

Worthing High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	126090
Local Authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	360007
Inspection dates	22–23 June 2011
Reporting inspector	John Seal HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	12–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	952
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tony Cohen
Headteacher	Alison Beer
Date of previous school inspection	16–17 June 2008
School address	South Farm Road Worthing West Sussex BN14 7AR
Telephone number	01903 237864
Fax number	01903 231709
Email address	achieve@worthinghigh.w-sussex.sch.uk

Age group	12–16
Inspection date(s)	22–23 June 2011
Inspection number	360007

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.

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 information 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
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011



Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. They observed 38 part lessons, which involved seeing 36 teachers. Two samples of lessons were carried out to observe the provision of support for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Meetings were held with students, staff and members of the governing body. The inspectors observed the school's work and looked at data on students' progress, a range of policies and planning documents, minutes of meetings, the school's self-evaluation documents, financial information, and the single central record of safeguarding checks on staff. The team analysed questionnaires returned by 346 parents and carers, 185 students and 64 staff.

Information about the school

This is an average-sized secondary school with specialist status for business and enterprise. Students are predominantly of White British heritage. The proportion of students who are known to be eligible for free school meals is below average. The proportion of students identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is average, although the percentage of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs is higher than average. Their main needs include moderate learning difficulties, behavioural, emotional and social difficulties and autistic spectrum disorder. The school has met government floor targets over the last three years.

Year 11 students were not on site during the inspection, which followed their GCSE examinations.

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	3
Achievement	3
Teaching	3
Leadership and management	3
Behaviour and safety	2
Does the school adequately promote the pupils' well-being?	Yes
Does the school adequately promote community cohesion?	Yes
Does the school provide value for money?	Yes

Key findings

Worthing High School provides its students with a satisfactory education. The school has some good features and is improving. The environment is welcoming and supportive for students, some of whom have complex needs.

Most students make satisfactory progress from average starting points. Attainment is in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 4. The progress of different groups is satisfactory, with some indications of a gradual increase, especially for most girls and those students with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Teaching is improving, but not rapidly enough to enable students to make good progress. Undoubtedly, there are some outstanding lessons which provide examples of good practice for the school to build on. Nonetheless, inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, especially in mathematics and science, hinder many students in making the best progress they are capable of. In the good and better lessons, teachers enable students to learn independently and provide regular feedback on how to reach higher levels and grades. Less effective lessons have an over-predominance of teacher talk, activities are not matched closely enough to the differing needs of the students, and teachers do not use specific feedback in order to help students identify the next steps in their learning.

The school has effectively addressed the areas for improvement from the previous inspection. As a result, attendance has improved to above average and students are receiving better academic and pastoral support. Although a small minority of students display challenging behaviour, the school addresses their needs well. The behaviour of most students is good.

Leaders and managers are appropriately deployed to ensure priorities for

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

improvement are implemented as planned. Senior staff and the governing body have a shared understanding of the priorities, although their self-evaluation of the impact of actions taken to support these priorities is more optimistic than the findings of this inspection.

Schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory, and where leadership and management are no better than 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?

- Increase the rate of progress made by students in their academic work by:
 - ensuring that the quality of teaching consistently matches the best in the school, especially in mathematics and science
 - providing more precise feedback in all lessons to help all students make the progress they are capable of
 - ensuring that most students are given opportunities to work independently.
- Ensure all leaders and managers use the information gathered from self-evaluation more systematically and analytically, in order to:
 - gain a more accurate picture of the school's performance when compared to national averages, so as to further focus the school's actions on improvement.

Main report

Attainment has kept pace with the national average since the previous inspection. The proportion of students gaining five A* to C GCSE grades including English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 4 in 2010 matched the national average. In lessons seen during the inspection and from the information available from the school's assessment system, students' progress continues to be broadly satisfactory. There are indications of a gradual increase in the speed of some students' progress, especially in Year 11, but progress in other year groups varies, depending on the quality of teaching. The majority make satisfactory progress overall.

One of the school's strengths is in its inclusive approach to supporting students, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and other complex needs. The proportion of students achieving at least one GCSE grade is significantly above the national average. The inclusion team is led and managed well, and provides timely and well-matched support for students whose behaviour is challenging, enabling them to attend more and therefore make at least satisfactory progress in line with their peers.

The school has quite rightly focused on improving the quality of teaching and learning. This has resulted in a steady increase in the proportion of good and outstanding lessons. However, the quality of teaching and learning is not yet good because in some subjects it is too inconsistent, for example in mathematics and

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

science. The inconsistency in quality is especially apparent in the mixed and lower-ability classes, preventing progress from being better than satisfactory.

In the good and outstanding lessons, students are highly motivated, learn independently and work collaboratively. Teachers apply their good subject knowledge to pose challenging questions, enabling students to progress well to the next steps in their learning. Learning objectives are specific to different abilities, and focus on developing communication skills well. Marking and feedback on students' work are precisely focused on how to achieve higher levels or grades. Teaching assistants are effectively placed alongside students who require additional support.

