

Reepham High School and College

Whitwell Road, Reepham, Norwich, NR10 4JT

Inspection dates 8–9 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Good 2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Teachers know their subjects well. They plan lessons that interest and engage students. Students take part enthusiastically in activities that develop their knowledge, skills and understanding.
- Students are quick learners. They use their literacy and numeracy skills well in a wide range of subjects, especially in the sixth form.
- Students make good progress. Students are on track to attain above-average results.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs are given good support and make good progress.
- Students behave very well in lessons and feel safe at school. They are well mannered, friendly, and courteous to adults and each other.
- The sixth form is outstanding. Students are on track to attain high AS and A level examination results. Sixth-form students are very good at working independently and they make outstanding progress.
- School leaders have high expectations for examination success and for the behaviour of students. These are shared by the governing body and staff.
- School leaders have introduced effective measures to tackle underachievement, particularly among disadvantaged students.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers do not give students in Years 7 to 11 enough opportunities to work independently and apply their knowledge and skills.
- Students' attendance is only average.
- The school's self-evaluation does not take enough account of data on students' progress. Senior leaders sometimes miss areas where improvement is needed and so judge the quality of teaching too generously.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 40 lessons, 12 of which were observed jointly with senior leaders. They also observed two school assemblies and two registration sessions.
- Inspectors held meetings with members of the governing body, school leaders, teachers and students of all ages. They also talked to students about their learning during the lessons that they visited.
- Inspectors took account of responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) completed by 187 parents and carers and to inspection questionnaires completed by 77 staff.
- They looked closely at the work of the school, taking account of safeguarding, school self-evaluation and performance management documents, and records relating to attendance, behaviour and the quality of teaching.

Inspection team

Nicholas Asker, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Keith Wheeldon	Additional Inspector
Godfrey Bancroft	Additional Inspector
Brenda Watson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Reepham High School and College converted to become an academy on 1 October 2012. When the predecessor school, Reepham High School and College, was last inspected by Ofsted, in September 2008, it was judged to be outstanding. At that time, it was known as Reepham High School and provided education for students aged 11–16. A new sixth form for 225 students opened in September 2009, when the school adopted its current name.
- The school is an average-sized secondary school.
- There are very few students from minority ethnic groups or who speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of students supported through the pupil premium is below average. Pupil premium is funding provided by the government to support students known to be eligible for free school meals, students who are looked after by the local authority and students who have a parent in the armed forces.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- Vocational education is provided for 16 students in Year 10 at Jo Academy and Norfolk Training Services, both in Norwich, and at Easton College. There is provision for 33 students in Year 11 at Reepham Fishery, Norfolk Training Services, Norwich City College, Jo Academy, Easton College and the Rural Norfolk Federation at Fakenham.
- The school meets 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?

- Ensure that teaching is of consistently high quality by:
 - providing students with more opportunities to work independently in Years 7 to 11 so that they can develop their own ideas
 - sharing outstanding practice more widely, so that the best elements are more commonplace.
- Improve the rigour of school self-evaluation by:
 - analysing data on students' progress in more detail, particularly for lower-attaining students and those supported through the pupil premium
 - making sure that judgements about the quality of teaching are more directly linked to the progress and achievement of students.
- Improve attendance by ensuring that all absences are quickly followed up.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students start at the school with average attainment. They make good progress in English and in most of their other lessons, and steady progress in mathematics. In English and mathematics, many higher- and middle-attaining students are making better progress than expected, but lower-attaining students do not always make as much progress as they should.
- The school makes good use of the additional funding it receives through the pupil premium. As a result, these students are making better progress in English than others in the school. In mathematics, their progress is improving. As this is the school's first year as an academy, it is not possible to compare the relative performance in examinations of students eligible for the pupil premium.
- Students who arrive at the school in Year 7 with below-average standards are making good progress as a result of the school's effective use of additional catch-up funding. The majority of these students have made faster progress than expected since arriving at the school.
- Sixth-form students make better progress than the national average and, as a result, their attainment is outstanding, especially in Year 12.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs do well. Skilful intervention by enthusiastic support staff and well-planned learning activities enable these students to thrive and make good progress.
- Literacy levels among students are high and they read widely for research and pleasure. Students often read aloud and analyse the derivation of words in different subjects. For example, in a religious education lesson, students discussing marriage worked out the meaning of 'bigamy' by considering the meaning of 'bi' in 'bicycle'.
- Students capable of achieving the highest grades in mathematics are entered for their GCSE examination at the end of Year 10. In Year 11, they study mathematics at a more advanced level, which prepares them well for sixth-form study. At Christmas, in Year 11, another, much larger, group of students is entered early. Overall, these arrangements work satisfactorily.
- Students in Years 10 and 11 who attend vocational courses at other colleges or centres are making less progress than expected in English and mathematics, but their attendance is above average and their progress on their vocational courses is good. At the end of their time at the school, all students are expected to stay in education, training or apprenticeships, or go into employment.
- In the sixth form, students are very good at working independently, and they make excellent use of the sixth-form centre for quiet private study. Progress made by these students is in line with that of the top 25% of schools in the country.
- Many students in Years 7 to 11 rely too much on their teachers or other adults to suggest a method to follow, rather than developing their own approaches when asked to solve problems.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good throughout the school and, in some lessons, it is outstanding. Parents and carers overwhelmingly and rightly believe that their children are taught well. In the sixth form, especially, teachers use their excellent subject knowledge to challenge students and provide highly personalised lessons. This approach is reflected in the outstanding achievement in the sixth form.
- Teachers plan their lessons well, and use a variety of teaching techniques to maintain the engagement of their students. For example, students in an outstanding mathematics lesson in Year 11 used a 'speed-dating' approach to enliven a challenging revision lesson. Many teachers make good use of their questioning skills to probe students' understanding, so that misconceptions can be quickly identified.
- Students frequently work in pairs or small groups to discuss their ideas. Teachers often emphasise and develop students' literacy skills, and expect students to read aloud, irrespective of subject. Mathematics skills are used well in other subjects.
- Teachers manage the behaviour of students well, lessons are purposeful and hard work is the norm. Teachers are dedicated, professional and give their time freely to help students outside school hours. During the inspection, students were keen to praise the helpfulness of their teachers.
- Disabled students, those who have special educational needs and those receiving other additional support receive skilled and effective help from specialist staff. They respond well to the students' individual needs and, as a result, these students make good progress.
- Marking is good and teachers provide useful written feedback. However, teachers do not always ask students to correct mistakes in their punctuation and spelling, untidiness is not always challenged, and those with poor handwriting are not always given help to improve.
- In a small minority of lessons, the teaching is less effective. For example, the pace of work is sometimes too slow and work is not always matched well to the different levels of attainment of students. More generally, in weaker lessons, teachers give students too few opportunities to develop their own ideas and approaches.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students are courteous and polite, get along well together and are respectful of staff. Their attitudes to learning are very positive. Students arrive to lessons punctually and are keen to contribute their ideas. Student behaviour around the school is calm and sensible.
- Sixth-form students are mature, hard working and well motivated. Many act as mentors to younger students and provide good role models for them to follow.
- In many cases, students' behaviour seen in lessons was outstanding. Misbehaviour by students is rare, and is dealt with effectively through a system of rewards and sanctions which is understood by all pupils. Students are very rarely removed from lessons and the number of fixed-term and permanent exclusions is low.

