

# Wey Valley College

Southway, Guildford, Surrey GU2 8AA

## Inspection dates

25–26 September 2018

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Outstanding</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Outstanding</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Outstanding</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- The heads of the primary and secondary school, under the direction of the executive headteacher, provide inspirational and effective leadership. They have ensured that the school is a positive, purposeful and calm learning environment where children thrive.
- Leaders and staff work tirelessly to develop pupils' self-esteem. As a result, pupils take pride in their work, uniform and in their well-kept school.
- Teachers and support staff use a wide range of strategies that help pupils to succeed and make the right choices regarding their learning and behaviour. Where required, exclusions are used. However, these occasions are kept to a minimum.
- Pupils say that they feel safe. Staff at all levels follow policy diligently. Senior leaders ensure that they do everything possible to involve helpful support where appropriate.
- Teaching is outstanding, resulting in pupils making consistently strong progress in most subjects from their starting points. Highly effective support ensures that pupils who have low starting points also make strong progress.
- Pupils' conduct around the school is excellent. Staff are skilled at ensuring that pupils' individual behavioural needs are met quickly and the strategies used are refined regularly.
- Parents and carers value the work of the school. They particularly appreciate the significant success it has in improving pupils' attitudes to learning and supporting their well-being.
- Pupils say that they enjoy coming to school. The school's high-quality support helps them to settle quickly when they first join. They say that they have a sense of 'belonging' and of being able to be successful.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced and reflects the needs of pupils very well. A blend of academic and practical subjects engages pupils and gives them many different opportunities to succeed.
- Pupils' attendance is monitored closely. Almost all pupils attend more than they did at their predecessor schools. Leaders are working hard with other agencies to remove barriers that prevent some pupils from coming to school as much as they should.
- The management committee contributes effectively to the school, supporting leaders in their high-quality work. However, the committee's checks on the impact of leaders' actions are not as rigorous as they could be.

## **Full report**

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Ensure that strong and effective links with other agencies lead to ongoing improvements in attendance for those pupils who find it difficult to get to school.
- Further develop the management committee's approach to monitoring, so that it provides consistently systematic challenge to school leaders.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- The executive headteacher has appointed effective heads of school in both the primary and secondary buildings. Their expertise has led to the development and delivery of an outstanding package for the pupils that require alternative provision in the local area. Consequently, rapid improvements in pupils' confidence and behaviour allow them to make consistent and sustained progress from their starting points.
- Leaders have an accurate understanding of the school's effectiveness in all areas. They use this to celebrate successes and identify areas for further improvement. They work hard to ensure that there is an open culture where all staff have the opportunity to contribute to important decisions about school improvement.
- Leaders' analysis of information about pupils' academic and personal development is highly effective in ensuring that pupils' strong progress is sustained. Leaders communicate the relevant information very effectively to all staff so that learning activities are planned well and match the needs of the pupils. Where the need for further support is identified, specific interventions, particularly to improve engagement in learning, are put in place. These contribute to pupils' strong progress.
- Staff are committed and enthusiastic. Highly effective training and support is helping teachers to develop their practice in a purposeful environment. Several staff told inspectors how much they appreciate the great lengths that leaders have gone to in supporting their professional learning needs and considering their workload.
- Leaders use their extensive knowledge of pupils' needs to design and implement an effective school curriculum. They combine work to change pupils' attitudes to learning with access to a broad range of subjects. This engages pupils' interest and encourages them to succeed. Where pupils want to study subjects that are not on the timetable, leaders look to make positive additional arrangements whenever possible.
- The overwhelming majority of staff that completed the confidential staff questionnaire said that the school was very well led and managed. Staff who spoke to inspectors completely agreed. This view was backed up by parents that spoke to inspectors, or made comments on Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire.
- Support for pupils' personal development and welfare is exceptionally well developed by leaders. The clear and consistent focus on positive behaviour, values and reflection supports pupils to understand and moderate their own behaviour choices. Relationships across the school are very strong and an atmosphere of trust flourishes that supports pupils' self-esteem and well-being. Consequently, pupils are prepared effectively for life in modern Britain.
- School leaders now work with the local authority to ensure the suitability of pupils' placements and provision. Leaders are in constant dialogue to develop ways to support pupils within their mainstream schools. This is a valuable attempt to put preventative help in place before attendance at alternative provision is required.

