

# Patcham High School

Ladies Mile Road, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 8PB

## Inspection dates

7–8 November 2017

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
Effectiveness of leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	<b>Good</b>
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	<b>Good</b>
Outcomes for pupils	<b>Good</b>
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- The headteacher, leaders and governors are focused on improving pupils' outcomes and achievements. Consequently, outcomes are improving in most subjects, and pupils' achievements are regularly celebrated.
- Leaders' work in promoting equality and respect has embedded itself into the positive school culture. The school is calm and well organised. Pupils' conduct is typically good and they treat one another with respect.
- Changes to the curriculum have broadened the breadth and choices available to pupils at key stage 4.
- Pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and modern foreign languages because highly effective subject leaders routinely review and improve the quality of the provision.
- Teachers' effective application of school policy on assessment and feedback is improving pupils' ability to write proficiently.
- Pupils are well prepared for life in modern Britain. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through life-skills lessons deepens pupils' knowledge and understanding of differences in religious beliefs and cultures.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are well supported in their learning.
- The school has a strong culture of safeguarding. Pupils feel safe and are kept safe because staff understand their responsibilities and know their pupils well.
- Pupils attend school regularly and most arrive on time and ready to learn. However, a few disadvantaged pupils do not attend as regularly as they should.
- Dedicated reading time ensures that pupils read widely and often. A few boys, however, do not read sufficiently challenging material.
- Teaching is effective and meets pupils' needs well. Most lessons are planned at the correct level for pupils' differing abilities, and activities are interesting and practical. However, teaching is less effective in science and design technology, and some pupils do not do as well as they could.
- Most leaders evaluate well the impact that new initiatives have on pupils' well-being and/or progress. A few, however, do not evaluate as thoroughly as others. This has led to slow progress in, for example, improving the quality of provision in science.
- Pupils achieve outcomes which are broadly in line with national averages. However, some disadvantaged pupils could do better in some subjects.

## Full report

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

- Further strengthen the way in which leaders and managers evaluate school improvement so that:
  - there is a more consistent approach across the leadership team to identifying the changes that are improving pupils' progress
  - all subject leaders are as effective as the leaders of English, mathematics and modern foreign languages at raising standards
  - pastoral leaders routinely analyse and evaluate pupils' attendance and behaviour patterns so pupils can quickly receive appropriate support.
- Improve the quality of teaching and assessment in science and technology so that outcomes for pupils improve.
- Improve the life chances of disadvantaged pupils by:
  - improving the attendance of disadvantaged pupils
  - further improving the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

**Good**

- The recently appointed headteacher has strengthened staff resolve to improve the outcomes for pupils at Patcham High School. His mantra, 'One team one dream', has been embraced by most leaders. Leaders in English, mathematics and modern foreign languages work collectively to improve the quality of provision in their subject areas. With the help of the headteacher, they have secured the staffing, improved the quality of the teaching and increased the effectiveness of learning and intervention.
- In 2016–17, the headteacher piloted 'pupil premium advocates' to support disadvantaged Year 11 pupils. This helped these pupils address concerns regarding their progress in particular subjects. Disadvantaged pupils' outcomes in most subject areas improved as a direct result. The attendance of this group also improved. Pupil premium advocates are now working with disadvantaged pupils from Years 7 to 11. Disadvantaged pupils told inspectors that this is helping them to engage more in their lessons.
- Leaders have adjusted the curriculum at key stages 3 and 4 so it now meets pupils' needs well. Across key stage 3, pupils' literacy levels have improved as a result of leaders' focus on improving reading. At key stage 4, the curriculum now includes a good range of pathways for pupils, including GCSEs and vocational qualifications. Overall, these curriculum changes are improving pupils' engagement and attendance.
- A few pupils attend alternative curriculum courses at local post-16 colleges. For some pupils, this supports their career path from an early stage. For others, it gives a more vocational option for them to study and excel in.
- Leaders have created a culture where all pupils value and respect each other's qualities and differences. The school's motto, 'Pride, respect and success', is well known by the pupils. Leaders are keen for pupils to be proud of their achievements. They want pupils to have a can-do attitude, and through tutor activities pupils are developing their grit and resilience as well as their confidence and creativity.
- Leaders have created a very inclusive school that supports vulnerable pupils well. A few pupils who have not succeeded in other local schools are typically successful here.
- Careers education runs from Year 7 to Year 11. Pupils receive impartial careers advice and guidance. The careers programme appropriately supports pupils' next steps to post-16 provision, apprenticeships or employment.
- The Year 7 catch-up funding is used well and is having a marked impact on improving pupils' reading, communication and mathematical skills. Staff coaches provide a good level of support. In the classroom, they work alongside pupils to help them to improve, and during pupils' dedicated reading time they support those who need extra support with their reading.
- Historically, disadvantaged pupils have not achieved as well as they should. Leaders' improvement plans focus on securing strong outcomes for all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged. Leaders have adjusted their teaching and learning processes to ensure that appropriate checks are made on the progress that disadvantaged pupils make in class. A review of the progress that pupils make in lessons identifies that these

