

Crookhorn College

Stakes Hill Road, Waterlooville, Hampshire PO7 5UD

Inspection dates	7–8 October 2015
Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The headteacher and leadership team have been relentless in their efforts to improve provision. Staff share this ambition keenly. As a result, teaching has improved well since the last inspection. Achievement of students is now good.
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good. Students say how much they value the extra support that teachers provide if they are having difficulty. Relationships between students and staff are warm and supportive.
- The college equips students to be thoughtful, caring and active citizens in the college and wider society. Strong spiritual, moral and social development permeates through the college.
- Teachers' questionnaires are extremely positive about the improvements made since the last inspection. The overwhelming proportion of parents agree that Crookhorn College is now good.
- Students' behaviour and attitudes to their learning are good. The college provides well-structured care and support, and is very effective in its approach to keeping students safe.
- The knowledgeable and influential governing body monitors the work of the school very closely and holds the school to account very effectively for the progress students make.
- The curriculum is good, providing a good range of opportunities to ensure that next steps in education, training or employment are successful.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Although the quality of marking and feedback is generally good, a minority of teachers are not sufficiently specific about what students need to do to improve their work and to reach their targets.
- The college does not yet fully meet the needs of the most-able students in all subjects, because they are not sufficiently challenged so that they can achieve their maximum potential.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Sustain improvements in students' progress by ensuring that in the feedback teachers give, they make students aware of the specific steps they need to take in order to reach higher levels of performance.
- Raise the progress and attainment of more-able students by continuing to improve the quality of stretch and stimulation in their learning experiences.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The headteacher has created a very positive ethos at Crookhorn College, which has been significant in driving the progress made in the last two years. An energetic and highly motivated senior team supports him with sharply focused actions. Staff share leaders' vision for the college, readily expressing their pride in being part of a school where 'Respect, Commitment, Responsibility and Achievement' are the cornerstones of their work. Leaders have ensured that students' safety is a priority at all times.
- Clear and accurate self-evaluation and effective improvement planning show what the college needs to do next and why. Governors are involved in checking how much progress the college has made in putting its improvement plan into practice. Leaders are acutely aware that some students, including the most able, do not always make the progress they should. Plans are in place to address this.
- Leaders monitor the achievement of each student carefully and identify appropriate support in progress meetings held with both subject and house leaders. This includes mentoring for individual students and the provision of additional classes. This has helped support the improvements made in students' achievement in Years 10 and 11, in particular.
- Senior leaders have established effective systems to check on and improve the quality of teaching, and they hold subject leaders fully to account for the progress made in their areas of responsibility. Many subject leaders lead their areas effectively. They meet regularly with their line managers, who ensure that they receive the support they need in order to build their leadership capacity. One middle leader commented that, 'Senior leaders challenge us to improve at all times.' This has been particularly the case for the English department, which has been robustly supported during the last two years so that it is now successful. Subject leaders, in turn, hold teachers to account for the progress made by their students.
- An effective group of teachers who pilot different ways of providing better approaches to teaching and learning is having a good impact in many subjects. More work is still to be done to create a greater consistency across the whole school, and leaders fully recognise this.
- Leaders' commitment to equality of opportunity is clear. It translates into actions to support the achievement and welfare of all students. Leaders' use of opportunities to engage with parents and their high expectations of students' social behaviours ensure that good relations are evident across all groups at the college.
- The curriculum in the college is broad and balanced. Leaders ensure that all students have access to a wide range of subjects including the arts, modern foreign languages and design technology. The Key Stage 3 curriculum correctly emphasises the need for students to improve their literacy and numeracy levels, where necessary. For older students, the provision of pathways that match their individual needs and aspirations is making a good impact on individual students' progress.
- The college offers good opportunities for students to develop their skills of creativity, leadership and teamwork, particularly in sport, dance and drama. This helps them develop self-confidence and promotes good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Lessons in personal, social and health education (PSHE) promote the understanding of British values well. Consequently, students are well prepared for life in modern Britain.
- The additional funding provided through the pupil premium is used effectively to support disadvantaged students. Leaders have addressed the weakness in these students' achievement that existed in 2014. They have provided extra classes and individual support for disadvantaged students and this is closing the gap in achievement between this group and their peers. The college knows that it has more work to do so that the gap closes more rapidly across the school.
- Additional provision at a local further education college is effective for a number of students who benefit from greater work-related opportunities. Leaders maintain very careful checks on their well-being, including their progress, behaviour and attendance. The school takes great care to ensure that they are able to follow appropriate GCSE courses. Equally, a very small number of vulnerable students benefit from well-planned placements at a local pupil referral unit.
- The local authority has provided good quality curriculum and leadership support since the last inspection. The school welcomes this, and uses the support successfully.
- Students told inspectors how much they value the high quality of independent careers advice they receive, and the support that enables them to make appropriate option choices and for their next steps following Year 11.