## Governance of the school

- Governance is currently via a local management committee, which meets regularly to consider the school's work. The committee supports school leaders well, offering guidance in areas covered by their expertise. They keep suitable records of their work, although minutes are not always published as promptly as they could be.
- The management committee carries out its governance duties effectively. At times, it does not check or evaluate leaders' actions or specific aspects, such as the school website, as rigorously as it could. Consequently, the challenge provided for leaders is not as systematic as the support offered by the committee.
- The management committee is currently exploring how it will evolve over the course of the year to act across the wider federation of pupil referral units that the school belongs to.

## Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Policies and procedures are in place to ensure that all pupils are safe from harm. School leaders work exceptionally hard to ensure that other professionals support them to keep pupils safe, particularly outside of school.
- Leaders implement comprehensive training so that all members of staff have strong safeguarding knowledge. This knowledge is constantly put to use in practical situations and to provide excellent support to some of the most vulnerable members of society.
- Pupils feel safe and valued in school. They are confident that there are always people to talk with if they have a worry or concern. Additionally, parents feel that the school looks after their children very well.
- The school's record of checks made on the suitability of staff and volunteers to work in a school is kept accurately and meets the requirements of statutory guidance. Leaders ensure that safer recruitment procedures are followed carefully.

## Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

## Outstanding

- Learning is meticulously thought out with each individual pupil in mind. Teachers use their detailed knowledge of pupils' needs and abilities to pitch work appropriately. Teachers are adept at identifying any gaps in pupils' learning and put in place additional teaching that helps them to catch up.
- Staff forge very positive relationships with pupils. Adults provide the support required to ensure that strong progress is achieved across the curriculum. Pupils appreciate this greatly and as a result there is a high level of trust between staff and pupils, which helps them to learn very well.
- Detailed records of behaviour and attainment are used by all staff to refine lesson planning so that it supports the individual needs of all pupils. These records are shared effectively with pupils in ways that help them to value their progress and think hard about what to do next.

- Pupils develop important skills, such as in literacy, highly effectively across the curriculum. Throughout the school, both in the primary and secondary provision, teachers plan learning that sparks pupils' interests and engages their creativity. Pupils respond enthusiastically to this approach and learn well as a result.
- Teachers and support staff consistently remove the fear of failure within learning. This is evident with reading across the age range. Pupils from the primary provision read out loud to inspectors confidently, tackling words that they found challenging by using skills they had learned. Secondary pupils answered questions readily and frequently, and read out loud sections of the work that they had recorded in their books.
- In creative subjects such as music, art and drama, pupils produce a range of high-quality work. Their impressive efforts are celebrated in displays across the school. Pupils are proud of their achievements and ensure that their portfolios are kept in the best order.
- Occasionally, guidance from teachers for support staff is not effective enough at helping pupils to overcome challenges within lessons.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Outstanding**

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Senior leaders work diligently to make sure that pupils are being placed appropriately at the school, and that their needs can be met. The heads of school at both primary and secondary phases are passionate about ensuring that once accepted pupils will be fully supported.
- The school aims for pupils to return to a mainstream school or a specialist setting whenever possible. It is highly effective at achieving this. Bespoke plans are put in place to support individual pupils and help them with the transition process. For example, wherever possible, staff accompany pupils when they move to a new school. This helps pupils to have a settled start and, therefore, the best chance of success in their new setting.
- Staff develop pupils' self-esteem very successfully. From the time they join the school to when they leave, pupils' well-being and confidence grow significantly. They take pride in their work, as shown in the quality of presentation of their books. This pride in their school can be seen in equal measure in the way they wear their uniform.
- Pupils are respectful and tolerant of each other's different views and backgrounds. As a result, incidents of aggressive derogatory language and racial discrimination are very rare. On the very few occasions that this does happen, staff challenge this behaviour quickly and effectively.
- Social time such as break and lunchtime is well managed, safe and engaging. Pupils enjoy interacting with each other positively and make thoughtful choices about what they would like to do during this time. In and out of lessons, pupils show tolerance and acceptance of each other's needs.
- During breaktimes, staff support pupils exceptionally well to help them to develop their social skills. For example, they diligently encourage pupils to use good manners at

