

# Wayland Community High School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	121158
<b>Local Authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	358946
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 March 2011
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Roderick Passant

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

---

<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	725
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Michael Corrie
<b>Headteacher</b>	Michael Rose
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	19 September 2007
<b>School address</b>	Merton Road Watton, Thetford IP25 6BA
<b>Telephone number</b>	01953 881514
<b>Fax number</b>	01953 885677
<b>Email address</b>	office@wayland.norfolk.sch.uk

---

<b>Age group</b>	11–16
<b>Inspection dates</b>	10–11 March 2011
<b>Inspection number</b>	358946

---

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the documentation in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Royal Exchange Buildings  
St Ann's Square  
Manchester  
M2 7LA

T: 0300 123 4234

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)

W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2011

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by four additional inspectors. They saw 27 teachers in 28 lessons. They held meetings with members of the senior leadership team, middle managers and members of staff, two members of the governing body including the chair, and held meetings with groups of students. They observed the school's work, including a Year 7 assembly and tutor periods and looked at a range of documentation regarding specific initiatives in the school, internal evaluations of aspects of the school and policies and documentation relating to safeguarding. In addition, the team scrutinised the questionnaire responses from 54 support and teaching staff, 91 students and 175 parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

How effectively are students working with the school and in partnership with staff?

- How effectively do lessons provide support and challenge for the full range of students' needs?
- What has led to the improvement in standards? Is this inbuilt and the improvement sustainable?

## Information about the school

The school is smaller than the average secondary school. The large majority of students are White British. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is currently average but increasing. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is broadly average. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is above average and the proportion with statements detailing their educational needs is high. The school has specialist technology status. The school was invited by the then Department for Children and Families to participate in a project called 'Gaining Ground' to help students reach their potential. This provides access to additional funding and expertise through links with another partner school. The school has gained Healthy School status.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

The school provides a satisfactory education. Nevertheless, it has a strong momentum of improvement and many good features, particularly in the way it helps students develop into maturity. It is helping motivate and develop students' confidence to find their feet in the world. In 2010, very few Year 11 students left the school without going on into education, training or employment. Standards too have shown steady improvement: the percentage of students gaining five or more A\* to C grades, including mathematics and English, has risen from significantly below to broadly average levels in the last three years. Students make good progress in many lessons but, at the moment, the proportion of good lessons has not yet reached the critical mass to foster consistently good achievement. Where other aspects are judged satisfactory, the issues relate to consistency in a similar way; good practice is evident but not yet secured. In some cases, more time is needed for the impact of a specific initiative to work through.

A number of elements are coming together to bring about the improvements and sustain them. A key factor is the improving leadership at different levels across the school. The school establishes clear priorities for development because it has an accurate view of itself based on good systems of self-evaluation. Given the improvements that have taken place, it has demonstrated good capacity for sustaining improvement. The specialist nature of the school has facilitated the links with another provider which have helped build capacity for change and improvement and contributed to a revitalised approach.

The school's leaders are effectively changing the school's culture and fostering higher expectations from students and staff. Key to this process has been the developments within the curriculum. These played a very significant role in raising standards in 2010. Innovations in the curriculum also brought about a change in students' attitudes reflected in the year-on-year improvement in attendance, which was high in 2010. Most students said in the questionnaires that they enjoyed school. Good quality care, guidance and support has a strong impact on improving progress, particularly for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities, whose progress is good.

In the best lessons, students are challenged well by exciting activities and fully involved, but this does not happen consistently enough to raise the pace of progress. Where teaching is weaker, information about what students can already do is not used well enough to plan, or teachers are not clear enough about what they want students to learn and how they will get there. Sometimes opportunities are missed to reinforce literacy skills or check learning during the lesson and then give feedback or revise what students are doing. In this school, the good quality of relationships that many staff have with their students is an important foundation for learning. In the good lessons seen, this relationship is such that students work in partnership, assuming responsibility for some of their learning.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Up to 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

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

- Improve the consistency of good learning across the school, so that by April 2012 teaching is good or better in most lessons, by ensuring teachers consistently:
  - make good use of assessment information to plan for the next steps in students' learning so work meets their needs and challenges them appropriately
  - are very clear about what they want students to learn in lessons and the steps in the lesson to achieve these objectives
  - make frequent checks on students' learning as the lesson progresses
  - develop students' capacity to learn independently by consistently providing them with good-quality feedback
  - provide good opportunities for extending or reinforcing students' literacy skills - particularly writing.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**3**

Many lessons have a purposeful ethos with students' attitudes and enthusiasm making a positive contribution to the lesson. Students respond well to practical activities and in the best lessons there is a buzz of excitement about their work, demonstrating independence, concentration and ability to work together well. In a minority of lessons, however, where activities are not well chosen, students sometimes lose interest.

