



## **SCHOOL INSPECTION SERVICE**

### **INSPECTION REPORT FOR FOCUS SCHOOL HINDHEAD CAMPUS**

**DfE No: 936/6585**

#### **The key inspection judgements for this school are:**

<b>The quality of education</b>		<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' personal development</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>Safeguarding pupils' welfare health and safety</b>		<b>1</b>
<b>Leadership, management and governance</b>		<b>1</b>

#### **Compliance with the Independent School Standards:**

The school meets the regulatory requirements of schedule 1 of The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

#### **Compliance with the Equality Act 2010:**

The school meets the requirements of the Equality Act.

**Date of inspection: 2-4 May 2017**

## **SECTION A: SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS**

Focus School Hindhead Campus benefits from outstanding leadership, management and governance which have driven forward substantial improvements within a short period of time. The system for assessment and data collection is highly effective. Through close analysis of this information the school is swiftly aware of where some students have not met progress targets and has put in place successful intervention strategies. Overall, the school provides a good quality of education and students achieve well. The quality of the teaching is good and there are some examples of outstanding practice, but not all teachers insist on the highest standards of work from all students: where they do so, the students achieve exceptionally well. Routine marking of students' work lacks consistency. Teachers are beginning to use the self-directed learning (SDL) facilities creatively and plan to develop further this aspect of their work. Provision for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is effective with clear procedures in place to identify quickly those in need of assistance. The learning support assistants (LSAs) provide good in-class support for individuals but they are under-used where the class is taught as a whole. The school has a developing performance management system which is not yet fully embedded and delivering the planned link to staff training. The curriculum is broad and well-planned with an excellent programme of work experience for sixth formers. Students enjoy coming to school and generally work hard and behave very well. Their personal development is outstanding as is the way in which the school safeguards students and cares for their welfare, health and safety. Attendance is good and has improved markedly in the course of the year. Parents express a high level of satisfaction with the school. All of the standards for independent schools are met.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT:**

Whilst not required by the regulations, the proprietor should:

Fine tune the already good quality of teaching so that students' progress is optimised by:

- increasing demands made of students of all abilities, including the more able, to produce their best work;
- improving the consistency and usefulness of routine marking so that all students receive high quality feedback on their work;
- continuing to adapt and develop teaching strategies to exploit fully the SDL facilities and the opportunities they offer;
- making best and potentially more flexible use of the learning support assistants (LSAs); and
- ensuring that the system for performance management is fully developed and embedded so that staff receive accurate and useful feedback which informs their continued professional development.

## **SECTION B: INFORMATION**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION:**

This inspection was carried out by the School Inspection Service (SIS) in accordance with Section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. It follows the inspection framework agreed by SIS and the Department for Education (DfE).

In reaching their judgements, the inspectors observed teaching and learning in a range of subjects in all year groups and work in the self-directed learning (SDL) centre. They examined samples of students' work from all key stages, talked to them about their work and heard some younger students read. They observed daily life throughout the school including at break and lunchtimes and arrival and departure times. They scrutinised the school's documentation, records, website and video evidence of the students' activities. They held discussions with staff and trustees and spoke to some parent volunteers. They took account of the parents' and students' responses to the pre-inspection questionnaires, and whilst in school held discussions with groups of students representing each key stage. The inspectors were:

Reporting Inspector:	Mrs Jane Cooper
Team inspectors:	Mr Peter Jones Mr Stephen Grounds

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL:**

Focus School Hindhead Campus in Surrey is an independent school for boys and girls aged 7 -18 years. It is owned by the Three Counties Educational Trust and is part of the Focus Learning Trust (FLT) group of schools which provides education for children of the Exclusive Christian Brethren community. There are currently 239 students on roll, of whom around a quarter have been identified as having special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and five have Education Health Care Plans (EHCP). No student has English as an additional language.

