

Twynham School

Sopers Lane, Christchurch, Dorset, BH23 1JF

Inspection dates 25–26 April 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
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

- Achievement is outstanding because students in all years make rapid and sustained progress and standards achieved in GCSE examinations are significantly above the national average for the majority of learner groups.
- The school has used additional government funding to support students who find learning difficult exceptionally well. The progress of these students is outstanding.
- Teaching and learning are outstanding because teachers have very high expectations and use their excellent subject knowledge to plan lessons that challenge and motivate students to achieve their best.
- The school uses the partnership with another local secondary school to drive a highly effective curriculum which meets students' needs and helps them to achieve exceptionally well.
- Students' behaviour is outstanding. They are immensely proud of their school and are overwhelmingly polite and courteous to each other, staff and visitors. Attendance, including in the sixth form, is above average.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported extremely well, contributing greatly to their positive relationships with their teachers and with one another.
- The inspirational headteacher is very well supported by his senior leadership team and by the outstanding governing body. Together they have been successful in their persistent quest for scholarship and, as a consequence, all students learn exceptionally well and have high personal aspirations.
- The sixth form is outstanding. Students benefit from excellent teaching and are encouraged to be ambitious about their future education and careers.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 57 lessons including twelve joint lesson observations with senior leaders. Inspectors also observed the routines for registration, attended an assembly and observed Year 10 students participating in an 'employability day'.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior leaders, students, governors and with staff, including subject and pastoral leaders. The lead inspector also held a telephone interview with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors considered 133 responses to the on-line questionnaire (Parent View), two additional written comments from parents, the outcomes of the school's biannual parental survey and the results from 106 staff questionnaires.
- The inspection team observed the school's work and scrutinised statistical information about students' achievement, attendance and exclusions. In addition they reviewed the school's evaluation of how well it is doing, policies, minutes of governing body meetings, safeguarding documents and samples of students' work.

Inspection team

Caroline Dearden, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Richard Butler	Additional Inspector
Stephanie Matthews	Additional Inspector
Margaret Faull	Additional Inspector
Terry Payne	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Twynham School is a larger-than-average secondary school which converted to academy status in April 2011. When its predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be outstanding overall.
- The school has Leading Edge and Training School status with specialisms in technology and music.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion who speak English as an additional language are very low compared to national averages.
- The proportion of students for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals, those who are looked after by local authority and the children of service families) is less than half the national average. About one in 5 students are eligible for the Year 7 catch-up premium.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is similar to the national average, and the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- Some students in Key Stage 4 attend alternative provision through the partnership with The Grange School.
- The movement of students in and out of school at times other than the start of Year 7 is much lower than that seen nationally and retention rates for the sixth form are higher than national.
- The school exceeds the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Further increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by;
 - making sure that teachers' planning and feedback consistently provides students with opportunities to respond to advice, to practise and develop skills or to undertake new challenges

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Achievement is outstanding because progress for all groups of learners, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds and the proportion who speak English as an additional language, is rapid and sustained. Student assessment information provided by the school, which is based on results from GCSE examinations taken early, indicates that the percentage of students likely to make better than expected progress in both English and mathematics will be more than twice that found nationally.
- The above average points scored by students in their best eight examination courses have been significantly above the national average since the last inspection of the predecessor school in 2006.
- The learning and progress of groups of students who are disabled or who have special educational needs is similarly outstanding because their needs are well known and because of the high quality individual and personalised support available to them.
- All groups of students eligible for the pupil premium reach similar levels of attainment to other students in the school in both English and mathematics as measured by their average points scores at the end of Key Stage 4. They make outstanding progress because of the wide range of personal and academic support provided. Year 11 students in 2012 achieved two GCSE grades above similar students nationally in both English and mathematics.
- Students with poor reading skills and those eligible for the Year 7 catch-up premium make rapid gains. Within two terms of joining the school three quarters of them no longer need additional one-to-one support and, by the end of Year 8, reading ages for all students in the group exceed their chronological ages.
- Senior staff review and revise the curriculum and the organisation of subject teaching on a regular basis to ensure that all students are supported and have the opportunity to make exceptional progress. The use of early entry to GCSE examinations is very effectively managed to make certain that students can achieve the highest possible grades. For example, 93% of students in Year 11 have secured at least three levels progress from Key Stage 2 to Key Stage 4 based on results from the mathematics GCSE examination taken in January 2013. All continue to study mathematics in order to achieve even higher grades; this includes those progressing from grade A to A*.
- Students attending alternative provision through the partnership with The Grange School also make excellent progress and achieve at least as well as other students nationally. The skilful organisation of their curriculum ensures that they study English, mathematics and science at GCSE with their school peers.
- Results for AS and A level examinations for 2011 and 2012 show that students in the sixth form achieve exceptionally well. Data provided by the school indicates even higher outcomes for 2013 because gaps in students' understanding between GCSE and AS level have been addressed extremely well.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- The vast majority of teaching in all key stages is at least good and much is outstanding. Teachers have high expectations of all students so that they feel encouraged and supported to achieve the highest levels or grades.
- The many outstanding lessons have the following features in common:
 - Teachers' enthusiasm and love of their subject being shared with and reciprocated by students.
 - Questioning and strong subject knowledge used skilfully to develop students' ability to explain, analyse and evaluate their work. For example, in a Year 7 science lesson, students independently developed theories to explain the chemical reactions during the neutralisation of

an acid by an alkali. Their hypotheses were scientifically correct and more typical of the depth of learning required at GCSE than at Key Stage 3.