pupils are beginning to make accelerated progress in some of their subjects. However, leaders recognise that further work is needed to ensure that they make progress in line with other pupils nationally.

- Leaders have recently changed the processes that subject teachers use to check on progress and provide effective feedback to pupils. Subject teachers in English, modern foreign languages, history and mathematics follow clear routines so that pupils understand what they are doing well and how to improve their work. Actions taken by pupils to improve their work in these subjects are proving fruitful. Most pupils in literacy-based subjects produce stronger pieces of extended writing as a result of teachers' feedback. However, there is too much variability in other subjects, and most pupils are not using this feedback effectively to improve further.
- Where subject leadership is strong, for example in English, mathematics and modern foreign languages, teams plan engaging activities that appropriately challenge pupils so that they develop their knowledge and understanding well. These leaders use assessment information well and identify which pupils need further support. However, this practice is not consistent across departments. Weak leadership in, for example, science and design technology, means that too many pupils are not supported well enough.
- The special educational needs coordinator (SENCo) provides strong leadership and uses additional funding effectively to enable pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities to better access the curriculum. Effective strategies are in place and teachers use these to support these pupils.
- Leaders' work to improve punctuality and attendance has increased the number of pupils attending extra-curricular sports clubs before school. More recently, their actions are having a positive effect on the attendance of some disadvantaged pupils.
- In recent years, leaders have found it difficult to find strongly qualified teachers. Leaders and governors now actively work with training providers to try and recruit more-highly skilled practitioners.
- Leaders have introduced a centre for alternative learning and mentoring (CALM) to support pupils to help them overcome emotional issues. This area is proving popular and is often visited by pupils before school.
- Leaders reconsidered the school behaviour policy in 2016–17. Following a re-launch of the policy, higher numbers of pupils received external exclusions. Many of these pupils were repeat offenders. School leaders have subsequently invested heavily in a new on-site facility called 'the bridge'.
- Recent changes to the pastoral structure of the school have led to heads of year having clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Many of these leaders are new to the role and are learning how to evaluate school information. Most have a clear understanding of their pupils' attendance, progress, achievements and behaviour. However, the senior team recognises that this level of clarity is not yet consistent across the pastoral team.
- Leaders use extra funding provided for disadvantaged pupils well. The new leader responsible for this budget logs spending carefully, and the school's pupil premium

advocates check on individual progress. However, leaders' evaluations of which interventions work best to raise standards are not well developed.

## **Governance of the school**

- Governance is highly effective and there is a good breadth and depth of expertise on the governing body. The experienced local governing body provides both support and challenge to school leaders. Governors have an accurate picture of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are keen to drive up standards for all pupils, including the disadvantaged, and want the school to be the school of choice for parents locally.
- Governors have welcomed the new headteacher's open and honest approach to school leadership. Governors are clear about the key areas for improvement. They understand what actions are being taken, and are aware of where these are adding value. All governors regularly visit the school, both formally and informally. They know the school well and diligently carry out their statutory duties.
- The governor responsible for checking safeguarding vigilantly checks school records and policies and establishes whether the procedures are understood both by staff and pupils.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that staff are safe to work with pupils. The recording of these checks meets statutory requirements.
- There is a culture of keeping pupils safe right across the school. All staff are trained appropriately and understand their responsibilities. Pupils said that they feel very safe in school. Parents also confirmed that they believe pupils are safe at school.
- School leaders ensure that vulnerable pupils are well supported in school. School staff work very well with parents and the local authority to protect pupils in need of care and support.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

**Good**

- Most teachers have high expectations of their pupils and set challenging activities in lessons. In English, modern foreign languages, humanities and mathematics, teachers consistently plan focused activities. These are pitched appropriately to challenge all pupils, irrespective of their starting points. Most teachers use their strong subject knowledge to question and check on pupils' understanding. As a result, pupils make good progress.
- In the strongest subjects, such as English, mathematics, history and modern foreign languages, teachers' feedback, in line with school policy, ensures that pupils know how to improve their work. These teachers check that pupils make required improvements and, consequently, pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make stronger progress.
- There is a strong culture of reading across the school, and pupils read daily during their dedicated reading time. Pupils typically enjoy reading and are happy to read aloud and

explain the context. A few boys are not reading sufficiently challenging material during this dedicated time, which restricts the development of their communication skills.