The students come from Surrey, Hampshire and West Sussex, including some who travel from the south coast. Over the last year, the school has changed considerably with the assimilation of many students from the former Pulborough Campus. An extension was built to create the SDL suites. During this time there was also a high turnover of staff. The current headteacher has been in post since September 2016 and the senior leadership team has recently been restructured.

The school's last full inspection took place on 11-12 May 2012. A short inspection in September 2016 confirmed the suitability of the material changes made to expand the school roll. The school's aim is to encourage students to develop their full potential and acquire the discipline of learning how to learn, while upholding Christian teachings and beliefs.

## **SECTION C: THE INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS**

### **1. THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

The quality of education provided by the school is good.

#### **Pupils' learning and achievement**

Overall students' attainment is above the national average and progress is good. Over the last three years standards have exceeded the national average in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2, and GCSE results last year were well above the national average, with 95-100% of students achieving 5 A\*-C grades, including in English and mathematics, and around 40% of grades being A or A\*. Sixth formers generally achieve well in their A level choices. Thus, from a good baseline in the primary phase, students typically make very good progress. Standards in Year 11 this year are not as high. The school's data shows that some students had not made the expected amount of progress, particularly where a lack of continuity in staffing had affected their attitudes to learning and achievement. The school is tackling the issue assiduously and to good effect.

Primary students quickly establish good computation skills; they read confidently with good understanding and write neatly, paying careful attention to punctuation, spelling and paragraphing. Older students write in a greater range of styles but in some subjects they do not present their work with sufficient care and accuracy. This contrasts markedly with the exceptionally creative and meticulous work the same students produce in design technology (DT) and art, and indicates that where expectations are very high, students achieve exceptionally well. In general, the students are keen and enthusiastic learners and develop competent research skills, particularly through self-directed learning, which encourages them to work both independently and as part of a team.

#### **The quality of teaching and assessment**

The quality of the teaching is consistently good and enables students to achieve well. However, in the summer term of the previous academic year there was a high turnover of staff and the lack of stability has had an impact on students' learning and achievement, particularly in cumulative subjects such as science. Teachers are well qualified for the subject or age group they teach, and plan lessons carefully. The tasks set in class and for homework engage students' interest and encourage good progress. At the time of the year in which the inspection took place, much of the lesson time for the examination classes was rightly focused on revision activities, with teachers offering students appropriate opportunities to practise, and providing good support for individuals needing help. Students' behaviour is well managed, and reflects the common expectations of all staff.

There is some outstanding teaching, characterised by confident mastery of the subject and a clear vision of how to optimise progress by putting the onus on students to always produce their best work. Such teaching involves a high level of participation, lively interaction, skilful and challenging questioning and tasks which make high demands on students of all abilities. Activities are often relevant to everyday life and require students to use a range of skills. For example, in mathematics, Year 8 students were analysing the words used in different news

reports to plot a graph from which to draw conclusions about the readership of the newspapers they were taken from. Similarly, in Year 4 the students had exploited fully a trip to the Isle of Wight to research information, design surveys, handle data and write reports and stories.

Where teaching is good but not yet outstanding, there is scope for teachers to fine tune activities so that higher demands are made of students of all abilities, including the more able, offer more informative feedback to individuals and improve the close of lessons by concluding with a plenary discussion where appropriate. The SDL facilities are well-used but there is room for teachers to innovate and take risks with the potential of this way of learning. The school itself has rightly targeted this as an area for continued professional development. Other improvements recommended were timed opportunities for discussion and a plenary session

The provision for students with SEND is very good. Their needs are carefully identified, especially in the case of those with EHCP. Intervention strategies are planned methodically, often with a limited timeframe, and teachers are well-informed about students' learning difficulties. Learning support assistants (LSAs) provide helpful in-class support for individual students when they are working on tasks, but when the whole class is being taught together their time is not always well used.

