

Felpham Community College

Felpham Way, Felpham, Bognor Regis, West Sussex PO22 8EL

Inspection dates 7–8 November 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because:

- The achievement in GCSE of boys is uneven, particularly in English and mathematics. The achievement of students in other subjects is not consistently good.
- The most-able students and those who are of lower ability do not consistently make good progress.
- The quality of teaching requires improvement. Too often, teachers do not check on students' learning regularly within the lessons and, as a result, some students do not make good progress.
- Some teachers do not make enough use of information about students' prior attainment to plan and set tasks and activities to meet the needs of all students. The assessment and marking of students' work are inconsistent in helping them move their learning on to the next stage.
- The evaluation of teaching is sometimes too generous and does not always reflect accurately the progress of the different groups of students.

The college has the following strengths:

- The college is improving because of good leadership and management. Swift and decisive action by leaders, with the governing body, has secured greater achievements following the sharp decline in GCSE results in 2012. As a result, teaching is now improving strongly.
- Students feel safe and actively contribute to a range of activities.
- Leaders and teachers have successfully created a positive atmosphere where all students are treated equally. As a result, behaviour and attitudes to learning are good.
- The sixth form is good. Students achieve well and are confident and mature individuals. They contribute well to the college's activities, showing enthusiasm and taking initiative readily.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection team visited 46 lessons, observing 45 teachers. Thirteen lessons were observed jointly with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also conducted a series of further brief observations of learning and a scrutiny of students' work. Many of these activities were conducted with members of the senior leadership team. In addition, inspectors visited an assembly.
- Members of the inspection team discussed with students their views about the college.
- Meetings were held with groups of students, governors, the senior leadership team, staff from the college and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors took account of the 130 responses available on the online questionnaire (Parent View) and the 24 responses to the staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors observed the college's work and looked at improvement plans, records and analyses of students' behaviour, the tracking of pupils' progress and examples of students' work. They scrutinised the college's attendance figures and information about other aspects of the college's work.

Inspection team

Raymond Lau, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Mary Hoather	Additional Inspector
David Wolfson	Additional Inspector
Una Maria Stevens	Additional Inspector
Trevor Woods	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this college

- This college is larger than most secondary schools. The majority of students are from a White British background and speak English as their first language. The proportion of girls in the college is below the national average but rising.
- The proportion of students supported through the pupil premium (additional funding provided to the college for students known to be eligible for free school meals, children in local authority care and children from service families) is average. There are very few looked after children and no students from service families on the roll. The proportion of students eligible for the Year 7 catch-up funding is below average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is average.
- The proportion of students supported at school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs is average. Most of these students have moderate learning difficulties, or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.
- The college meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- A very small number of students from the college are educated off site and study at Chichester College. In addition, a few study at the Alternative Provision Centre, or complete their studies separately at Felpham Community College.

What does the college need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching so that it is consistently at least good by:
 - making sure that teachers use the information on students' previous attainment in order to plan and provide activities that meet their needs
 - frequently checking, within lessons, students' knowledge and understanding of their learning, and adjusting activities as required
 - ensuring that students' work is marked consistently and provides feedback that enables them to respond to the comments and improve their own learning.
- Make sure students' achievement accelerates to become consistently good or better in all subjects, especially for boys, lower-attaining students and more-able students, through:
 - ensuring that the work provided stimulates the interests of these students to achieve better
 - carefully and accurately monitoring and analysing evidence of how well different groups of students are achieving, including in lessons, and acting on the findings.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils requires improvement

- The progress of the boys is not consistently strong across the college. For the past two years, boys' achievements have been uneven. This is particularly the case in English. In 2013, girls rapidly increased their GCSE achievement while boys continued to make slow progress similar to that in 2012. Consequently, the gap in performance between girls and boys has widened. This gap is now closing as a result of better teaching. Nevertheless, there still exists variation in the achievement of boys and girls, given their starting points. Students from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve similarly to their peers.
- Students enter the college with attainment levels that are broadly in line with the national average. In 2012, the GCSE results significantly declined to be below the national average, which represented underachievement. In 2013, there was a significant rise of 17% in GCSE A* to C grades, including English and mathematics, from the previous year and attainment was in line with the national average. Nevertheless, attainment over time is too erratic. Students have been entered early in GCSE mathematics examinations and this has supported their achievement well. This policy has not prevented more-able students from attaining higher grades.
- While the overall proportion of students making expected progress in both English and mathematics is close to or in line with the national averages, there are clear variations in students' performance. Students entering the college with average attainment make good progress in both subjects. Students who enter the college with lower attainment make slower progress in mathematics than their peers.
- Progress in English and mathematics is uneven across the college. Students do not consistently make good progress in all subjects. The most-able students are not always sufficiently challenged. This is because they are sometimes set work that is too easy for them. However, the college's initiative, named 'Make a Difference Academy', offers a range of interventions for these students, which is accelerating their achievements and raising their aspirations.
- There are a small number of students educated off site. They make similar progress to other groups through attending Chichester College, where they follow a vocational course once a week. A very small number study through the Alternative Provision Centre and also make similar progress to their peers.
- The achievement of students varied widely in subjects in the 2013 examinations. Students performed exceptionally well in French, Spanish and the sciences. However, their attainment was below the national average in resistant materials, psychology and graphics.
- The achievement of students supported through the pupil premium is improving. In 2013, these students attained grades in GCSE English and mathematics which were approximately one quarter of a grade below those of their classmates. Some students supported through the pupil premium made better progress than their peers. The college is reducing the variations in students' performance through better monitoring and tracking and putting in intervention strategies. A summer school for newly arriving Year 7 students aids the progress of those supported through the pupil premium specifically.
- The Year 7 catch-up funding is used to provide a range of strategies, including one-to-one tuition, to help those falling behind in literacy and numeracy and these students are improving their achievement. Disabled students and those who have special educational needs have generally made similar progress to their peers, and their achievement is also uneven. There is an

increased focus on a range of programmes such as individual support and tuition; this is beginning to improve the progress they make.

