

Inspection of The Henry Cort Community College

Hillson Drive, Fareham, Hampshire PO15 6PH

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 June 2023

Overall effectiveness

The quality of education

Behaviour and attitudes

Personal development

Leadership and management

Previous inspection grade

Requires improvement

Requires improvement

Requires improvement

Good

Requires improvement

Good

What is it like to attend this school?

Leaders have high expectations for pupils at Henry Cort. They are committed to improving behaviour and standards in the school. However, some pupils and parents feel that sanctions are used unfairly and are not as effective as they could be. Most pupils feel safe and know that there are adults that they can talk to.

On the whole, pupils respect difference and diversity. They learn about inclusivity through the school's religious education, personal development and assembly programmes. A number of pupils, however, do not always think carefully about the language that they use which may be offensive to some protected groups.

Pupils interact positively at social times. They queue patiently in the canteen and move around the school calmly. Pupils generally want to work and achieve well, although some are less engaged in their work. Those in the younger years report frequent low-level disruption in lessons. This affects their learning and motivation. Although teachers try to address disruption when it occurs, actions are not always effective enough to make it stop.

There are some clubs and trips on offer to develop pupils' skills and interests, such as Minecraft and choir. Pupils enjoy trips to the theatre to enrich their learning in English and to theme parks as part of activities week. Leaders check carefully that those who would benefit the most take part.

Pupils in all year groups engage in a well-structured careers programme. They have access to a wealth of information so that they can make informed choices about their next steps in education, training or employment.

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

Senior leaders are ambitious for pupils to achieve well. They have identified that the curriculum is not as well planned and broad as it could be in all subjects. This has led to some gaps in learning. Leaders have new plans in place to introduce a new, well-sequenced curriculum in key stage 3 next year. Currently, however, the curriculum is not yet fully cohesive as it is in a state of transition.

The curriculum is not yet implemented consistently well in all subjects. For example, some lesson activities are not ambitious enough for pupils to build further on their embedded knowledge. Leaders have recently introduced a system for pupils to recall prior knowledge. Where this is done more expertly, pupils can make links between new and older learning. For example, in history, pupils in Year 9 explain how specific events, such as the Hungarian uprising, impacted on the Cold War. Where this is done less well, re-cap is disconnected and time consuming, preventing pupils from moving on in their learning.

Staff develop secure subject knowledge through a carefully planned professional development programme. In some lessons, teachers use expert questioning to

identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and change plans to address them. Assessment is not yet consistently precise in all subjects, however. As a result, pupils are not always clear about what they need to do to improve.

Leaders swiftly identify pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). They develop clear strategies to ensure that pupils with SEND engage well and enjoy the same curriculum as their peers.

Leaders have introduced a programme of support so that pupils who need more help to read are developing fluency and confidence. Leaders know that the development of wider reading is not yet embedded more widely across the school.

There are clear policies and procedures in place to help staff manage pupils' behaviour, but staff do not always apply them consistently. The number of suspensions remains high. Actions that leaders take to prevent the most serious incidents do not prevent repetitive poor behaviour by some pupils. Newly appointed leaders wish to embed a more positive and 'restorative' approach to managing behaviour, but plans are still in their infancy. Leaders work hard to address persistent absence and it is improving. However, leaders know that there is still work to be done to address this further.

Pupils learn about key issues such as finance, democracy and resilience as part of the school's broad personal development offer. Pupils understand the importance of healthy relationships and looking after their mental health and well-being. Development of physical health is a key priority in the school and all pupils study GCSE physical education. Pupils become active citizens as anti-bullying ambassadors and members of the student council. They enjoy taking part in community events, such as musical performances at the local parish council.

The school has experienced significant challenge in recruiting staff in recent years. This has impacted on the capacity for school improvement. Governors and senior leaders have a keen desire to improve outcomes and pupils' experiences now that the school is more fully staffed. Staff say that leaders make meaningful changes to reduce their workload. Less-experienced staff receive high-quality support and training.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders in charge of safeguarding keep accurate records so that they can monitor the pupils they are most concerned about. They perform the necessary checks to ensure that new staff are safe to work in the school. Leaders provide staff with training and updates so that they can identify and refer pupils who are at risk of harm. They secure external help from safeguarding partners so that pupils get the specialist help and support that they might need quickly.

Pupils learn about personal safety and how to keep themselves safe online through the curriculum. They know who to report their concerns to if they are worried.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The curriculum is in a period of transition and is not yet fully broad and cohesive. This means that pupils do not have the secure knowledge that they need to achieve success in all subjects. Leaders need to continue their plans to embed the newly planned curriculum so that pupils learn knowledge deeply and progressively in the full range of national curriculum subjects.
- Assessment of pupils' knowledge is not consistently secure across all subjects. This means that gaps are not identified or addressed quickly and effectively in all subjects. Leaders need to continue to develop staff expertise through high-quality professional development, and provide further capacity for subject leaders to monitor the effectiveness and impact of assessment practice.
- There is not yet a strategic approach for identifying the impact of actions to manage behaviour and improve attendance. This means that persistent absence and suspensions remain high. Leaders need to continue their work on preventative strategies and review systems that they already have in place to ensure that their actions have a more significant impact.
- The school has put systems in place to increase communication and invite feedback from parents, but this has not yet worked as well as leaders would like. Leaders should continue to adapt their approach to enable more effective two-way communication between home and school, so that parents and staff can work together to make improvements for the benefit of pupils.

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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

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	116466
Local authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	10287904
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	851
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Christine Hansford
Headteacher	Claudia Cabbage
Website	www.henry-cort.hants.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	24 April 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school uses four alternative providers, two of which are registered.
- The school runs its own on-site inclusion unit.
- The school has an on-site breakfast club.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 11 with information about approved technical educational qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with school leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The inspection team completed deep dives in English, mathematics, modern foreign languages, science, history and art. To do this, they met with subject

leaders, had discussions with staff and pupils, visited lessons and looked at pupils' work.

- Inspectors scrutinised a range of documents, including leaders' evaluation of the school and priorities for improvement.
- Inspectors met with senior leaders, a selection of subject leaders, teachers and support staff.
- The lead inspector met with members of the governing body, including the chair, and the local authority school improvement partner.
- The inspection team reviewed the arrangements for safeguarding by scrutinising records and through discussions with staff and pupils.
- The views of pupils, parents and staff were considered through discussions and a review of Ofsted's parent survey.

Inspection team

Zoë Harris, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Siobhan Lowe	Ofsted Inspector
Peter Woodman	Ofsted Inspector
Adrian Percival	Ofsted Inspector

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