

# Taverham High School

Beech Avenue, Taverham, Norwich, NR8 6HP

## Inspection dates

29–30 November 2012

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school

- Students' achievement is good. Most students make good progress and achieve well. They gain better than expected examination results.
- An above average proportion of students gain five GCSE passes, including English and mathematics, at grades A\* to C.
- Students' behaviour is outstanding. Attendance is high and exclusions are rare. Students feel safe, valued and respected. Their excellent attitudes contribute well to the school's improved outcomes.
- The teaching in most lessons is at least good. Such lessons are planned well, challenge and enthuse the students, and staff expectations of what the students can achieve are high.
- The most effective headteacher has high aspirations for the school. Since his appointment, many improvements have been made
- Thorough leadership and management of teaching have fostered improvements to ensure good learning.
- The governing body is most effective. Governors know the school's strengths, but can also pinpoint areas for development. They are supportive of the staff, but hold them to account for the quality of the school's performance.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- In a small minority of lessons, the work is not sufficiently demanding, not enough independence is encouraged and marking and the feedback offered to students about how to improve lack rigour.
- A small minority of students, whose prior attainment is often low and who have special educational needs, but are not statemented, make less progress than such students nationally.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 54 lessons, involving 51 different teachers. Many lessons were jointly observed with senior members of staff. In addition, a number of other lessons were visited to determine how well the needs of specific students are planned for, to look at the quality of marking and assessment and the help offered to students to secure improvement.
- Meetings were held with five different groups of students, and the Chair of the Governing Body and three of her colleagues. A telephone conversation was held with a representative from the local authority. Meetings were also held with many different members of staff, including senior and middle leaders and those who are relatively new to the school.
- Inspectors took account of 117 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View) in planning the inspection. Thirty responses to the staff questionnaire were also considered.
- Inspectors scrutinised examples of students' past and present work and looked at various documents. These included the school's self-evaluation and planning, information on students' academic progress and records relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.

## Inspection team

Bill Stoneham, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Paul Bartlett	Additional Inspector
Keith Thomas	Additional Inspector
Charlotte Evers	Additional Inspector
St John Burkett	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This secondary school is larger than average.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals, and for whom the school receives additional pupil premium funding, is well below the national average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is well below the national average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is close to the national average.
- Most students are of White British heritage. The proportion of students who are from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion who speak English as an additional language are well below national averages.
- A very small number of students in Year 11 receive part of their education off-site. These students are following work-related courses.
- The school has a small but growing sixth form. Sixth form tuition is offered in association with a neighbouring secondary school.
- The school meets the current floor standard set by the government, which determines the minimum expectations for attainment and progress.

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

- Raise achievement further so that by the end of the current academic year learning in all lessons is at least good by ensuring that:
  - teachers have higher expectations of what the students can do and their planning does not concentrate simply on task completion but is designed to meet the needs of all groups of students
  - planning is improved so that the learning of the small minority of students who have special educational needs, but do not have statements of their needs, is raised to a higher level
  - students are given ample scope to learn by working individually and collaboratively, rather than simply relying on their teachers to impart knowledge
  - the good and outstanding marking and assessment practice that is evident in many lessons is spread to all.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- GCSE results show a good trend of improvement, especially in mathematics and science. Though, on average, students enter the school with prior attainment that is above the national average for their age, they leave Year 11 with GCSE results, including English and mathematics, that are above the national average and are higher than predicted given their starting points. This represents good progress and achievement.
- Results at AS and A Level are improving well and sixth form students make good progress. Outcomes are above average. In 2012, the proportion gaining grades A\* to B at A Level improved significantly.
- Different groups of students, including those who are disabled and the vast majority who have special educational needs and those for whom the school receives additional funding, learn well and make good progress. Though a small number of students with moderate learning difficulties make less progress than expected, results for all other groups have improved since the previous inspection and are close to the national average for all pupils. This demonstrates the school's success in promoting equality of opportunity for all.
- The school uses its additional funding well to support students for whom the funding is intended. These students do well in many subjects, and their scores in English and mathematics are better than the national average for this group of students.
- All students are set challenging, but realistic targets for every subject they study, and their progress against such targets is checked thoroughly. Robust checking of individual performance has contributed well to the improving outcomes.
- Individual students will only be entered early for particular GCSE examinations if there is compelling evidence that a high grade will be secured. In the overwhelming majority of cases, the school does not favour early GCSE entry.
- A small number of students in Year 11 spend part of their timetable studying off-site. Their progress is good. The arrangements for checking their work, attendance, punctuality and behaviour are effective.
- The school has a strong record of preparing its students for the next step in their careers. It is rare for any students to leave school at the end of either Year 11 or Year 13 without a placement in education, training or employment. This reflects well on the school's highly successful careers education guidance programme and the work that is done in developing students' skills in literacy, numeracy and the use of information and communication technology (ICT).
- An overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the on-line inspection questionnaire believe that their children make at least good progress. Inspection evidence endorses this view.

### The quality of teaching is good

- In most lessons, and over time, the teaching is at least good. Pace is appropriate, students are given scope to work independently and collaboratively, and the set work is exciting and engages. Students' learning is fostered by high-quality marking and feedback about how to improve

further.