■ The governance of the school

- Governance is effective. Governors bring a range of experience and skills to their role. They know the college well and identify areas of strength and weakness. Governors visit regularly. The informative reports from the headteacher and senior leaders, together with regular presentations from middle leaders, keep governors abreast of progress with the college's development plan.
 - Governors are trained in the analyses of students' performance data and in safeguarding. They track the effective use, and impact, of funds to improve the performance of students identified for pupil premium support, asking challenging questions of senior leaders. This ensures that senior leaders keep to agreed plans for improvement in the college.
 - Governors receive feedback about the quality of teaching on a regular basis from senior leaders. The requirement for all staff to produce good teaching is a prerequisite for pay increases and promotions. They manage the headteacher's performance management with external support. Staff appraisal targets are linked closely to the outcomes of the college's self-evaluation and objectives set out in the college's performance plan.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. As a result, students feel safe and are kept safe at school. Thorough checks are made on all adults who work in the school. Staff are well trained. They fully understand and follow the school's child protection policy. School leaders identify quickly any students at risk of harm.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Teaching is good across the college. Leaders have created a positive climate of sharing best practice. Teachers are encouraged to share ideas and resources through formal professional development training days, a best practice group and in shorter informal sessions. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are highly reflective. They value these opportunities greatly.
- Leaders make regular checks on the quality of teaching, both through lesson observations and checking students' work. Leaders have a very good understanding of the quality of teaching throughout the school. They support those whose performance is not up to the high standards expected.
- Good relationships exist between adults and students and between the students themselves. These help create a good learning environment where it is acceptable for students to work on their own or cooperate with others in groups or in pairs. As a result, most students consolidate their understanding of their ideas. Where teaching is occasionally weaker, expectations of what students can achieve are lower and demands placed on students do not always match their abilities. These teachers do not always expect written work of the highest quality.
- Teachers' subject knowledge is good. They plan work that, in most cases, enables students to learn well in a range of subjects. On a few occasions, the right level of challenge is not provided for all students, especially most-able students. This is, in part, because teachers do not always use questioning well enough to gauge how much students have understood. Consequently, the adaptations to lessons needed to accelerate and deepen students' learning are sometimes not made quickly enough.
- Teaching in English and mathematics is now consistently good. Literacy skills are promoted well in most subjects and reading is encouraged widely across the school. Initiatives to improve the quality of students' writing are proving successful, including in helping students to answer examination questions. The mathematical skills required to complete tasks successfully in other subjects, such as science and geography, are taught effectively.
- In most lessons, students have a good understanding of how well they are doing and what they need to do to make even better progress. This is particularly evident in English, humanities subjects and music. However, not all teachers make clear what students need to do next in order to improve their work, and their advice is sometimes too general or vague.
- Reading is taught well across the college. Weaker readers are supported effectively, including by capable teaching assistants. This helps them to catch up quickly and access the full range of subjects. In most cases, literacy and numeracy skills are promoted thoroughly across the curriculum, as well as in discrete English and mathematics lessons.
- When students are encouraged to take pride and care in their work, their learning is enhanced. Students made better progress when they closely follow a teacher's guidance on the importance of presenting their work neatly and accurately to avoid making careless mistakes. However, not all students take the same care in that presentation.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs receive specific guidance in their learning

mainly in mainstream lessons but sometimes in small-group work. They are taught effectively by subject-based teaching assistants who know students' learning needs well.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare are good

