

Southampton School Improvement Officer Annual Visit Report 2023 – 2024

School	Woodlands Community College	
Headteacher	Jim Henderson	
Chair of Governors	Kirsten Buist	
School Improvement Officer	John Seal	Date of visit: 24.1.24
Other attendees	Alison Philpott	
Last Ofsted inspection judgement / date	Good/ 13 to 14 September 2022	
Information about the school	• 904 pupils are currently on roll - this is 59 more than at this point last year • 29.1% of pupils have SEND • 3.0% (of NOR) of pupils have an EHCP (included in above figure) • 19 % of pupils have EAL • 48% of pupils are eligible for PP • 51% of pupils are currently FSM6 - this is 2% (of NOR) fewer pupils than academic year 2021/22 • 80 pupils currently have/have ever had a social worker • 31% % of pupils were persistently absent in 2022/23 • 8.2% pupils had 1 or more exclusion(s) in 2022/23 • 2.8% of pupils arrived in-year in 2022/23 • 5.8% of pupils were in-year leavers in 2022/23 • 12 number were EHE leavers in 2022/23 (included in above in-year leavers) • 41 pupils had reduced timetables in 2022/23	

Follow up review recommended: No

Area to develop	Timescale and intended impact
Continue to develop strategies	Autumn 2024. Increase overall attendance to be at least in line with the national average.

to improve attendance. Consider the impact on Year 11 attendance of the greater Year 11 focus on out-of-hours academic support	
Track and monitor the attainment and progress of pupils with SEND and lower attendance as separate strands to other groups	Use appropriate disaggregation strategies to provide leaders and governors with an even clearer picture of the attainment and progress of the different groups including those whose attendance is above 90%.
Ensure that the revised provisions such as ALPs, Harbour continue to positively impact upon individual pupil targets.	Evaluate the effectiveness of these provisions in terms of personal development, behaviour and attitudes as planned so as to provide clear impact evaluation for governors at agreed times of the year.
Check on participation in leadership or extra-curricular sessions at regular points in the year	Each term or half term so that representation can be checked and supported for different cohorts and groups within them. Check Year 11s participation and the potential impact on attendance and personal development of the increased academic extra-curricular coaching.

How evidence was obtained

Meetings were held with:

- Headteacher.
- Assistant Headteachers
- Deputy Headteacher
- Literacy leader
- KS3 and KS4 student group
- SENDCOs
- A governor representative attended the feedback

The following documentation was reviewed:

- SEF
- SDP

A series of short visits to a variety of lessons took place accompanied either by the assistant headteacher responsible for teaching and learning or Deputy head to Period R.

Summary of key findings

- Senior leaders have continued to focus on improving teaching and learning to minimise passive responses from students. There were some effective examples seen of where there have been positive developments.
- The headteacher and senior leaders have maintained a persistent and rigorous approach to encouraging students and their families to respond more positively to increasing attendance rates.
- Students' behaviour and attitudes are very strong and this was observed both during lessons and around the school.
- The quality of education remains strong. Leaders have put in place a range of effective and constructive CPD elements which are being responded to very positively by staff.
- Reducing students' absence continues to be a priority.
- In-school support has been revised into distinct provisions with clear intent and the implementation embedding.

The quality of education

- Senior leaders know their school well and have put in place appropriate action plans to support further improvement. They have an objective and candid view on the 2023 GCSE results and have put in place strategies to give even more support and monitoring for the current year 11.
- The curriculum meets the needs of students and staff are well trained to teach the different subjects that make up a cohesive curriculum covering the required subjects in addition to a strong range of extracurricular activities and clubs. Educational visits are also supplementing students' knowledge and experiences.
- Leaders ensure that there is a strong programme in place to check the quality of staff's work through regular formal and informal visits, discussions about students' progress and a well-resourced and planned CPD programme where staff are able to enhance their skills and knowledge.
- Literacy remains a high priority for the school. The literacy lead has a good grip on what needs to be done to support students' development of their literacy skills. One of the examples seen during the visit was 'Drop Everything and Read' (DEAR) across the whole school. Students were provided with texts relating to the Holocaust in preparation for Holocaust Memorial Day. Students were seen reading fluently, listening to each other, discussing the difficult subject with maturity, and understanding. This topic and approach links well with the elements of discussion and teaching in PSHE lessons.
- SEND continues to be led well. The SEND leads know the students and families and students are supported well. There are a multiplicity of support packages and programmes for the different needs of students in mainstream lessons. The rise in the number of students with SEMH has been managed well with opportunities for students with these needs to find safe places and/or adults. Teachers are aware of the students and the 'pass' system to allow students to find a safe place. Teaching assistants have positive relationships with the students where required and the team of TAs are well managed and deployed.

