

Southampton School Improvement Officer Annual Visit Report 2022 – 2023

School	Woodlands Community College	
Headteacher	Jim Henderson	
Chair of Governors	Kirsten Buist and Ruth Thomas Co-chairs	
School Improvement Officer	John Seal	Date of visit: 1.3.23
Last Ofsted inspection judgement / date	13/14 September 2022	
Information about the school	• 843 pupils are currently on roll ○ this is 54 more than at this point last year • 29.7% of pupils have SEND ○ 3.0% (of NOR) of pupils have an EHCP (included in above figure) • 17.1% of pupils have EAL • 54.7% of pupils are eligible for PP • 51.9% of pupils are currently FSM6 ○ this is 2.1% (of NOR) fewer pupils than academic year 2021/22 • 85 pupils currently have/have ever had a social worker • 39.6% % of pupils were persistently absent in 2021/22 • 9.4% pupils had 1 or more exclusion(s) in 2021/22 • 4.8% of pupils arrived in-year in 2021/22 • 5.8% of pupils were in-year leavers in 2021/22 • 13 number were EHE leavers in 2021/22 (included in above in-year leavers) • 59 pupils had reduced timetables in 2021/22	

Follow up review recommended: No

Area to develop	Timescale and intended impact
Continue to develop strategies to improve attendance.	Autumn 2023. Increase overall attendance to be at least in line with the national average.
Increase the proportion of lessons in all subjects where students are more practically involved in their learning.	Autumn 2023. Lower levels of passivity are observed.

How evidence was obtained

Meetings were held with:

- Headteacher.
- Assistant Headteacher, teaching and learning
- Deputy Headteacher
- Research and Literacy leaders
- leader of science, leader of humanities and leader of creative arts.
- Assistant Headteacher, attendance
- KS3 and KS4 student groups
- SENDCO

The following documentation was reviewed:

- Curriculum plans
- Subject action plans
- SEF

A series of short visits to a variety of lessons took place accompanied by the assistant headteacher responsible for teaching and learning.

Summary of key findings

- Senior leaders have maintained the focus on improvement following the successful Ofsted inspection in September 2022.
- The headteacher and senior leaders understand what needs to be done to support those students who are not attending as well as they could. They are working with a range of local authority agencies and families to encourage them back to school.
- Students behave well around the school and in lessons. They enjoy school and feel they are safe and looked after by the adults.
- The quality of education is strong and where there are some areas for improvement, appropriate CPD, direction and support are in place. Senior leaders recognise that there are often high levels of passivity in some subjects. The plans to develop more active approaches are in place. Where subject leaders and their teams are overcoming this issue, they are being deployed to support their colleagues.

The quality of education

- Senior leaders have an accurate view of the quality of education in the different subjects.
- The curriculum is well planned and meets the needs of pupils. Leaders adapt the curriculum where appropriate.
- Leaders are able to provide effective challenge and support for those teachers who require additional professional development. There are a variety of methods of employing other coaching colleagues and providing opportunities to observe and discuss effective practice in stronger departments.
- The assistant headteacher for teaching and learning oversees a strong programme of monitoring and evaluation including departmental reviews where leaders check that lessons are meeting the requirements of the '3 Rs' Respect, Responsibility and Resilience.