Personal development and welfare

- The college's work to promote students' personal development and welfare is good.
- Students' attitudes to their learning are good across all areas of the college. Students say that they feel safe and that they know how to seek help, should they need it. Students have confidence in their pastoral support systems. They also enjoy the mixed-age tutor groups, with older students relishing the responsibilities they provide.
- Advice and guidance processes for students making study choices for GCSE is very thorough and leads to very few pathway changes. Equally, the number of students taking on A-level courses when they move to post-16 education has grown considerably in the last two years.
- The pastoral care of students is of high quality. Heads of house and form tutors collectively foster strong relationships with students and use appropriate agencies to tailor support to students' needs. This approach, combining academic and welfare checks, prevents academic achievement from slowing. This approach is also evident for students attending courses at the local further education college.
- There is a robust personal, social and health education programme. It has a marked impact in helping students to stay safe and manage any risks. This is supplemented by an effective assembly programme and visiting speakers who cement fundamental British values.
- Safeguarding procedures are very strong. The college has invested well in key personnel who work unflinchingly to safeguard all students. Governors oversee safeguarding thoroughly.
- Careers guidance is of good quality. It starts in Year 7 and students speak highly of it. The college targets pupil premium students with a custom-made programme to raise their aspirations further.
- Attendance has improved over time and it is now in line with national averages. The slight drop in overall attendance last year has seen the school redouble its efforts to reduce persistent absence. The school works hard and with some success to tackle the lower attendance of those eligible for free school meals and some boys.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is good.
- Students are proud of their college. They wear their uniform compliantly and with pleasure, being smartly turned out. The large majority show a positive attitude towards their learning; therefore they are making good progress. The college has a real heart with a personal feel to it. Students have a strong sense of belonging.
- Students uphold the behaviour policy across the college. Leaders have worked hard to initiate consistency in behaviour management approaches and this has borne fruit. Exclusions have reduced since the last inspection, now being in line with national averages.
- Students report that bullying is rare and is quickly dealt with when it does occur.
- The overwhelming majority of both staff and parents believe that behaviour is managed well across the college. Behaviour observed in lessons and during social times is good. Students attending the alternative provision behave well. In a small number of lessons, boys become too passive and drift off, losing concentration, which is why behaviour is not outstanding.
- Students are calm and polite, speak confidently with each other and adults. They conduct themselves well around the building, with behaviour in lessons and during social times being good. They are punctual to both school and their lessons. Behaviour of those attending vocational courses outside the school is also good.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Students achieve well at the college. The proportion of students at the end of Year 11 gaining five or more good GCSE passes, including English and mathematics, is now in line with national averages, having increased well since the last inspection. Given that students typically join the college from below average starting points, this represents good progress.
- Rates of progress in English and mathematics were just above average in 2014. The college's own analysis of 2015 information shows that performance has maintained its upward trend. Current data indicate that this year students are again on track to match last year's national figures at least. In 2014, in a growing number of other subjects, students made better progress than that recorded nationally. This was most obvious in humanities subjects. As a result, students are prepared well for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
- Leaders identified that, in 2014, the gap between the attainment of disadvantaged students and other students in the school was too wide. In mathematics, disadvantaged students in Year 11 were two thirds of a GCSE grade behind others in the school and students nationally. In English, they were a grade behind others in the school and students nationally. There were also differences in rates of progress in both English and mathematics.
- Early data for 2015 outcomes indicate that these gaps narrowed, as the school had predicted. Leaders have focused strongly on this group and the in-school attainment and progress gaps are closing for the current Year 11 and for Year 10. The gap between disadvantaged students and their peers is also closing lower down the school.
- The college's tracking of in-house student information shows that more students are now making at least expected progress across Years 7 to 11. A growing proportion is also making better than expected progress by the end of Key Stage 3, justifying the resolute emphasis on improving students' literacy and numeracy skills in the first two years in the college. Consequently, students in the current Year 11 are firmly on track to attain results that are at least as good as the previous two years, including in English and in mathematics. Boys are now beginning to perform as well as girls, better than was the case historically.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs now make similar progress to others in the college. They benefit from effective support that is matched well to their specific needs.
- The most-able students achieve well and many attain the highest A* or A grades at GCSE level. However, this performance is not yet fully secure, as several of these more-able students are not yet reaching the very high levels of performance expected of them. The college does not enter students early for either English or mathematics GCSE examinations, as leaders believe that all students need to gain maximum benefit from their studies. However, the college does enter some students early for technology exams where they perform well.
- The literacy programme in Year 7 and beyond is having a good impact on improving students' reading proficiency. Students express an enjoyment of reading and the school library is well used. Students' writing is improving effectively with an increase in opportunities to reinforce skills in most subjects, as the result of guidance from teachers' marking of their work.
- The small number of students who follow vocational courses with alternative providers achieve well over time. They make good gains in confidence and in basic skills. This means that they, like other students, are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

School details

Unique reference number	116428
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10002379

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

Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	704
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Gareth Denby
Headteacher/Headteacher/Teacher in charge	Mr Grahame Sammons
Telephone number	02392 251120
Website	http://crookhorn.hants.sch.uk
Email address	grahame.sammons@crookhorn.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	26–27 September 2013

Information about this school

- Crookhorn College is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The college meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for attainment and progress in English and mathematics by the end of Year 11.
- The majority of students are of white British heritage.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below the national average. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The proportion of students supported by the pupil premium is higher than that nationally. The pupil premium is additional funding for those students who are known to be eligible for free school meals and those children who are looked after.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is above the national average.
- Twenty-five students learn on vocational courses at South Down College for up to a day. A very small number of students receive alternative education at Woodland pupil referral unit.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning across a wide range of lessons. Eight lessons were observed jointly with members of the senior leadership team. In addition, the inspection team made short visits to lessons during a number of walks through the school to look at students' work; two of these were carried out with senior leaders.
- Inspectors saw students' behaviour in lessons and around the college throughout the college day. During visits to lessons, inspectors spoke to students about their work and progress, and looked at students' work in books.
- Inspectors viewed registration periods, an assembly, the student council and reading support sessions.
- Inspectors met with three groups of students and had informal discussions with students in corridors, in lessons and during social times.
- A further scrutiny of work was undertaken in which inspectors sampled students' work across a wide range of subjects and year groups.
- Inspectors looked closely at a wide range of documents, including on the college's view of how well it is performing; development planning; policies and procedures; students' progress tracking; records of leaders' monitoring of teaching; arrangements for the appraisal of teachers' work, and staff training. Inspectors also reviewed records relating to safeguarding, behaviour and attendance, as well as a wide range of information available on the college website.
- Formal discussions were held with the headteacher, head of school, senior leaders, five members of the governing body, middle leaders, support staff and a representative of the local authority.
- Meetings were held with newly qualified teachers and those undertaking training at the college.
- Inspectors evaluated the 152 responses of parents to the Ofsted online questionnaire (Parent View). Inspectors also took account of the views of 70 members of the college's staff through the inspection questionnaires they returned.

Inspection team

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David Smith	Ofsted Inspector
John Worgan	Ofsted Inspector

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