- The re-developed ALPs, Harbour, LINK provisions are enabling students to remain engaged with the main school appropriate to need and the principles of re-engagement in main school timetables full-time are evident.
- The school uses offsite Alternative Provision appropriately if needed, and undertakes QA to ensure that education and safeguarding processes are in line with their expectations.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported effectively and make good progress.
- The recently appointed assistant headteacher for attainment is developing effective strategies and systems for identifying pupils at risk of not achieving the GCSE grades they have the potential to gain. It was agreed that it would be helpful to analyse the data by disaggregation of certain groups to clarify the progress and attainment those students whose attendance is above 90% and also the progress made by students with SEND.
- Students were generally positive about the quality of teaching and particularly enjoy subjects which include art, P.E. history and computing. Key stage 4 students were particularly positive about R.E. and music. Where they had some reservations occurred where they perceived some inconsistencies in how some teachers responded to students from one lesson to another.
- Period R continues to be well-planned and offer a wide range of knowledge as well as developing further skills such as listening, empathising and debating. This is sufficiently flexible to enable specific issues or world-events to be included as required, building pupil cultural capital and understanding of British Values.

Behaviour and attitudes

- Students behave well in lessons and around the school. In lessons visited, students responded well to teachers' questions and examples of students asking questions and explaining their thinking were seen.
- Students say they think behaviour is good in the school and they understand the clear policies around consequences.
- Students say they feel safe and that staff follow up on any concerns. There were some views about how bullying was dealt with, for example, the anti-bullying ambassadors were not always confident to report what they had seen/heard.
- The ALPS and 3R provision are positively impacting on the development of pupil ability to recognise the need and ability to regulate either supported by an adult or self-regulate. Provisions all are offering the ability to build positive relationships and further develop skills to support the young person either to be successful in school or to be well-prepared for their next phase of education.
- Where needed the school uses direction offsite to improve behaviour – this is limited in nature and safeguarding of these pupils is considered with necessary information shared to support the safeguarding of the pupil where appropriate.
- The strongest attendance rates currently are noted as in Years 7 & 8. These are the year groups who have only had the newer approaches. There is evidence of improving attendance for many pupils and this includes some pupil's improvements that have not yet raised above the severely or persistently absence thresholds. It is recognised by leaders that this remains a priority for the school.
- When reviewing FFT quintile comparative data Woodlands is above in terms of attendance, but there remains recognition this remains a priority to reach National attendance percentages.

- The importance of attendance is evident and well-promoted by leaders. The weekly bulletin and competitions have raised the profile even further.
- Clear accountability exists with teachers and the accurate recording of lesson attendance. Assistant year leaders are being empowered and supported to hold staff to account.

Personal development

- Students continue to find the '3 Rs' helpful relating to relationships and behaviour. There is evidence of the impact of this intervention and this is being used effectively.
- During the visit, a year 8 assembly was seen where the theme was the Holocaust. Students listened well and were appropriately responsive to the sensitive issues that were raised.
- Period R continues to be an effective method of providing enrichment, respect and awareness of a wide range of issues that deepens into greater debate and curiosity as pupils' knowledge develops over time.
- Younger students spoken to were very positive about how their transition from primary schools had been arranged.
- Leaders continue to work hard to address the wide range of mental health issues and maintain and develop strong partnerships with the external agencies.
- Student leadership opportunities are wide and varied and there are ambitious plans to develop this further. Leaders should consider if plans are overly ambitious in terms of timing and should prioritise these so that the excellent plans can be effectively implemented.
- Year 11 have more focus on academic input in after-school opportunities currently so leaders should consider how the other opportunities students will have been motivated by and offered them development in previous years can remain a part of their provision out of hours. The potential impact on attendance in Year 11 of the additional provision should be considered.
- The school has worked to attain Rights Respecting status and leaders are rightly proud of this.
- The drive to achieve School of Sanctuary in this academic year is testament to the commitment leaders have to all pupils and staff.
- Work experience is in place for KS4 pupils and this is managed through Solent LEP.

Leadership and management

- The headteacher and the senior leadership team are dedicated and reflective in how they are responding to the wide range of social and emotional issues and developments in the community. They have responded well to the changing needs of students through a range of practical developments. For example, the establishing of the on-site alternative provision, interventions, strategies to help students manage their feelings and staff training have all helped to develop a calm and productive ethos.
- Leaders continue to be vigilant about what takes place in classrooms. Effective CPD opportunities for staff are in place and match the needs of the school in addition to teachers.
- SEND provision is well managed. All the senior leaders are aware this is an important aspect of the schools' work and is a cross-cutting strand for different responsibilities. It was agreed that some form of tracking and analysis of SEND assessment information and data should be coordinated to provide a separate picture to compare with other groups.
- The leadership of Attendance is excellent. The levels of detailed analysis being undertaken and data considered is enabling strategies to be evidence based and specific targeting of actions is becoming more of a feature of schools work and will continue to reduce absence.

- The leadership of the alternative on-site provision is exciting, there is clear intent and much work has been undertaken swiftly with clarity around the raising of expectations evident.
- The aspects of safeguarding reviewed were effective. The newly introduced role of safeguarding manager is supporting senior leaders well, and new ways of working with Pastoral leads/ HOYs are developing.