

Inspection of a good school: Worthing High School

South Farm Road, Worthing, West Sussex BN14 7AR

Inspection dates:

10–11 March 2020

Outcome

Worthing High School continues to be a good school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils believe that this is a school where people smile. There is a strong sense of community, where older pupils look out for their younger peers and bullying is rare. One pupil said, 'This is a very accepting school', explaining how lessons and assemblies develop an understanding and respect for diversity.

Rude or poor behaviour is not tolerated by anyone. This means that everyone can focus and learn. Pupils ask for help confidently because they recognise that their teachers want the best for them. This includes individual support to help with any upcoming examinations.

Pupils know that the school prioritises giving them thoughtful care and nurture. This helps them to feel safe. Pupils speak highly of the support they receive from adults. Pupils know that there is always someone to help them explore their feelings and emotions.

Leaders provide pupils with many interesting and exciting experiences. Trips abroad, alongside expeditions as part of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme, are remembered fondly. Pupils engage with many extra-curricular activities that include different sports, drama and music, as well as gardening and reptile clubs. They appreciate the way that staff will always provide opportunities for pupils to find out more about their interests.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders are resolute in their ambition to create a curriculum that reflects academic excellence. Pupils can study all subjects within the national curriculum. Year 9 pupils benefit from good advice from their teachers when they consider what subjects to study at GCSE level. Many continue to learn a modern foreign language and history or geography. They do this alongside performing arts and technology subjects. This means all pupils enjoy a wide-ranging curriculum.

Subject leaders have focused on making sure learning helps pupils to build important knowledge and skills. While some subjects are at a different stage of development, clear plans are in place to ensure that they are all carefully sequenced. There is a whole-school approach to help all pupils develop a wide vocabulary. Pupils draw images that they associate with key words and apply these throughout their lessons. This is regularly revisited, ensuring that pupils are learning and remembering what they already know.

Many parents have chosen Worthing High to help children with complex special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). The school provides real care for these pupils and ensures that they can study the same curriculum as their friends. However, leaders recognise that more support is needed so that each pupil with SEND achieves as well as they could. Regular training for staff is helping to develop teaching to make sure it meets the different needs of these pupils. There are clear plans in place to continue these improvements.

Pupils are proud of the many different roles and responsibilities they have at the school. Senior prefects, sports leaders and librarians provide daily support for pupils and their teachers. Pupils speak positively about their termly 'focus days'. They enjoy exploring important questions about the world, as well as finding out about their future career options. Different eco-projects, such as creating and racing a 'greenpower car', help them to understand their role in looking after the environment.

Lessons are calm and purposeful. Pupils and adults know and understand the behaviour policy. This includes high expectations of how pupils should be thoughtful and always respectful to each other. Staff build positive relationships with pupils who find controlling their behaviour more difficult. This includes making time for pupils to reflect upon their behaviour and make amends to their friends, family and teachers.

Staff value the guidance they receive from leaders about their workload and well-being. There are regular opportunities to discuss developments in the school and for training. Newly qualified teachers are positive about the care and support from their colleagues. They describe the school as 'a small village', where staff provide a listening ear to help them continue to improve their teaching.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders provide high-quality training for all staff and governors. Staff are vigilant and know the actions they must take if they have any concerns. This includes being persistent in making sure pupils and their families get the right support from external agencies when they are most in need.

Pupils can confidently explain what they need to do to keep themselves safe. They appreciate the advice they receive from their teachers and the specific lessons they have had on online safety. They feel that staff are very mindful of their mental health, particularly in relation to the preparation for GCSE examinations.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- While leaders have begun to improve the provision for pupils with SEND, not all pupils in this vulnerable group receive the precise support they need to help them achieve well. Leaders should continue to build upon the improvements that have already been made, making sure that all staff have the appropriate knowledge and skills required. This will ensure that all pupils with SEND get the help and support they need in readiness for the next stage of their education.

Background

When we have judged a school to be good, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains good. This is called a section 8 inspection of a good or non-exempt outstanding school. We do not give graded judgements on a section 8 inspection. However, if we find some evidence that the school could now be better than good or standards may be declining then the next inspection will be a section 5 inspection. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the section 8 inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will convert the section 8 inspection to a section 5 inspection immediately.

This is the first section 8 inspection since we judged the school to be good on 19–20 April 2016.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	139109
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	10122295
Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,056
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Rosanne Nulty
Headteacher	Pan Panayiotou
Website	http://www.worthinghigh.net
Date of previous inspection	19–20 April 2016

Information about this school

- The school has a new headteacher and leadership team since the last inspection.
- The school is part of the South Downs Education Trust.

Information about this inspection

- We met with senior leaders, staff, pupils and representatives of the board of trustees and governing body.
- As well as speaking to staff, we considered the 50 responses to the confidential staff survey. We took account of the 370 responses to Ofsted's Parent View questionnaire.
- We also spoke to pupils about the many different aspects of their school and considered the 473 responses they made to the confidential pupil survey.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding we viewed the school's website and policies. We met with the designated safeguarding leaders, spoke with pupils and staff, scrutinised school records of safeguarding checks on adults working at the school and spoke with governors and trustees.

- We completed deep dives in English, geography, modern foreign languages and drama. We discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.

Inspection team

Aimee Floyd, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Colin Lankester

Ofsted Inspector

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