In lessons that are less effective, the work set does not meet the different learning needs of the students, often leading to students doing the same work regardless of their ability. Teachers talk too much, hindering students in engaging in their learning. The lessons are over-directed so that a whole class stops and starts together, regardless of whether it needs to or not. Teaching assistants work well with the students but are not able to do so while the teacher is talking. Although subject-specific vocabulary is highlighted in plans, opportunities are missed to develop literacy and numeracy skills in different subjects. As a result, students' progress is slowed down and occasionally they become frustrated.

Students who completed questionnaires and spoke to inspectors say they feel safe, and this was confirmed by the vast majority of parents and carers. They also said that generally, bullying is dealt with effectively. They know how to keep safe and are supported by the school's effective pastoral support team and systems. The recently revised tutor groups provide good opportunities for students to develop positive relationships across age ranges and develop a better understanding and tolerance of others. A significant minority of parents and carers, students and staff who returned questionnaires felt that challenging behaviour was not always dealt with in the school. Further investigation by the inspection team found that, on the whole, behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Exclusions are declining and are low. Racist incidents are rare and relationships between the students and with staff are generally positive and productive. Because of the school's effective approach to inclusion, there are a very wide range of needs amongst the students. A very small number have difficulties in managing their behaviour and are supported well. On a few occasions, inappropriate behaviour occurs both around the school and in lessons. These incidents are usually managed well, leading to an atmosphere which enables students to be safe and get on with their learning. There are a very small number of lessons where teachers spend too long on minor behavioural issues at the expense of ensuring a stronger focus on learning.

The headteacher and senior leadership team know what the school needs to do to improve further. Equality and diversity are addressed satisfactorily, with the gaps for different groups beginning to be narrowed. A recent restructuring of leadership and management roles matches the needs of the school to promote further improvement. This has enabled teaching and learning to be monitored and evaluated more regularly and senior leaders' judgements regarding the quality of teaching are

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

generally accurate. Nevertheless, the resulting improvements are only just becoming apparent. Relationships with the community are good, and the business and enterprise status aids good links with future employers and trainers in the locality. The governing body has been supportive and although it offers suitable challenge in holding the school to account, it has an inaccurate view of the school's performance. As a result of all these aspects of leadership and management, improvements are beginning to emerge but it is too soon to gauge the full impact of these actions.

The system for tracking individual students over their time in the school secures a clear picture of their progress at an individual level. Middle managers and senior leaders use this information appropriately to regularly check with teachers how individual students are progressing towards ambitious targets. However, the processes for analysing the attainment and progress of groups of students in relation to national expectations are underdeveloped. Consequently senior leaders, including the governing body, do not have an accurate picture of the school's overall performance when compared to national expectations. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students is promoted well through mixed-age tutor groups known as 'communities' and there are some good examples of students working together in lessons. The school has appropriate links with other organisations to promote community cohesion; as a result, students are developing a secure understanding of the wider and more diverse communities in Britain and further afield.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Worthing 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 346 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 952 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Q1 My child is happy at school	109	32	211	61	23	7	0	0
Q2 My child feels safe at school	112	32	217	63	13	4	2	1
Q3 The school helps my child to achieve as well as they can	120	35	191	55	29	8	4	1
Q4 The school meets my child’s particular needs	100	29	215	62	21	6	3	1
Q5 The school ensures my child is well looked after	113	33	217	63	14	4	1	0
Q6 Teaching at this school is good	103	30	210	61	17	5	2	1
Q7 There is a good standard of behaviour at this school	71	21	209	60	55	16	5	1
Q8 Lessons are not disrupted by bad behaviour	50	14	169	49	93	27	14	4
Q9 The school deals with any cases of bullying well	88	25	184	53	29	8	9	3
Q10 The school helps me to support my child’s learning	97	28	211	61	27	8	4	1
Q11 The school responds to my concerns and keeps me well informed	120	35	191	55	25	7	7	2
Q12 The school is well led and managed	113	33	206	60	15	4	3	1

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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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">■ the achievement of all pupils■ behaviour and safety■ the quality of teaching■ the effectiveness of leadership and management <p>and taking into consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ how well the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
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.



24 June 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Worthing High School, Worthing BN14 7AR

When we visited your school, we enjoyed observing many of you in lessons and talking with you about what you thought about the school. We read the questionnaires that some of you completed. As a result of the inspection, we judged Worthing High to be a satisfactory school.

Some of the good things we found were:

- your attendance has improved since the last inspection and is now above average
- quite a few of your lessons are interesting and help you make good progress
- your behaviour is generally good but in your questionnaires and in discussions, some of you told us that some students disrupt lessons and misbehave around the school – we looked closely at this and we found that a few students occasionally behave inappropriately or disrupt lessons, but these incidents are few and far between and are handled well by most staff
- the school looks after you well and the majority of you feel safe.

We did find some things that need improving. We talked to the headteacher, staff and governing body about these. They are going to be finding ways to:

- make sure that more of your lessons help more of you make good or better progress
- give you better information during lessons so that you know how to get to the next steps in your learning
- encourage more of you to be responsible for your own learning
- use the information about your learning to check how many of you are making good progress.

You can all help the school by continuing to attend well and becoming more independent in your learning. I hope you continue to enjoy your time at school and achieve the best results possible in the future.

Yours sincerely

John Seal
Her Majesty's 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. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone **0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.**