- Staff coaches work regularly with small groups of pupils who need further support with their reading. This is developing pupils' ability to read more challenging books and improve their reading age in comparison with their chronological age.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities are supported well by teaching assistants who ably question and work with these vulnerable pupils in lessons. The SENCo ensures that teachers are aware of individual pupils' needs and of how best to support these pupils. As a result of these improvements in support, more pupils are enjoying their learning, and they are attending school more often.
- Where teaching is less effective, for example in science and design technology, pupils are set activities which either lack challenge or are not sufficiently engaging. As a result, pupils make slower progress and take less pride in their work. Some pupils disengage, and low-level disruption or passive behaviour is not appropriately well managed by the teacher.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

**Good**

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good. Pupils engage well with the taught programme of personal development, which also improves their confidence, self-esteem and resilience. Pupils respect the rights of others and celebrate differences. As a result, the school is friendly and very inclusive.
- Pupils told inspectors that they feel very well supported by their pastoral support team and pupil advocates. Pupils are taught how to stay safe. They are clear about how to keep themselves safe on line and how to avoid potential dangers when using social media. Pupils understand the risks associated with drugs and alcohol. Pupils know who to report concerns to should any arise.
- Pupils are happy at school and proud to be members of its community. Pupils wear their uniform with pride, respect their learning environment and are rarely late for lessons. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy talking to senior leaders on their way into and out of school. Pupils also appreciate the availability of all leaders, should they need to discuss anything that concerns them.
- Pupils' life-skills lessons develop their understanding of democracy and the rule of law. They understand how and why decisions are made by those governing modern Britain and learn how to be responsible citizens. Pupils' life-skills lessons also broaden their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Disadvantaged pupils appreciate the support they receive from their pupil advocate. Using this support to discuss how they can further improve is helping some disadvantaged pupils to attend more regularly, while others discuss how to improve their behaviour. Some disadvantaged pupils benefit by using their advocate to discuss specific subject concerns which may be hindering their progress.
- Staff in the CALM area work with groups of pupils who need extra support to manage their emotions and feelings. Pupils who have received counselling attend this area to gather their thoughts before returning to class, while other pupils use this area when

they are feeling anxious. Staff using the school dog, 'Ralph', help pupils to gather their thoughts, compose their emotions and develop coping strategies.

- Pupils appreciate the impartial careers advice and guidance they receive. This is helping pupils in Year 11 to think differently about possible career options and raising their aspirations. As a result, pupils are taking challenging next steps into further education, employment and training.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils' conduct, both in lessons and around the school at break and lunchtimes, is of a high standard.
- Changes to leadership and the reinforcement of school rules resulted in an increase in recorded incidents of misbehaviour in 2016–17. School processes ensure that any incidents are dealt with quickly and efficiently. Pupils are clear about the consequences and sanctions associated with specific actions.
- The school has recently opened a new unit on site called 'the bridge', providing a safe environment for pupils, who would otherwise have been excluded for a period of time, to work in. This new team of support staff helps pupils to understand how to manage their behaviour while ensuring that they continue with their academic subjects. This helps pupils to develop strategies which they can apply in everyday life. Pupils who attend the unit recognise that this is making a difference to how they behave once they are reintegrated into school.
- Attendance of pupils is improving and is in line with national averages. The attendance levels of disadvantaged pupils and those who have SEN and/or disabilities are also slowly improving. As a result, persistent absence is reducing. Pupil attendance continues to be a high priority for school leaders in order to reduce the negative impact that poor attendance has on pupils' progress. Pupils' punctuality to school is improving as a result of leaders carrying out their 'meet and greet' policy at the school entrances.