- Challenge and pace which require students to think deeply about their learning and to explore a range of possible responses. For example, towards the end of a history lesson Year 7 students commented, 'When we leave lessons we always feel that we have learnt a lot'.
- Flexibility to respond to the needs of students. For example, as seen in a Year 11 science lesson where the teacher had planned revision activities based on email communications from students who had themselves identified areas of the subject they did not understand.
- Where teaching is not outstanding teachers occasionally either do not plan work or provide feedback that is sufficiently challenging or responsive to students' needs to practise and develop skills.
- Literacy and communication skills are taught exceptionally well. Students read accurately and fluently, developing linguistic skills above the level expected for their age. As a consequence students are able to debate and thoroughly explain their thinking. For example, in a Year 13 Spanish lesson students debated the morality of in-vitro fertilisation entirely in the target language.
- Teachers know their students well and very good use is made of both resources and information from assessments to plan interesting and stimulating lessons. Homework is often used to very effectively support new learning.

The behaviour and safety of pupils is outstanding

- In the overwhelming majority of lessons observed behaviour was good or outstanding. Students have very positive attitudes to learning and their relationships with one another and with their teachers are exceptionally strong.
- Students attending alternative provision behave outstandingly well and are kept safe.
- Students move around the site promptly, use the freely available study spaces at every opportunity and gather in easy social groups during breaks and lunch periods. Students' awareness of personal safety, including e-safety and cyber-bullying, is raised through assemblies, tutor time, visiting speakers and during lessons. They state bullying in all its forms is rare and, when it does occur, is dealt with swiftly and very effectively.
- Students' attitudes towards difference are exemplary. For example, students were observed escorting students from a special school through the site, engaging with them well and showing appropriate peer respect. Incidents of racism or discrimination are very rare.
- Excellent promotion of students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development has a highly positive impact on the way in which students interact with each other and the way in which they welcome those new to the school. For example, the 40% of students joining the sixth form from other schools integrate quickly making friendships with those who have been in the school since Year 7.
- Students are immensely proud of their school and clearly appreciate the staff interest in them as individuals. In interviews with students, when asked what they would do to improve the school they consistently found almost nothing to criticise. For example, Year 11 students commented, 'It is genuinely an amazing school. It's a comprehensive school; a wide range of people can achieve really well. There is no limit to how high you can achieve'.
- Parents and carers who responded to the Parent View questionnaire were very positive about the school; all felt that their children were happy, well looked after and safe. The school's own surveys of parents and carers confirm this view which is also endorsed by the views of staff.
- Attendance, including in the sixth form and for those students attending alternative provision, is high.

The leadership and management is outstanding

- The headteacher provides strong and inspirational leadership. Together with the outstanding governing body and senior and middle leaders, he has been uncompromising in driving up standards of achievement. His passion for scholarship ensures that all students learn exceptionally well and that short-cuts to examination success are not a feature of teaching in the school.
- All leaders and managers, including those responsible for governance, share an ambitious vision for the success of the school. This is reflected in the way in which the curriculum is adapted and changed to meet the needs of the different groups of learners. An example being the decision not to introduce BTEC qualifications and the belief that all students have the potential to succeed at GCSE in English, mathematics and science.
- The school's well-developed systems for tracking students' progress enable timely, personalised and highly effective intervention. This, together with the very robust performance management system and highly effective professional development, ensures that teaching is of the highest quality so that students make outstanding progress.
- The close partnership with The Grange School supports vocational courses and ensures that all are attending, behaving and making very good progress. Alternative provision for the most vulnerable students is well matched to their needs.
- The curriculum in all key stages, including the sixth form, ensures that students of all aptitudes and abilities are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their education or training exceptionally.
- Leaders at all levels, including governors, regularly evaluate the school's performance. Their judgements are accurate and plans for further development are very well focussed on securing even higher standards..
- The local authority provides light-touch support for this very successful school because it has faith and confidence in the ability of the headteacher to lead the school in the quest for sustained excellence.
- The clarity and extent of information provided to the governing body is exceptional. Senior staff are open to questions and ideas, including those from students, and this is a feature of the way senior staff line manage subject and pastoral leaders.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet the current statutory requirements and equality of opportunity is promoted well through initiatives to promote diversity and by support for individual students.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is highly effective and, because of the clarity of information available from senior leaders, is very well informed and equipped to challenge and support the school. Governors compare the school's performance with schools nationally and are influential in holding the headteacher and senior leaders to account. Governors are supported well by the local authority to regularly undertake additional training in order to further develop their effectiveness. As a consequence they ensure that the school's financial and other resources, including the pupil premium, are used efficiently to help students make outstanding progress. Governors set targets for the headteacher, and check carefully how well these are being met. They also take an active part in performance management, tackling under-performance and ensuring that teachers' pay progression is related to their effectiveness in raising standards.

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

Unique reference number	136649
Local authority	Dorset
Inspection number	413306

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

Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11-18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1655
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	407
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Julian Burton
Headteacher	Terry Fish
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01202 486287
Fax number	01202 486230
Email address	office@twynhamschool.com

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