At the start of the academic year the school had few measures of students' progress beyond the outcomes of key stage assessments and national examinations. It now has an extremely well-organised and effective system producing rich and reliable data from which to track students' progress. This is informed by examination results; the outcomes from routine spelling, mental arithmetic and end-of-unit tests; and teachers' own assessments which are moderated for accuracy. National assessment programmes, such as the Interactive Computerised Assessment System (InCAS) and the Advanced Level Information System (ALIS), and the use of Suffolk reading tests provide an external perspective on students' progress. The information from assessment is analysed keenly to identify the progress of both individuals and groups, and is used exceptionally well to set targets, recognise and reward achievement, identify quickly any underperformance and provide swift, time-limited interventions for students' individual needs. Critical use of data has enabled the school to set up a reading recovery plan for some of the boys; introduce a new mathematics course with more demanding problem-solving activities; and provide tailored intensive revision programmes for Years 11 to 13 which have already had an impact on achievement, particularly in science.

Despite this good progress, the routine marking of students' work is too variable. Whereas in some cases it is frequent, rigorous and precise about the improvements needed or how to move to the next level, there are also instances where teachers' marking fails to ensure that the students' mistakes in spelling or punctuation, for example, are not reinforced. The school is aware of the lack of consistency in marking and feedback and this is a priority in the school improvement plan.

## **The quality of the curriculum**

The quality of the curriculum is good. Based on the National Curriculum and FLT guidance, it is well planned and covers comprehensively the required areas for learning. Effective guidance for teachers is provided by the schemes of work. The good planning is particularly manifest in students' work in creative subjects such as art, music and design technology and in physical education (PE). At all levels subject matter is well chosen and matched to the age and ability of the students. Transition arrangements are strong, both into the school and between key stages.

The primary curriculum is broad and balanced. Literacy and numeracy are well covered and there is a good range of subjects, including French which is taught from Year 3. The secondary curriculum is also broad and balanced. Small class sizes and the splitting of examination classes in core subjects enable the provision to be tailored to students' abilities. Despite the small size of the sixth form, the school provides a very wide range of examined courses which are well matched to students' academic interests and abilities. For example, A level in mathematics is provided but the most able can also study further mathematics. Video-conferencing facilities are used appropriately to link with other campuses and maximise students' choice of subjects. There are plans to introduce courses with more appeal to less academic students. Recent building improvements have provided greater flexibility in the use of space allowing some secondary staff to provide specialist teaching in the lower school. Teachers are beginning to use the school's excellent SDL facilities creatively and are exploring alternative ways for students to learn.

The academic curriculum is supported by a broad range of educational visits and field trips which bring interest and relevance to the work studied in class. Enrichment is also provided by sports and music; inter-campus and inter-house competitions; concerts; and fund-raising events. Some students follow courses in drama and public speaking and take the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA) examinations.

## **2. THE QUALITY OF PUPILS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Students' personal development is outstanding. The school provides a well-planned programme of personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) and citizenship which systematically ensure that students know about and are encouraged to show respect for other people whatever their faith, culture, heritage, lifestyle or background. The school works with the FLT to promote the British values of respect and tolerance, learning about their own and other faiths and cultures through both the mainstream curriculum and special events such as 'India Day'; a talk from a Holocaust survivor, or a visit to a Baptist chapel. Their understanding of democracy is promoted well through work on the electoral system, as illustrated by Year 10 students who were writing their own manifestos for the forthcoming General Election, and by the school council, where elected form representatives debate and take decisions. In citizenship lessons the students acquire a good general knowledge of local and national government, public services and the law.

The students are well-mannered, considerate, enthusiastic learners who play a major role in creating a harmonious school community. They work hard and are quietly confident and supportive of each other. Sixth formers are notably well-adjusted and mature in their attitudes and are able to engage confidently in conversation with adults. By using the SDL facilities, students learn the valuable life skills of leadership, research, teamwork, personal organisation and self-discipline. The student leadership team enables students of all ages to take responsibility for arranging events and assemblies. The school's system of rewards and recognition for effort, achievement and kindness is highly effective in motivating the whole school community to become a 'Power for Good'. Student initiatives, such as the setting up of a 'Chillax Club' for less confident students, allow the young people to demonstrate their care for others, and through the numerous fund-raising activities for local and international causes they learn about issues of the modern world and those in less fortunate circumstances.