## Outcomes for pupils

**Good**

- Pupils' attainment on entry is broadly in line with the national average. In 2016, the overall progress of pupils at the end of key stage 4 was slightly below the national average. Disadvantaged pupils made less progress than others with similar starting points. However, pupils attained outcomes above age-related expectations in a range of subjects.
- Provisional information indicates that pupils in Year 11 in 2016–17 continued to attain outcomes above expectations. Pupils made stronger progress in English, mathematics, French, German and history. Disadvantaged pupils also made stronger progress in 2016–17 than in previous years. However, their progress is still below that of other pupils nationally in a number of subjects.
- The percentage of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, achieving a strong grade in both English and mathematics has improved significantly in the last academic year.

- Some pupils studying science, computing, physical education, design technology and geography made less progress in these subjects than in other subjects in 2015–16.
- Provisional information on the progress of pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, at key stage 4 in 2016–17 indicates that they made stronger progress in physical education and geography. Pupils with low prior attainment on entry and the most able are now making expected progress in most curriculum areas. However, some middle-ability pupils could make more progress in some subjects. This is notable in some subjects like science and design technology.
- Pupils following alternative courses at post-16 colleges all achieved at least a pass in their qualifications.
- Current pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make strong progress in both English, mathematics, modern foreign languages and history. Teachers have very high expectations of what pupils can achieve, and pupils rise to the challenge.
- Most pupils develop their ability to read well. This ensures that pupils' reading ages are roughly in line with or higher than their chronological ages. Interventions ensure that those who are below age-related expectation on entry into Year 7 quickly catch up. However, some boys have difficulties and do not read as well as their peers.
- At each key stage, pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities follow a curriculum appropriate to their individual needs. These vulnerable pupils make similar progress to their peers. A few pupils benefit from attending a local pupil referral unit. As a result, the progress of this group of pupils is improving, and pupils are making good progress according to their specific need.
- Leaders are aware that progress in science is not as strong as in other subjects. Not all teachers routinely check progress, and some pupils' workbooks do not record accurately their learning over time. As a result, some pupils develop gaps in their knowledge and understanding.
- The progress that current pupils make in design technology is too slow. Teachers' expectations are not high enough, and pupils complete work which is not sufficiently challenging.
- Leaders are beginning to set more challenging targets for pupils. While leaders accurately monitor pupils' learning, some subject leaders are not evaluating this information accurately enough. Consequently, some disadvantaged pupils' difficulties are not being identified quickly enough, and they are falling behind in key stage 3. As a result, the intervention in place at key stage 4 is not having the impact it could have.

## School details

Unique reference number	114608
Local authority	Brighton and Hove
Inspection number	10037839

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

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	1035
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sarah Fitzjohn Scott
Headteacher	John McKee
Telephone number	01273 503908
Website	<a href="http://www.patchamhigh.brighton-hove.sch.uk">http://www.patchamhigh.brighton-hove.sch.uk</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:office@patchamhigh.brighton-hove.sch.uk">office@patchamhigh.brighton-hove.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	27–28 February 2013

## Information about this school

- Patcham High School is an averaged-sized secondary school.
- The school meets the government's current floor standard for attainment and progress.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by pupil premium funding is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is above other schools nationally.
- A few pupils in key stage 4 attend the local pupil referral unit for additional support.
- A few pupils in key stage 4 follow alternative courses at Plumpton College, Blatchington Mill School and Sixth Form, and BHASVIC College.

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 42 lessons across a range of subjects and year groups. Eight of these lessons were joint lesson observations with members of the school’s leadership team. Inspectors looked at samples of pupils’ written work across a range of abilities, subjects and year groups.
- Inspectors visited five tutor groups and observed an assembly. They met with pupils from all year groups and talked to pupils, both during lessons and more informally around the school. Inspectors talked to pupils in all year groups about the books they were reading.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior leaders, middle leaders and newly qualified teachers. They met with the chair and governors from the local governing body, as well as a local authority representative.
- Inspectors considered the school’s policies, including those for safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, pupil premium and SEN. They reviewed the school’s self-evaluation, improvement plan and governing body meeting minutes. They also looked at records relating to current pupils’ progress and attendance, as well as behaviour and exclusion logs.
- Inspectors reviewed the 298 responses to Ofsted’s online questionnaire, Parent View, and 216 responses from parents on Ofsted’s free-text service.

## Inspection team

Caroline Walshe, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Frederick Valletta	Ofsted Inspector
Colin Lankester	Ofsted Inspector
Sue Bullen	Ofsted Inspector

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