- There is a strong ethos of research-based learning and curriculum development. Most teachers engage with these projects to further their professional skills, knowledge and understanding and the school has strong links to SCITTs.
- Literacy is a whole school focus which supports different subjects for example in science there are discrete science specific literacy sections in the slides teachers present to students to support a better understanding of subject specific language. To encourage students' interest in reading leaders have planned activities such as the 'Masked Reader' during world book week.
- Leaders are aiming to strengthen performing arts in the school. For example, dance has been brought into performing arts from PE in key stage 4. There have been variabilities in the quality of music and drama, although the technical aspects of music appear to be more popular. Through emphasising the '3 Rs', leaders are hoping to help students to become more confident in performing. Stronger aspects in performing arts include the choir and 'dance live'
- During the learning walk, students were seen during their reading sessions which are heavily emphasised in the timetable and – teachers CPD. Students' behaviour was calm and polite. There were several examples of where teachers are providing information and lessons which match students abilities and needs but the responses from students were low-key and passive. This is an area leaders are aware of. They are beginning to provide training and information for teachers about more stimulating and curiosity provoking approaches. There are also plans to further develop students' Oracy skills next year.
- Lessons are well structured and are designed to encourage students to be 'self starting' when they arrive in class. The aim being for students to take responsibility for their learning. This is emphasised through activities such as 'Do now'. Students are provided with knowledge organisers for each scheme of work. In these organisers, students have access to key vocabulary and information to help their independent learning.
- Personal, social and health education (PSHE) lessons are a key part of the curriculum and timetabled like other subjects rather than only tutorials. There is a PSHE lead, a progression map and subject plans. The passive nature of many students is challenged through providing opportunities for them to speak about aspects that are interesting to them.
- Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are supported well. Teachers are expected to provide lesson plans which include those students who require additional support. There are many examples of where middle leaders are ensuring lessons are adapted for students.
- Careers advice is a strong aspect of what the school provides students. This underpinned in the 'science and careers' strand which is based on a 'real world' approach. Older students that were met with felt they are provided with appropriate advice and guidance about their next steps.
- The curriculum is based on age related expectations. The pathways in key stage 3 are tracked by leaders to gather accurate information about where pupils are in comparison to what is expected of them. These progression pathways continue through into key stage 4.
- Support for students with SEND is strong and there are plans to increase the development of the alternative learning provision and support resource (ALPS) attached to the school. The aim being to become even more inclusive in supporting those students with SEMH difficulties.
- Pupils who speak English as an additional language are supported well across the school.

Behaviour and attitudes

- Students behave well in lessons and around the school. They sit attentively in lessons and are respectful and polite.
- Leaders are introducing approaches to encourage students to be less passive during lessons. Teachers use a range of strategies including cold calling and a no hands up approach to answering questions.

- Appropriate rewards and sanctions policies and procedures are in place and students know, respond well and respect them. Students say they think behaviour is good in the school and they understand the clear policies around consequences.
- Staff are expected to be present during students' entry and exits to lessons. Parents are communicated with through an app which instantly informs them of detentions and off site directions to other schools in a local reciprocal arrangement to provide respite opportunities for students to reflect on their attitudes.
- Students say they feel safe and that staff follow up on any concerns. They like the rewards system and feel the sanctions are fair and appropriate when applied.
- The suspension figures are lower compared to others in the local authority. Information is compared to the national average and regularly analysed.
- Leaders provide a group for teachers to help them with behaviour management strategies, these include classroom culture and planning a behaviour for learning working party.
- The '3R room' supports those students who are struggling with aspects of their behaviour and provides them with intervention lessons and a programme of reflection.
- Leaders point to the developing relationships data which suggests incidents and truancy are improving.

Personal development

- Students are provided with opportunities to take on roles of responsibility. Students think the '3 Rs' approach helps them in how they behave towards each other and think about others.
- Youngers students are supported well in their start at secondary school through nurture groups.
- Students are supported well and leaders are keen to develop wellbeing strategies and support for the more vulnerable students.
- Different groups of students are monitored closely and discussed during senior leadership meetings.
- Leaders have noted an increase in mental health concerns including anxiety which in some cases has an impact on attendance. The support for students is in place including the educational psychology service.
- The school is working with another local school on 'team around the schools' approaches. This strategy involves services such as educational welfare officers, social care and police.
- Those students who are finding it a challenge to return to school are supported through the 'link provision' situated in the link room.

Leadership and management

- The headteacher has a strong grip on what is going on in the school. He has set a clear direction which is ably supported and driven by the senior leadership team.
- All senior leaders know and understand the challenges facing the school and have appropriate action plans and activities in place to develop the school further. The strong work the school does was recognised by an Ofsted inspection in the autumn term 2022 which resulted in the school improving its judgment to 'good'.
- Senior leaders have not sat on their laurels since the inspection. A vigorous programme of improvement is in place, including the promotion of better student attendance, inclusion and more active lessons to minimise the passive nature of many students.
- Senior and middle leaders carry out a well organised programme of visits to lessons, data analysis and discussions with staff to ensure that students are making the right amount of progress. The quality of provision in different subjects is checked by both subject leads and senior leaders. The very small

number of areas for development in some subjects is being tackled appropriately through directed CPD including visits to stronger teachers and coaching alongside during lessons.

- SEND provision is managed well and the headteacher has well developed plans to increase teachers' understanding of the best practice in inclusive teaching in addition to developing the role of the ALPS centre.
- The welfare of students is foremost in leaders minds. The care and support offered for the most vulnerable is effective and is a key part of the work of the school.
- Governors weren't met with during this review.