The school provides up-to-date and accurate careers guidance which identifies and develops employment skills from key stage 3 onwards. As students move into the sixth form they are inducted into the highly effective Careers Advantage Programme (CAP) which prepares them extremely well for the world of work. Here they have the opportunity for sponsorship from up to sixty different employers who provide well-structured and worthwhile work experience in which the student is required to research topics, make presentations, produce a CV and undertake a mock interview. By the time they leave the school, many students have recorded over a hundred hours of work experience and have a clear idea of the type of career they want to pursue. The community ensures that those who wish to do so may take additional work-related qualifications in the sixth form, and enrol on tertiary courses when they leave. There are no school leavers who are not in education, employment or training.

### **3. SAFEGUARDING PUPILS' WELFARE, HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The quality of safeguarding and the school's provision for the welfare, health and safety of its students are outstanding. Safeguarding is at the heart of this school: students report that they feel safe and their parents agree. Key policies relating to safeguarding, anti-bullying, first aid, fire prevention, and risk assessment are adaptations of specimen policies prepared by FLT and have been appropriately customised for this school. The safeguarding policy indicates clearly who the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and her deputy are, and the links they maintain with the local authority child support officers. It is fully up-to-date on specific safeguarding issues, such as cyberbullying and the prevention of radicalisation and reflects the latest government guidance. The DSL ensures that all staff and volunteers are up-to-date in their training and understanding of child protection and that it is an embedded part of the school's culture. The school meticulously records attendance at training to ensure that everyone has received the required training. Record keeping is excellent: the DSL keeps careful records of all referrals and communications with child protection officers. The trustees maintain excellent oversight of safeguarding matters through the actions of the dedicated and trained safeguarding trustee.

The school operates thorough procedures for recruiting and vetting staff, trustees and volunteers and checks rigorously their suitability to work with young people.

The single central register contains a comprehensive record of these checks which is fully supported by meticulous staff files. These arrangements are a model of recommended practice.

Senior leaders have had a substantial impact on improving behaviour and attitudes to learning this year. The students themselves report that there were bullying incidents in the past but that they are now rare, and that when they occur the school acts quickly to bring them to an end. Teachers carry a script for conversations they might have with pupils if they identify bullying but they report that they seldom, if ever, have to be used. Personal safety, including online safety and cyber-bullying, is covered in PSHEE lessons and in tutor time. Pastoral records are excellent and demonstrate the care with which behaviour is monitored. Several parents commented on improvements in behaviour since the start of the year.

Students' safety is paramount. They are supervised appropriately at all times, and bus arrivals and departures are carefully controlled from a safety perspective. The school has a well-established and effective system of risk assessment which pays close attention to students' safety in school and on outside visits. The first aid policy meets requirements. There are sufficient trained first aiders and all accidents are monitored to improve on-site safety. The school's fire risk prevention records and policy are up-to-date, and the school, in this and in other health and safety matters, makes use of an external consulting firm. The premises and equipment are checked regularly for hazards. Attendance and admission records are carefully maintained. The school monitors patterns of attendance closely and follows up poor attendance. As a result, attendance has improved through the year and is now just above the national average.

The school has a rudimentary Disability Accessibility Plan which requires revision. However, despite the plan's shortcomings, the students with SEND enjoy good access to the school and to the same curriculum as their peers. They are very well cared for and generally make good progress. The school complies with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

