

# Farlingaye High School

Ransom Road, Woodbridge, IP12 4JX

**Inspection dates** 25–26 April 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	<b>Outstanding</b>	<b>1</b>
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school.

- Pupils make outstanding progress and reach well-above-average standards in their personal and academic skills because teaching is excellent at all stages throughout the school.
- Pupils' behaviour is excellent, their attitudes to work are exceptionally good, and they thoroughly enjoy school and the rich range of learning and social activities that prepare them extremely well for later life and the world of work.
- Pupils feel safe in school. They say that bullying is extremely rare and when any does occur, the staff deal with it swiftly and effectively.
- Teachers usually give pupils outstanding personal and academic help and guidance. Just occasionally, the work set in lessons is not precisely planned to get the most out of all ability groups, and pupils do not make the best possible use of the advice they are given in marking.
- The headteacher provides excellent leadership. She works successfully with other leaders and governors to raise standards and improve pupils' progress, as well as provide effective training to improve the quality of teaching.
- The sixth form is outstanding. The students make excellent progress because teaching is consistently of a very high quality.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 58 teachers in 59 lessons or parts of lessons. Three of these were observed jointly with senior leaders to determine how accurately they evaluate teaching.
- Meetings were held with staff, pupils, parents and governors. The lead inspector also met with the headteacher's performance adviser.
- Inspectors examined documents about the school's work, including information about the achievement of pupils, development planning and the school's own judgements on its strengths and weaknesses.
- They took account of 468 responses to the Parent View online questionnaire, and the school's own survey of parental views.

## Inspection team

Edward Wheatley, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Isobel Randall

Additional Inspector

Brenda Watson

Additional Inspector

Michael Stanton

Additional Inspector

Godfrey Bancroft

Additional Inspector

Piers Ranger

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is larger than most secondary schools.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is well below average, and no pupils are at the early stages of learning English.
- The proportion of pupils supported through school action is below average, and the proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for the pupil premium is below average. This is additional government funding for children looked after by the local authority, pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and children who have a parent in the armed forces.
- A small number of students are partly educated in Otley College to provide them with opportunities to gain work-related qualifications.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school takes students from other schools into its sixth form, and currently about a quarter of the sixth form is made up of students from other schools.
- The school became an academy on 1 July 2011. The predecessor school, also called Farlingaye High School, was judged to be outstanding when it was last inspected by Ofsted in March 2007.

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

- Improve the quality of good teaching to outstanding by making sure that:
  - work is always matched precisely to the learning needs of pupils, particularly in the classes where pupils have a wide range of ability
  - pupils always follow the advice on how to improve their work that teachers give in their marking.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Standards are well above average by the end of Year 11. They are currently rising and have risen since the school became an academy. GCSE results dipped in 2012, but the reasons for this were quickly identified and improvements were made that have led to a considerable rise in levels of attainment in the current Year 11. This represents outstanding progress from pupils' broadly average attainment on entry to the school.
- The proportions of pupils achieving five or more GCSE passes at A\* to C grades, and the highest A\* to A grades, are rising.
- All pupils read well. Almost all pupils explain their understanding and knowledge extremely well. Their written work in all subjects is usually detailed, accurate and well presented.
- Pupils have well above average mathematical skills that are reinforced through being used regularly in different subjects. They calculate confidently and accurately, both mentally and on paper. Pupils handle and interpret numerical information presented to them in graphs and charts extremely well.
- Pupils who take their mathematics GCSE examinations early are not penalised. Those who achieve the highest grades take statistics to GCSE level, while those who are not so successful continue with the mathematics course and take the examination again at the end of Year 11.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs make excellent progress. Support staff provide accurate, sensitive help. They encourage pupils to work independently or with other pupils, and to solve problems themselves. This is very successful and these pupils become confident in using the skills they gain.
- Pupils who start Year 7 with poorer English and mathematical skills than other pupils make fast progress and catch up quickly. This is because they receive short-term individual support until they reach the levels they should be at.
- The small number of pupils in Years 10 and 11 who attend a local college for work-related courses are successful and achieve very good results in the courses they follow.
- Pupils supported by the pupil premium funding make excellent progress. Funding is used extremely well to provide support for individual and small groups of pupils, and to make sure they have the full range of opportunities other pupils have. While the standards they reached in 2012 were on average about five terms behind those of other pupils, the gap was narrower than for similar pupils nationally. They did better in mathematics than in English in 2012, but the difference has reduced considerably. Many of these pupils are in top sets and achieve as well as other pupils.
- Students in the sixth form make excellent progress. They did very well in examinations in nearly all subjects in 2012. Where students unexpectedly underperformed in a small number of subjects at A and AS levels, the reasons were identified and resolved, and students' current performance is high. The small number of students following applied A and AS level courses make excellent progress.