Students have good speaking skills and are generally confident enough to give extended answers to questions. An increasing minority of students start school with lower than the expected English skills and are reluctant readers and writers. Attainment in English shows year-on-year improvement although it remains below average. On occasions, the lesson context promoted students' writing skills well. In a science lesson, for example, both boys and girls were clearly enthused by their experiments and engrossed in writing up the conclusions. Their work was supported by clear modelling from the teacher and emphasis on using specific technical vocabulary. Attainment in mathematics is broadly average.

In 2010, standards rose significantly but this was the first year that a range of indicators were significantly above average. For example, the proportion of students gaining five or more A\* to C grades and those gaining at least five A\* to G grades were both significantly above the national average. The impact of the school's specialism was evident in above average results in design and technology. Students also did particularly well in science. Students who receive some outside support for their special educational needs and/or disabilities and students with a statement make good progress to attain above the national average for their groups. Students learning English as an additional language make similar progress to their peers. The performance of students known to be eligible for free school meals was not significantly different from other students. The proportion of students gaining three A\* to A grades almost doubled in 2010. There was little difference in the performance of boys and girls in lessons or in their 2010 attainment.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Most students feel safe in school. They report that it is friendly but that there is some bullying. They indicate that staff usually deal with this effectively. Students are confident that staff care about them and listen to their views. The school has a calm ethos. It has introduced a clear code of behaviour which is having a good impact, but it is at an early stage. In addition, there is a system to recognise whether students are prepared for learning and convert awards into tangible benefits. Students know what is expected of them and have been involved in creating the policies. Fixed-term exclusions have increased because the school is implementing the behaviour for learning policy more rigorously. Students report that behaviour is improving.

Students have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles and the risks of lifestyle choices, for example of smoking and alcohol. There is a high take-up of sporting activities beyond the normal two hours per week. The house system and councils, and posts as prefects and buddies provide a range of opportunities to contribute to school life. Students are regularly surveyed and their views sought. They also contribute to local communities through relevant youth councils. Students gain confidence and self-esteem over their time in school. The high visibility of the headteacher around the school and the good relationships with staff help ensure that students feel valued. Within subjects like citizenship and religious education, they reflect on their lives, the lives of others, different faiths and diversity and explore moral issues and spiritual issues. Students learn to work together well. Overall students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, although cultural development is relatively weaker.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	1
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## How effective is the provision?

The quality of lesson planning is key to the inconsistencies in teaching. Where teaching is not consistently good there are pockets of slower pace because work is not consistently engrossing. This is because either aims are not clear enough to get the activities finely focussed, or else activities are not pitched at the right level. Sometimes planning misses opportunities for literacy work or for independent learning and involvement by students. However, there is good practice in some of these things in many lessons. Most students feel that they know how well they are doing in school. The school tracks their progress through half termly assessments, and departmental monitoring identifies students who are in danger of slipping behind so that appropriate steps can be taken involving parents and carers. There is very close tracking of Year 11 students.

The school knows its students very well. It has provided them with a good curriculum which is balanced and broad but allows students to focus on aspects that they find rewarding. It is now more inclusive, particularly through the development of vocational courses that many students find motivating. The introduction of the Skills Centre has had a very positive effect on the school by allowing the delivery of construction and engineering to take place in purpose-built accommodation. Religious education and citizenship make significant contributions to students' personal development. The Years 7 and 8 gold classes and carefully targeted adult support in these classes and around the school, one-to-support and catch-up activities, along with close monitoring of progress, means that students with special educational needs and/or disabilities are supported well. An 'Easter school' provides revision support. Technology status has helped to improve provision in mathematics and science. These subject areas are working with other departments in the school to enable them to develop further.

Outstanding transition and induction procedures, especially for students whose circumstances make them the most vulnerable, ensure continuity from local primary schools. There is strong support for families, parents and carers and very good support for students facing challenging circumstances. Work in the Gold groups leads effectively to students' re-integration into mainstream classes where appropriate. Through its very strong pastoral support the school is enhancing life chances of specific individuals who face personal challenge by supporting their learning and personal development effectively. Careers counselling and advice is good, and includes opportunities to visit a wide range of post-16 providers.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## **How effective are leadership and management?**

The headteacher has a passionate commitment to the school and its development; he is ambitious for the school and its students. The senior leadership team bring a range of complementary skills and the middle managers interviewed shared a good commitment to improvement and clarity about the next steps within the departments to maintain these improvements. The school is supporting the development of good teaching well through its mentoring programme. Records show the effectiveness of this work in developing the skills of some staff.