#### **4. LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE**

The school's leadership and management are outstanding. This judgement is made despite the fact that the quality of education is not yet outstanding, because of the substantial and decisive impact on school improvement already made by senior leaders most of whom have not yet been in post for a full year. They are supported very effectively by an excellent campus administration team. Senior leaders are self-critical and self-aware. They work determinedly as a cohesive team to drive forward an ambitious plan for the school based on clear values which are fully understood and supported by the whole community. Strong pastoral arrangements have generated improved behaviour and attitudes to learning so that there is now a business-like working atmosphere in school and students arrive prepared and ready to learn. Students say they like the way the school values their efforts and achievements and that they can gain credit for all their activities. School managers have improved attendance though the year from below to above the national average. Morale is high. Partnership with parents has



improved strongly. The school's internal survey of parents' views provides evidence of a rapid rise in parental satisfaction, and this is strongly endorsed by the questionnaires returned by parents to inspectors. The work of the school manager in liaising with parents is highly valued and parents have access to all the information they need. Safeguarding has improved significantly and students report that they feel safe and happy in school. The collection and use of data is now exceptional in its use as a guide to target-setting and planning intervention strategies, the impact of which is monitored and evaluated for success. The spotlight on each individual's academic and personal progress now means that any underachievement is swiftly identified and addressed. Achievement is good and improving, but is not yet outstanding and senior leaders are well aware of areas of comparative weakness and are rectifying them. Some excellent new substantive appointments have had a beneficial impact on the quality of teaching and are raising standards by identifying and reducing gaps in students' knowledge, particularly in cumulative subjects such as science.

There is further work to do on the school's performance management system which is still developing and needs to be fully embedded. This will allow the headteacher to coach others to share the responsibility of staff appraisal and build up accurate records from which individual and whole school priorities may be matched to continuing professional development.

The school administrators make a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school and support senior leaders very well. Effective arrangements for maintenance of the buildings and grounds make the school a pleasant learning environment which meets all of the independent school standards. The complaints procedure meets requirements and no formal complaints have been received.

## **Governance**

The school enjoys excellent governance from a team of trustees who are fully engaged in the life and development of the school; fully committed to its vision and values and ambitious for its success. The trustees are extremely well organised and between them have a range of complementary skills and expertise which they bring to their roles. The campus administrators in particular act extremely effectively as both critical friends and challenging partners for the school. Excellent training, induction and shadowing opportunities ensure that trustees are knowledgeable about the requirements of the independent school standards and their duties as trustees, and discharge these effectively. There is a clear succession plan to secure the same high quality of trustees in the future. Both the full board and the campus administrators meet regularly together and with senior leaders and take a full part in guiding and facilitating the good management of the school. Trustees are visible in the school, known by students and communicate effectively with parents. The impact of their work has been a cornerstone of the school's success and rapid improvement by securing key appointments in school leadership, monitoring developments and ensuring that students' welfare is safeguarded and actively promoted. They check diligently to ensure that the school continues to comply with the independent school standards.

## SCHOOL DETAILS

Name of school:	Focus School Hindhead Campus			
Address of school:	Highcombe Edge Tilford Road Hindhead Surrey GU26 6SJ			
Telephone number:	01428 601800			
Email address:	<a href="mailto:hindheadcampus@focus-school.com">hindheadcampus@focus-school.com</a>			
Web address	<a href="http://www.hindhead.focus-school.com">www.hindhead.focus-school.com</a>			
Proprietor:	Three Counties Education Trust			
Person registered with DfE as proprietor under paragraph 20 of Part 4:	Glenn Devenish			
Head Teacher:	Mr Kristian Still			
DfE Number	936/6585			
Type of school	Independent school			
Annual fees	Internally charged			
Age range of students	7-18			
Gender of students	Co-educational			
Total number on roll	full-time	239	part-time	0
Number of children under-5	Boys:	0	Girls:	0
Number of compulsory school age students	Boys:	110	Girls:	90
Number of post-compulsory students	Boys:	22	Girls:	20
Number of students with Education Health Care Plans (EHCP)	Boys:	2	Girls:	3
Number of students with English as an additional language	Boys:	0	Girls:	0
Type of inspection	Section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008			

**This report has been prepared by the School Inspection Service, which provides independent professional inspection of all schools affiliated to the Focus Learning Trust, and members of the Steiner Waldorf Schools Fellowship or Cognita group. The report is available from the School Inspection Service website: [www.schoolinspectionsservice.co.uk](http://www.schoolinspectionsservice.co.uk).**