**The quality of teaching is outstanding**

- Teaching is usually fast paced, challenging and planned on the basis of accurate assessments of pupils' performance and what they need to do to make excellent progress. The great majority of lessons provide activities that ensure the most able pupils do extremely well, and that pupils who learn more slowly are well supported to help them achieve as well as they can.
  - Lessons are long, and teachers plan a wide range of activities to make sure pupils' attention and efforts are maintained. They do this extremely well. Typically, teachers make sure that there are many opportunities for pupils to work independently and in groups, to write about what they learn and to discuss their learning with each other, and to carry out practical tasks.
  - When teachers organise group work, they make sure that pupils explain their understanding, question each other, and collaborate over how tasks are carried out. This promotes pupils' confidence in their own learning and their moral, social and cultural development very effectively.
  - The questions teachers ask are designed to make pupils think hard, and they frequently draw pupils into discussions so that ideas and understanding are strengthened and extended.
  - Teachers promote the development of pupils' literacy, numeracy and computer skills exceptionally well. Pupils are expected to explain their knowledge and understanding in speech and writing, to use and interpret numerical information, and to use computers to research and present their work.
  - Learning assistants work outstandingly well with teachers. They plan work for pupils in great detail. Their support for pupils is exceptionally good, and involves providing good opportunities for pupils to work by themselves, to explain their own thinking to adults and to other pupils.
  - The range of subjects taught is very wide and is carefully planned to meet pupils' academic, future career and personal interests. The small range of work-related courses provided at a local college is very well planned, and the school checks to make sure the courses are demanding and continue to meet pupils' individual needs.
  - Teachers involve pupils in assessing their own progress extremely well. The main learning points of lessons are often linked to examination mark schemes. Using these, pupils are encouraged to assess not only what they have learnt, but also how their learning improves during the course of a lesson. This has a strong impact on helping pupils know exactly what they need to learn to do well.
  - Teachers' marking is extremely good. It nearly always gives pupils a very clear picture of how well they are doing and what the next steps in learning are. Pupils are very clear about what their targets are, and most follow teachers' guidance on how to improve their work. However, some do not and this occasionally slows the learning of these pupils.
  - In a small proportion of lessons, particularly where the ability range of pupils is wide, work is not demanding enough for the most able or planned carefully enough to support the learning of the less-able pupils.
  - Teaching in the sixth form is outstanding. Teachers have excellent subject knowledge. They
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have an extensive knowledge of how well each student in their classes makes progress and what they need to support their learning. Students are encouraged to identify the specific topics they need to revise for examinations. Teachers then support them through demanding questions, extension materials and personal support to make sure they do well. The range of courses provided is wide and caters extremely well for students' higher education and career aspirations.

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

- The behaviour and attitudes of pupils are outstanding. Pupils are exceptionally keen to learn and, without being prompted in any way, maintain a high level of concentration throughout their lessons.
- Relationships are excellent. Pupils support each other in lessons, and are considerate to each other in and around school. They work together in small groups, and share and collaborate in practical tasks, exceptionally well.
- Pupils are keen to take part in the wide range of musical, dramatic and sporting activities out of school time. Boys and girls participate eagerly in the musical and choral productions. These contribute exceptionally well to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The wide range of revision classes held after school and sometimes at weekends are extremely well supported.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of the different kinds of bullying, and very few can recall any bullying incident. They say they would not hesitate in going to any member of staff for help if they were worried.
- Pupils know how to stay safe. They move around the building, often through narrow corridors and entrances, sensibly and safely. In workshops and laboratories they handle and use equipment and chemicals safely and carefully.
- Attendance is above average, and it has improved steadily in recent years. The school is rigorous in encouraging regular attendance and works effectively with outside agencies such as local authority staff to reduce absence.
- Students in the sixth form behave outstandingly well. Their attendance is above average. They have extremely positive views about the school, and highly appreciate the high-quality teaching and personal and academic advice they receive from teachers. They are keen to work with each other, and to argue their case in discussions about their work.

### **The leadership and management** are outstanding

- The headteacher provides outstanding direction for the school to maintain its strengths and to eliminate weaknesses, however minor. She is exceptionally well supported by all other leaders and staff.
  - Leaders have an excellent understanding of where the school needs to focus its efforts to make improvements. It took rapid and effective action to deal with small slips in achievement in 2012.
  - Leaders have eliminated inadequate teaching, and they work effectively to improve teaching from good to outstanding. Training and support for teachers are exceptionally good. Teachers know their targets to help them improve teaching, and these take full account of pupils'
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progress, their individual needs in terms of developing their personal and professional skills, and the school's wider priorities.

- The school has maintained strong links with the local authority, and gains considerable benefit from reviewing teaching and its effectiveness in conjunction with local authority staff.
  - The school manages the range of subjects it teaches exceptionally well. Visits to universities, field trips, drama and art events, and several residential trips all support and enrich pupils' learning. Along with activities and exceptionally good displays in school that highlight art, science and literature, they also promote pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural development extremely well.
  - Most parents and carers are very pleased with the school. The school's communications with homes are exceptionally good. The Friends of Farlingaye High School parents' organisation is very supportive and raises considerable funds to improve the school buildings and provide resources.
  - The school encourages tolerance and understanding of individuals and different groups of people exceptionally well, and is effective in eliminating all forms of discrimination. It is successful in making sure all pupils, whatever their abilities or backgrounds, achieve equally well. Standards are rising, teaching is steadily improving, and pupils' attendance has improved. These improvements demonstrate the school's strong capacity for further improvement.
  - **The governance of the school:**
    - The governing body is exceptionally well informed about how the school operates, and its members have close links with the different subject areas. Governors have a very good understanding of how well pupils perform compared with similar schools nationally, and about the small differences between subjects. They monitor how effectively funds are spent on supporting different groups of pupils, particularly those pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium. Governors question and challenge the headteacher over the performance of pupils and expenditure, and support the school in its work to further improve standards. They know how well the school evaluates the quality of teaching, and how teachers' pay rises are firmly linked to pupils' progress, staff training needs and the school's priorities for improvement. Governors are knowledgeable and well trained. They meet their responsibilities in ensuring that national safeguarding requirements are fully met, and that staff are properly checked before taking up appointment.
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## 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>	136834
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	412382

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Academy converter
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained
<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>	1840
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	410
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Tim Fosker
<b>Headteacher</b>	Sue Hargadon
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
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