- Students feel safe. They report that instances of bullying are very rare, and they are dealt with swiftly and effectively by the school when they occur. Students take their e-safety seriously and are aware of the dangers of cyber-bullying.
- Child protection, health and safety arrangements are all good.
- The behaviour and safety of students are not outstanding because attendance rates are not as good as they should be, although they are improving and are now close to the national average. The school has made good use of pupil premium funding, which has had a significant impact on reducing absence among supported students. The school is working hard to ensure that all students attend regularly.

The leadership and management are good

- The senior leaders and the governing body share a common vision for the school, which they communicate effectively to the wider school community. This vision is reflected in the very positive views expressed by parents, students and staff.
- The school promotes the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. A wide variety of social and cultural activities are provided during and outside the school day. These are much appreciated by the students. Assemblies and lessons in English and religious education are used well to explore cultural, moral and spiritual issues.
- The school offers a largely traditional curriculum for the majority of the students, with exclusively academic courses in the sixth form. The school provides vocational courses away from the school site for almost 50 students in Years 10 and 11, and this helps maintain the motivation and good attendance of these students.
- Senior and subject leaders have worked well to improve standards of literacy across the school. Teachers create many opportunities to develop reading, writing and oracy skills in different subjects.
- Outstanding leadership has enabled the successful sixth form to be established in a relatively short period of time, with exceptional progress by the students from the start.
- Senior leaders know the relative strengths of their teaching staff well, and regularly check the quality of teaching. Their judgements are based on regular lesson observations but they take too little account of the long-term progress made by students. As a result, the school's view of the quality of teaching is sometimes too generous.
- Self-evaluation by the senior leadership team of the school's performance, including that of the predecessor school, is too generous, with too much attention given to external examination results as students leave the school and insufficient focus on the progress they make throughout Years 7 to 11.
- Measures taken by senior leaders to improve teaching mean that students are currently on target to achieve above-average results. There is a thorough process of lesson observation that has helped senior leaders to tackle weaker teaching, but teachers need more opportunities to share outstanding practice.

■ With the introduction of extra funding, students eligible for pupil premium funding are making much better progress, particularly in English. The school is aware of some shortcomings in the performance of these students but leaders have not analysed this in enough detail and have yet to fully evaluate the impact of the various initiatives to help these students to make the same good progress and achieve as well as their classmates.

■ **The governance of the school**

- The governing body holds senior leaders to account effectively for students' achievement through regular reports and committee scrutiny. However, because the senior leaders' evaluation of the school is too generous, governors are not always made aware of shortcomings in the progress made by particular students. In other respects, governors are well informed about the quality of teaching and, in consultation with senior leaders, have ensured that pay increases are linked firmly with good teaching and students' achievement. They are also well informed about new initiatives; for example, the impact of the sixth-form mentoring scheme, which is helping Year 7 students to catch up with their learning in English.

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 students' needs. This ensures that students 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 students' needs. Students 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 students 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	138829
Local authority	N/A
Inspection number	411983

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

Type of school	Academy converter
School category	Non-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	1029
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	204
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Tony Williams
Principal	Mark Farrar
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01603 870328
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