leaders keep.

Despite this, pupils are at risk because the school's system for checking absence is weak. When pupils are at school, leaders cannot be sure where they are or whether they are safe. This is because there are ineffective systems in place for registering

pupils. In addition, there are not adequate checks on those pupils who are absent for long periods of time. Subsequently, it is not known if these pupils are safe.

The school has not completed the required safeguarding checks on alternative provisions they use. As a result, staff cannot be sure that pupils are safe when attending them.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Safeguarding is not effective because the school does not have adequate systems in place to check where pupils are and whether they are safe. Leaders must take immediate action to ensure that appropriate checks are made on commissioned alternative provisions. Furthermore, there needs to be robust systems in place to check attendance and whether those pupils who are absent are safe.
- There has been much instability in leadership over the past two years. This means that neither leaders, staff or parents have a clear understanding of the vision of the school or how pupils' needs will be met. The local authority and the management committee must secure their plans for the school's vision and admission arrangements so all can have clarity on the precise actions they need to take to improve the weaknesses in the school. Leaders and those responsible for governance must also ensure that staff have the training and knowledge they need to fulfil their roles effectively and support the complex additional needs of pupils.
- There is no provision in place to support the weakest readers in the school. This means that pupils do not have the secure reading skills that will help them access a broad and balanced curriculum. Leaders must put in place a system to identify the specific needs pupils have and provide the supporting activities which will help pupils to become confident and fluent readers.
- The curriculum does not meet the needs of the pupils in the school. It lacks ambition and is narrow. Pupils are not engaged in lessons and do not build knowledge over time. This contributes to pupils' negative attitudes to learning. Leaders need to ensure that there is a sequenced, ambitious and well-adapted curriculum in place that provides pupils with the knowledge and skills they need to be well prepared for the next stages in their lives.
- Planning for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not effective. Furthermore, pupils are not accessing a rich set of experiences to enhance their character development. Consequently, pupils are not well prepared for adulthood or for life in modern Britain. Leaders should consider their approach to supporting pupils' personal development through a cohesive enrichment programme which will provide pupils with the life and employability skills to be successful as they move into adulthood.
- Pupils do not attend school regularly. All pupils are persistently absent. This means pupils are at high risk of not being in education, employment or training. Leaders need to take urgent action to reduce the level of persistent absence and

develop an effective approach to supporting families to improve the amount of time pupils attend school.

- Leaders and those responsible for governance may not appoint early career teachers before the next monitoring inspection.

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.

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	131769
Local authority	Bracknell Forest
Inspection number	10269621
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	30
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Headteacher	M. Bent (see note below)
Website	www.collegehall.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	31 October 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The named headteacher has, due to personal circumstances, not been in school since October 2021. During this time the management committee, as directed by the local authority, has engaged a series of interim leaders to perform this role.
- The school makes use of 10 unregistered alternative providers.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

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

In accordance with section 44(1) of the Education Act 2005, His Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the consultant headteacher, the interim headteacher and other members of the leadership team. The lead inspector met with the chair of the management committee and two other members of the committee. The lead inspector also met with a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in the following subjects: English, mathematics and PSHE. For each deep dive, they discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons. They also spoke to pupils in lessons and during social times.
- Inspectors considered a range of documents, including leaders' evaluations of the school, their school action plans and minutes from management committee meetings.
- Inspectors took account of the views of staff through conversations and the responses to the online staff survey.
- Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements in the school by speaking with leaders, staff and pupils. They met with the designated safeguarding leads to discuss the arrangements for safeguarding. During these meetings, the lead inspector scrutinised records and sampled case files to explore how the school identifies and supports pupils at risk of harm. Inspectors also examined the school's work to recruit and check on the suitability of staff as well as checking the knowledge of staff about their responsibilities.

Inspection team

Nina Marabese, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Linda Jacobs	Ofsted Inspector
Linda Culling	His Majesty's Inspector

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