mealtimes, including sitting down together to eat. As a result, breaktimes and lunchtimes are calm and orderly.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Most pupils are referred to the school because of poor behaviour in their mainstream schools. Staff go to great lengths to help pupils realise that they have the opportunity to succeed. They achieve this by quickly identifying what pupils need in terms of support for their personal and academic development. As a result, there are sustained improvements in pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning from challenging starting points.
- Pupils behave very well in class and around the school. This is because staff are successful in promoting a calm and courteous atmosphere. Pupils are encouraged to make 'the right choices' and where they fail to do this, appropriate consequences are clearly and consistently applied. Staff use carefully thought-through strategies that encourage pupils' positive conduct.
- Relationships in all areas of school are exceptionally strong. Pupils often work together successfully to overcome challenges, accepting others' opinions and ideas even when these differ from their own.
- Pupils are directly involved with their behaviour targets and reflect regularly on their successes. As a result, pupils who have previously struggled to regulate their own behaviour take responsibility for their actions and show understanding of the impact that they have on others.
- Bullying at the school is rare and on the occasions it happens it is dealt with quickly and effectively. Steps are always taken to help pupils understand the impact of their actions on those around them.
- Attendance for the vast majority of pupils is strong as they attend more regularly than they did at their previous school. Staff work hard to remove any barriers to pupils' regular attendance. Processes to help all pupils get to school every day are increasingly successful, though leaders acknowledge that they must continue to look for innovative ways to continue this improvement, particularly when working with other agencies.

### Outcomes for pupils

### Outstanding

- Pupils start at Wey Valley College having often experienced significant turbulence to their education. This results in gaps in their knowledge and a lack of belief in their ability to succeed in lessons. Staff quickly address these issues, allowing pupils to make very good progress.
- Pupils make strong progress in a range of life skills, and their communication skills improve rapidly. They learn to question in a purposeful, respectful and calm manner. Their progress is tracked carefully and supported through sharing this information regularly with relevant staff.
- Across the secondary age range, progress in English, drama and music is especially strong. Pupils make very good progress in reading across all areas of the primary

school. Staff use skilfully adapted tasks to encourage pupils to read out loud, which helps them gain the confidence to tackle challenging words on their own.

- Pupils develop their basic number skills in mathematics especially well. They have useful opportunities to apply their skills in all curriculum areas.
- Year 11 pupils leave school with qualifications that link well to their prior learning and prepare them well for their next steps in education or training. Staff recognise that high expectations are important and encourage pupils to access GCSE examination and appropriate entry level courses. As a result, most pupils move on to suitable college courses to pursue further studies or training.
- Effective plans are established for primary school pupils to move on to long-term placements, either in a mainstream school or in an identified specialist setting. Leaders take the highest possible care over these plans and ensure that they play a key role in the transition process wherever possible.
- Where appropriate, secondary pupils are given opportunities to return to mainstream schools. When this is deemed not to be in the pupil's best interests, leaders work hard to ensure that a place at a specialist setting can be found, offering comprehensive support at each stage of the process.

## School details

Unique reference number	124923
Local authority	Surrey
Inspection number	10053182

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

Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	5 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	28
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair	Matthew Armstrong-Harris
Executive Headteacher	David Euridge
Telephone number	01483 518212
Website	<a href="http://www.wvc.surrey.sch.uk">www.wvc.surrey.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:info@wvc.surrey.sch.uk">info@wvc.surrey.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- Wey Valley College is a pupil referral unit for pupils who have been permanently excluded from other schools or are at high risk of exclusion. It also provides short-term placements and supports pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities that require assessment for specialist provision.
- The school has been led by an executive headteacher since its formation in 2015. He is supported by heads of primary and secondary provision. The school accommodates pupils in key stages 1 to 4.
- The school is part of a federation of three maintained pupil referral units. It has its own management committee, which is responsible for governance.
- The school receives additional sport premium and pupil premium funding. It does not receive Year 7 catch-up funding.



## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in the majority of classes. All of the observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders. Inspectors also observed break and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors held discussions with the executive headteacher, heads of school and other key staff. The lead inspector also met with the chair of the management committee.
- The lead inspector spoke with a local authority representative by telephone.
- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents including leaders' evaluations of school performance, minutes from management committee meetings, school policies, safeguarding records, records of attendance and behaviour, pupil progress information and information on the school's website.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils during break and lunchtimes as well as between lessons and in classes. Inspectors also considered 18 responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.
- One parent spoke to the lead inspector and five responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey were considered, including five free-text entries.
- Inspectors carefully considered the 25 responses to the Ofsted staff survey.

## Inspection team

Gary Tostevin, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

Becky Greenhalgh

Ofsted Inspector

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