- The achievement of sixth form students is good. Over time, students have attained grades at least in line with the national average in a wide range of subjects. The proportion of students achieving the highest grades at A level is similar to that found nationally. Students make good progress in a range of subjects. In a Year 12 public services lesson, for example, students investigated the characteristics of their personalities and demonstrated good progress when working independently.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Inconsistencies in the quality of the teaching have led to students' uneven achievement within and across different subjects, including in English and in mathematics. Nevertheless, the teaching is steadily improving and, overall, the achievements of students have improved from the previous year. Teaching in the sixth form has got better over time. This is because the teaching is sharply focused on the examination specifications and promotes good achievement.
- Where teaching is not consistently effective, planning does not cater well for the needs of different students. This is because teachers do not always make enough use of what is known about students' previous attainment in their planning. More-able students often carry out similar tasks to their peers, which limits progress. Too often, emphasis is placed on completing tasks and students are not clear about precisely what they should be learning. Teachers do not check frequently on how well students are learning in class.
- The use of assessment is too variable. While there is a policy for marking and feedback, it is inconsistently applied across the college. Frequently, the marking does not help learners improve the quality of their work. There is some good practice in teachers' marking and assessment of students' work. In the work sampled, there were helpful comments and students responded well to them.
- In the most successful lessons seen during the inspection, teachers knew the students' strengths and weaknesses and ensured that planning met their differing needs and challenged them to achieve well. Students knew precisely what they were learning and what was expected by the end of the lesson.
- Although few lessons were observed in which teaching was judged to be outstanding, in a highly successful Year 8 mathematics lesson, lower-attaining students were extremely well targeted. This enabled them to make significant gains in their learning about the key mathematical concepts of mean, median and mode. The teacher's use of humour enabled exceptionally positive relationships to develop. A rich use of mathematical language, linking the concepts to the world of work, brought this lesson alive. Because very well-targeted tasks matched the students' ability, the lesson provided opportunities for them to challenge themselves and achieve more. Students were very clear about how they were to be assessed and, combined with all of the ingredients for learning, this enabled them to make rapid progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The college has successfully created a positive environment and climate for learning. As a result, students are delighted to be part of the school. In the main school, they are polite and courteous and demonstrate good manners. Students' levels of attendance are above the national average and the proportion of those being excluded for serious misbehaviour is declining. Students are treated fairly. The school integrates students who have been moved from previous schools very well into Felpham.
- Students' behaviour and attitudes to learning are typically good in lessons. The parents and carers who completed the online questionnaire (Parent View) agree that behaviour is good. One student commented, 'My teacher really helps me because he works through things step by step.' When given the opportunities in lessons, students are generally active in their learning and some support their peers.
- Students feel safe at the college and are aware of the different types of bullying, including cyber and homophobic bullying. Those who spoke to inspectors said that bullying occurs rarely and when it does staff deal with it swiftly. The Year 11 students who were interviewed stated that both behaviour and safety have improved over time.
- Students, including those in the sixth form, contribute well to the running of the college in taking responsibilities, such as participating in the college council. Members of the sixth form take the lead in raising contributions for a range of charities nationally.
- Behaviour and safety are not outstanding because while attitudes to learning are routinely positive, not all students consistently demonstrate exemplary attitudes in their learning.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher provided decisive leadership in dealing with the college's decline in GCSE results in 2012. The senior leadership team has contributed well to securing a sharp upward rise in the 2013 results. Middle leaders, including those responsible for specific subjects, provide good leadership in conducting a range of monitoring activities and their work is now notably improving students' achievement. The leadership of the sixth form is also effective in raising students' achievements.
- While there are rigorous systems in place for monitoring teaching, the evaluation of lessons is, on occasions, too generous. The judgements made focus too much on the teachers' actions rather than on what the different groups of students are learning and, subsequently, what progress has been made. Nevertheless, the information is used effectively to tailor the professional development programme to meet the individual needs of most staff. The good training is linked to the college's robust performance management systems, which now contribute well to the students' achievements. As a result of these actions, there is now a strong improvement in the quality of teaching.
- The college's self-evaluation is broadly accurate and succinct. There have been good improvements in the college's work, most noticeably in behaviour and safety, and in the quality of teaching.
- The college's target-setting and monitoring processes generally contribute well to students' achievements. While the progress of those students supported through the pupil premium is

tracked, leaders do not always track sharply the progress of other groups of learners.

- The learning opportunities provided are broad and balanced. This contributes well to the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The curriculum enables students to balance academic and vocational studies to meet the needs of most learners. In the sixth form, there is a good range of courses that interest and prepare the students well for their next stages of learning. As a result of targeted support, students' aspirations have increased, as some are applying to more prestigious universities.
- The local authority has provided useful light touch support for leadership and management of the college.

■ **The governance of the college:**

- The governing body has a good range of talent and skills. Members visit the college frequently and are linked to separate departments. The governors hold the college to account, especially for the variations between subjects in achievement in GCSE. They show awareness of how well the college's performance compares to that of other schools nationally. Governors have a good awareness of how teachers' pay is linked to the students' performance and an awareness of the quality of teaching. The governing body is aware of the impact of the spending on pupil support. They attend suitable training and, at the time of the inspection, all statutory requirements, including those for safeguarding, were met.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	126080
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	426548

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,316
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Ken Lloyd
Headteacher	Mark Anstiss
Date of previous school inspection	7–8 December 2011
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