The governing body has a range of professional and personal expertise and is growing in its capacity. It is now stable after a period of change and the new Chair of the Governing Body is experienced. The committee structure has been reviewed and induction for new governors is in place. It meets its statutory responsibilities; most governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses and the governing body provides both support and challenge. Safeguarding is good; staff are vigilant and well trained, and there are clear lines of communication. Risk assessments for trips are very thorough. Key staff in the school provide very effective liaison, support and engagement with parents and carers, particularly those whose children may have additional needs. The school continues to work on a range of ways to develop communication further with those less easy to reach. Finance is well managed and aspects of value for money are good, for example in relation to provision for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, satisfactory achievement overall means value for money is also judged satisfactory.

The school knows its context well, has a good understanding of the factors which define it and has planned activities that are effective for developing community cohesion in its local context. This has had a positive impact within the school community and students are supportive of this. The school has formed a link with a school in Nepal, and has mentors into the school from beyond the local community. Many students have little opportunity to regularly engage with other school communities in the wider UK and through international links. This is an aspect that the school is aware of and has secure plans to address. The school works well to remove any barriers to learning and to support students' specific needs. It has been particularly effective in raising the rate of progress of some groups of vulnerable students. Within citizenship lessons, the school effectively promotes respect for human rights and challenge for stereotypical views.



**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Views of parents and carers

The number of questionnaires returned was above that generally seen. Most parents and carers were happy, overall, with their child's experience at the school. Responses were broadly in line with views nationally, but more than usual had concerns about behaviour, communication and the progress their children are making. Progress is satisfactory overall and the inspection's points for improvement are aimed at raising its pace. Inspectors found behaviour satisfactory and the new systems the school has to support it to be good. It has introduced a behaviour for learning code which provides a positive approach and measured escalation of sanctions in response to poor behaviour. The school has a range of appropriate communication systems. It produces a termly snap-shot report and an annual full report and has an annual parents' and carers' meeting. Students have a school planner to record homework, their merits and their 'Cope' stamps which recognise the level of preparedness and cooperation in lessons. The school surveys parents and carers periodically on a variety of issues and uses this information to inform their strategic planning, but the response rate is often low.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Wayland Community High School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 175 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 725 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	44	25	108	62	22	13	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	44	25	117	67	10	6	2	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	31	18	103	59	35	20	3	2
My child is making enough progress at this school	36	21	109	62	23	13	3	2
The teaching is good at this school	26	15	122	70	18	10	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	27	15	102	58	38	22	2	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	21	12	125	71	26	15	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	33	19	93	53	30	17	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	32	18	103	59	26	15	3	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	7	100	57	40	23	12	7
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	24	14	96	55	33	19	7	4
The school is led and managed effectively	43	25	102	58	17	10	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	44	25	104	59	22	13	3	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



14 March 2011

Dear Students

**Inspection of Wayland Community High School, Thetford, IP25 6BA**

Thank you for making us so welcome in your school. My particular thanks go to those students who gave up part of their lunchtime to talk to us.

The school's effectiveness is satisfactory. It is improving rapidly and has put in place the various elements to raise achievement. Staff care a great deal about you and support you well so that you feel safe and enjoy school. The curriculum is good and helping to raise standards. A strength of the school is that it is helping you to develop good personal skills and also prepares you well for the future. This is reflected in the fact that very few students from last Year 11 did not go onto some form of education, training or employment. Last year, the percentage of 5 A\* to C grades was significantly above the national average and was a record for the school. Standards are more average when English and mathematics are added in.

The progress that you are making is satisfactory but improving. You are making good progress in many lessons because the teachers work hard to make the work interesting. In these lessons you are engaged and work with your teacher. However, good progress is not yet the feature of some lessons and some of you 'switch off'. This is the reason why we have said behaviour is no better than satisfactory. I have asked the headteacher to work with staff to ensure that there is consistent good learning. You can expect more consistently challenging work and rapid feedback to help you be more independent. A minority of students find writing difficult and are reluctant readers. I have therefore also asked the headteacher to work with staff to ensure that you are given good opportunities to develop your writing and reading skills across the school.

One student thought that the school 'has improved fourfold since' he joined. This momentum for improvement will continue if you help and support the school by taking every advantage of what the school provides and readily assume more responsibility for your learning.

Yours sincerely

Roderick Passant

Lead inspector

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).**