

# Inspection of Oriel High School

Matthews Drive, Maidenbower, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 7XW

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Inspection dates:	18 and 19 March 2025
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Good</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Good</b>
Sixth-form provision	<b>Good</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Oriel High School provides an orderly environment for learning. Pupils of different ages and backgrounds get on well together on this large campus. Pupils are respectful of their surroundings, for example they are careful around displays of artwork in corridors. Sixth-formers are good role models for younger pupils. They enjoy having their own area but also mix regularly with the rest of the school. They take on leadership roles readily.

Pupils typically behave well. Most are keen to learn and to follow the school's expectations of their behaviour, both in and out of lessons. Pupils have good relationships with staff. They feel safe in school. Pupils are confident that staff will support them if they have concerns. Any unkind behaviour is usually resolved by adults when it is reported to them.

The school has high expectations for pupils' achievement and does a good job in ensuring that pupils meet these. Pupils get high-quality support when making options and career choices. The very great majority go on to further study or employment. Pupils value the chance to pursue their interests through the school's wide range of curricular and extra-curricular provision. Parents are very positive about this aspect of the school's work in particular, as they are about the school, overall.

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

The school has a strong culture for learning. It offers a broad curriculum. It places a high value on learning in academic subjects, while also providing a wide vocational offer at key stage 4 and in the sixth form. The proportion of pupils taking the subjects which make up the English Baccalaureate at GCSE level is below the national average. This is due to a lower-than-national number of pupils who take modern foreign languages. However, the school offers extensive key stage 3 language study opportunities and is encouraging more pupils to consider taking a GCSE in the subject.

Subject staff ensure that learning is well sequenced. Teachers set well-chosen tasks for pupils so they can build on what they already know. Teachers introduce new learning skilfully, for example, with modelled examples and discussion. They organise classroom environments well to support learning, such as through displays. Typically, teachers check that pupils have understood the new material. They correct any misunderstandings and develop learning further. On occasion, this is not the case. Sometimes, in the main school, checks on more vulnerable pupils' learning, such as those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) or those from disadvantaged backgrounds, are not sufficiently thorough. As a result, some pupils understand less well and do not achieve as much as others. In the sixth form, while there is much skilful testing and extending of students' understanding by teachers, there are also occasions where this is not the case. Here, too, achievement is reduced as a result.

The school identifies any pupils with SEND effectively. It provides useful information to staff about pupils' needs. Teachers often use this well to provide additional support. Specialist staff work effectively to include pupils from the specially resourced provision for pupils with SEND (specially resourced provision) in mainstream lessons where

appropriate. The school provides support to pupils who need it to read well. The school is ambitious in this regard. It is rightly developing its work to support reading further.

Staff have high expectations for pupils' behaviour and attitudes. They manage pupils' behaviour confidently. Typically, pupils concentrate closely on their work in class. Staff work hard to ensure pupils attend regularly, and most do. The school does a good job with some of the pupils who regularly miss school so that their attendance improves. However, this is not always the case. There are others, notably from disadvantaged backgrounds and with SEND, for whom the school has not secured regular attendance. This reduces these pupils' achievement.

The school provides pupils with strong personal, social, health and economic education. Through lessons, assemblies and mentor times, pupils learn to treat each other respectfully, and to live healthy and safe lives. The school makes effective use of its mixed-age mentor groups to enable pupils and students of all ages to mix. The broad curriculum, and extra-curricular opportunities, supports pupils' cultural and social development strongly. The school provides high-quality advice and guidance about options and career choices.

School leaders have a clear vision for the school and work hard to ensure that pupils benefit from this. They identify accurately areas for improvement. Staff feel well supported, saying that they receive helpful training and have manageable workloads. Parents are positive about the school and say staff usually communicate with them well. Governors are committed to the school. They work closely with school leaders to challenge and support them. While much of governors' and leaders' evaluation of the school's effectiveness draws accurately on evidence, this is not always the case. Sometimes they pay too little attention to measurable evidence of the impact provision has on pupils, and their views are not fully accurate.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

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

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- On occasion, teachers do not check carefully enough that new learning has been fully understood. This typically affects more vulnerable pupils in the main school, such as those with SEND, but also affects students more generally in the sixth form. This means that their knowledge is less securely built. The school should support staff to check and secure learning more consistently.
- The school's work to reduce the number of pupils regularly missing school has helped some but not all. A small number still regularly miss school, reducing how much they learn. The school should sharpen further its actions to improve these pupils' attendance.

- Leaders, including governors, do not always check the impact of their actions by referring to clear and measurable evidence. This hinders the sharp evaluation of progress and the identification of the next steps for improvement. The school should refine its approach and the range of evidence used.

## 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](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	134042
<b>Local authority</b>	West Sussex
<b>Inspection number</b>	10341654
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,497
<b>Of which, number on roll in the sixth form</b>	244
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair of governing body</b>	Ben Chubb
<b>Headteacher</b>	Philip Stack
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.oriel.w-sussex.sch.uk">www.oriel.w-sussex.sch.uk</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 October 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- The school houses a specially resourced provision for up to 20 pupils with speech and language difficulties.
- The school uses one registered provider and four unregistered providers of alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005. During a graded inspection, we grade the school for each of our key judgements (quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; and leadership and management) and for any relevant provision judgement (early years and/or sixth form provision). Schools receiving a graded inspection from September 2024 will not be given an overall effectiveness grade.

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- The headteacher was absent during the inspection. Inspectors held discussions with the two deputy headteachers, usually accompanied by a representative of the local authority. They met with other senior colleagues, with the chair of the governing body and with another group of governors. Inspectors spoke with groups of staff.
- Inspectors took account of responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and of surveys of staff and pupil opinions.
- To evaluate the quality of education, inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: mathematics, English, science, modern foreign languages and business and economics. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met groups of pupils and sixth-form students, and observed breaktimes and lunchtimes.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record of checks on adults; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has established an open and positive culture that puts pupils' interests first.

## Inspection team

Stephen Long, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Helen Middleton	Ofsted Inspector
Harry Kutty	Ofsted Inspector
Mike Serridge	Ofsted Inspector
Richard Kearsey	Ofsted Inspector

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