- In a significant minority of lessons, the teaching is outstanding. For example, in an outstanding English lesson in Year 9 on developing an understanding of linguistic techniques, rapid learning was witnessed because the lesson was thoughtfully planned and grabbed the students' attention. Part of the lesson was based on a 1966 video extract of Alf Garnett in 'Til Death Us Do Part'. The students were fascinated by the extract, listened carefully and thoughtfully analysed the linguistic styles used. Learning was rapid.
- In the vast majority of lessons, teachers' expectations of what students can do and achieve are at least good. In an effective religious education lesson in Year 10 on the philosophy and ethics of religion, learning was rapid because the planning for learning was accurate, the activities were challenging and engaging, and students were offered appropriate opportunities to work collaboratively, including a peer assessment exercise. The lesson successfully encouraged all students to think about, and reflect on, the views of different religions and cultures.
- Sixth form teaching is good; there is some outstanding practice. This makes a strong contribution to students' good progress and achievement over time.
- In the small number of lessons that require improvement, expectations are not high enough. In these lessons, teachers do not plan accurately for the learning needs of different groups of students, especially those who have moderate learning difficulties. Pace tends to be pedestrian, independent learning is stifled because teachers talk too much, and planning concentrates on task completion rather than on activities that challenge, engage and motivate. Less effective teaching is further characterised by inadequacies in the quality of marking and the lack of advice offered to students about how to improve their work.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding**

- Behaviour over time, around the school and in lessons is outstanding. Students show respect, are courteous and are willing to help each other. Such traits contribute extremely well to their progress and achievements, as well as ensuring that the school is a happy and harmonious place.
- Particularly outstanding behaviour was seen at break and lunchtime on the first day of the inspection. Atrocious weather conditions prevented the students from venturing outside. Most students were crammed into the school hall and dining areas. Staff supervision was minimal and unobtrusive; the students' behaviour was simply outstanding.
- Attitudes to learning are positive, and older students say how much the school has improved. Younger students, who have attended for less time, simply say, 'It's great!' High levels of respect exist among students and between students and staff.
- Though a small minority of parents in the inspection questionnaire expressed some reservations about behaviour and bullying, students reported that they feel safe and well catered for. They reported that incidents of bullying based on name-calling, racism and homophobia are rare and that if anything untoward does occur, they have great faith in their staff to tackle incidents with alacrity.
- Students show a clear understanding of the pernicious effects of cyber-bullying. They praised work to raise awareness that has been done in their ICT lessons. They also reported that bullying, in all guises, often forms the basis of lessons in personal, social and health education (PSHE) and assemblies. The school does sterling work to inform its students about the dangers of bullying.

- All students are encouraged to lead safe and healthy lives. In thoughtfully planned PSHE lessons, for example, work is undertaken on a variety of themes, covering the importance of healthy eating and the adverse effects of drug and substance abuse.
- Further evidence for outstanding behaviour is reflected in the high attendance rates of all students, including sixth formers, and the very low rates of fixed-term exclusions. Students attend school, and lessons, regularly and punctually. This makes a significant contribution to their good and improving levels of achievement.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- Leadership and management at all levels, including the sixth form, are good. The school is well led by its visionary headteacher. He is well supported by his strong deputy and his effective senior team. Further good support is provided by most other staff.
- Procedures to check and evaluate how well the school is doing have improved since the previous inspection and are now embedded. As a result, the vast majority of students, including those in the sixth form, make at least good progress.
- Teaching and learning are managed well and there is good provision for staff development. This is reflected in learning that is mainly good, with a significant proportion that is outstanding.
- Self-evaluation is accurate. Senior staff and governors know the school well. They are aware of its many strengths, but can identify where further improvements are needed.
- Improvements in examination results and students' excellent attitudes to learning can be attributed to the variety of subjects available, especially in Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form. The range of experiences available contributes well to the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Senior leaders have identified that some students have lower than expected literacy skills. Additional funding made available through the pupil premium is being used effectively to raise literacy standards through additional lessons, for example. Such funding is further utilised to ensure vulnerable students can access all aspects of the school's provision, including taking a full part in educational visits.
- The school's desire to develop international understanding also contributes well to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. During the inspection, the school celebrated a 30-year partnership with a school located near Cologne in Germany. A partnership with a school in China, a planned visit this summer to Borneo and various other exchanges and educational visits serve to widen the students' experiences and heighten their cultural awareness.
- Though a small minority of staff in their inspection questionnaire suggested that there should be more consultation, most are happy and pleased to be at the school. As one responded, 'I enjoy working in a warm and caring environment in which I feel thoroughly supported.'
- Though the school often works independently of the local authority, when they have worked in unison, partnership work has been good, contributing well to improved outcomes.
- Arrangements for safeguarding are thorough, including the risk assessments for the occasions when students are working off-site.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors have a realistic understanding of how well the school is performing, and the quality of teaching and learning. They rightly judge that the school offers a good education. They are fully aware of its strengths and where improvements are needed. They hold the school to account well for its performance. They analyse outcomes, including examination performance; they are aware of the many strengths that exist in teaching and they are fully involved in ensuring that there is a close link between salary progression and the effectiveness of teaching. Through the training they have received, they are aware of how performance management works. They thoroughly monitor expenditure, including the way extra funding through the pupil premium is spent. They are proud of the school they represent.

## What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>



## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	121181
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	402013

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>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1179
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	65
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Margaret Garwood
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ron Munson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	18 May 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	01603 860505
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