

Highworth Warneford School

Shrivenham Road, Highworth, Swindon, SN6 7BZ

Inspection dates 15–16 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	N/A
	This inspection:	Good	2
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 make good and often very good progress so that they achieve well in their GCSEs, and exceptionally well in English.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make equally good progress as others.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding. Lessons are well planned and many include a rich variety of activities.
- Students are proud of their school. They show respect to one another and to adults. Students feel safe and their behaviour is outstanding both in lessons and around the school.
- School leaders have been successful in raising achievement and improving the quality of teaching. They have taken strong action to improve standards.
- Governors are effective and show a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- Students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good so that the students are well prepared to be considerate citizens.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- All groups of students do not make equally rapid progress. Students of middle ability and those known to be eligible for free school meals do not make as much progress as more able students.
- Achievement in some subjects is not as strong as in others.
- There is not enough outstanding teaching. The strengths present in the school in developing literacy need to be shared fully across all subject departments and work needs to be set at a level so it challenges students and is not too easy or too hard.
- Written advice from some teachers is not as good as it could be, so students do not always know what to do to improve.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 39 lessons, of which 11 were jointly observed with a member of the school's leadership team. Inspectors visited assemblies, tutor groups and other learning activities.
- Inspectors held meetings with two groups of students, talked with students around the school and scrutinised samples of students' work.
- Meetings were held with senior leaders, middle managers and two members of the governing body.
- A variety of school documentation was examined, including the school's records of current students' progress, self-evaluation summaries and improvement plans, behaviour and attendance logs, records relating to safeguarding and those relating to the management of staff performance.
- Inspectors took account of the questionnaire completed by 52 staff, together with 76 responses submitted to the on-line questionnaire Parent View.

Inspection team

Sean Thornton, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Teresa Gilpin	Additional Inspector
Justine Hocking	Additional Inspector
Rob Isaac	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is an average-sized secondary school.
- A lower than average proportion of students is known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in local authority care, students from service families and those known to be eligible for free school meals. Almost all of these students in this school are those known to be eligible for free school meals.
- Most students are from White British backgrounds and the proportion of students whose first language is not English is much below the national average.
- The proportions of disabled students and those who have special educational needs who are supported at both school action and school action plus are below average; the proportion with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- A small number of students attend alternative provision at Swindon College for part of their studies.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- Highworth Warneford School converted to become an academy school in July 2011. When its predecessor school, also called Highworth Warneford School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was judged to be outstanding overall.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching by:
 - ensuring that the work provided for all students provides them with an appropriate level of challenge so it is not too hard or too easy
 - making sure that students' work is marked frequently by all teachers and that it provides students with advice on how to improve
 - developing the strategies that have been introduced to improve literacy in all subjects so that they are consistently applied across the school.
- Improve student achievement by:
 - ensuring that all groups of students, including those of middle ability and those eligible for free school meals, make outstanding progress and that they make equally strong progress in all their subjects.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- The proportion of students gaining five or more GCSE grades A* to C including English and mathematics is increasing. In 2012, results were above average in many subjects but disappointing results in mathematics meant that overall results were broadly average. The school has dealt effectively with this issue and detailed tracking shows that the proportion is now projected to be above average.
- Very large numbers of students study three sciences to GCSE level and gain good results. High standards of attainment are also seen in other subjects such as music and English, but students are less successful in French, geography and physical education.
- Students make good progress overall. However, there is some variation between groups of students, with those of middle ability and those known to be eligible for free school meals making less progress than students of high ability. All students make outstanding progress in English.
- The needs of disabled students and those with special educational needs are considered carefully when they join the school. Appropriate interventions, including the provision of one-to-one teaching, are then provided throughout the school. This enables these students to make good progress, in line with their peers. The small number of students with English as an additional language makes more rapid progress than their peers due to targeted support.
- The school makes good use of the pupil premium funding to support the progress of the eligible students. Students of all abilities are supported, for example, by providing revision programmes during school holidays, financing additional staffing for emotional and academic monitoring, and ensuring that all students can attend cultural enrichment activities. Results in English and mathematics for these students at the end of Key Stage 4 are one grade lower than their peers, but much above the national averages for this group of students. Their progress is good and the gaps in attainment are reducing.
- The Year 7 catch-up premium is being used to provide additional in-class support and one-to-one teaching. The students involved are making good progress in improving their reading and writing.
- Early entry for GCSE is used only for specific groups of students where the school is sure that they will benefit. A group of able students complete their GCSEs in English and mathematics at the end of Year 10 and then follow an AS course in English and an additional mathematics course. There is no evidence that this lowers their attainment.
- The school is committed to ensuring equal opportunities for all its students.
- The small number of students who attend Swindon College for part of their week make good progress in the courses they are following.

The quality of teaching

is good

- The overall quality of teaching is good; students' good progress is evidence of the impact of teaching over time. Several examples of outstanding teaching were seen in a variety of subjects.
- Teachers show good subject knowledge. They set high expectations and show enthusiasm for their subjects, and students respond well to the tasks provided for them, extending their knowledge and deepening their understanding.
- In the best lessons, teachers ensured that work was provided at the right level for all students, probed understanding with skilful questioning and ensured that the lesson proceeded at a good pace. In other lessons, these features were less apparent and the levels of challenge were not fully appropriate.
- Lessons are well planned. For example, in a Year 10 mathematics lesson, students were challenged to investigate the interior angles of their chosen polygons. The students responded

well to the challenge, sharing their results and identifying a pattern. They were then able to answer a relevant examination question.

- Students are articulate and eager to discuss their ideas and their work. In an outstanding English lesson on *Of mice and men*, students showed a deep understanding of the underlying issues and gave mature and skilled oral descriptions of them.
- Skilled teaching in English ensures that nearly all students, including disabled students and those with special educational needs, can read and write well enough to make good progress in their other subjects and are well prepared for the future. The school's recent focus on developing literacy in all subjects is beginning to show impact, but is not yet consistent across the school.
- Most students know their targets and are helped by their teachers to move on to the next level. However, students are not always clear about exactly how to improve their work because the quality of marking is variable. There are examples of marking that praise the specific good aspects of students' work and provide them with clear guidance for improvement. Other marking, however, is less detailed and offers less advice on how students can improve their work.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- Students' outstanding behaviour makes a strong contribution to their learning and personal development. Students pay close attention in lessons, follow instructions carefully, share their own ideas and listen respectfully to the views of others.
- Teachers are skilled in managing students' behaviour and they follow consistent policies so that students know that there are high expectations.
- Students show courtesy and respect to one another and to all adults as they move around the school. They are punctual for their lessons, moving purposefully between the different parts of the school site.
- Students feel safe in school and the curriculum supports them well in learning how to stay safe. They have a good understanding of e-safety, including how to avoid unsafe websites. Students report that incidents of all types of bullying, including cyber bullying, are rare and are dealt with swiftly by the school's staff. A group of students is trained to form a students' support group to offer help to any of their peers who are bullied or have personal problems. The very strong and respectful relationships within the school ensure that there is hardly any evidence of racial or other prejudice-based bullying. The school promotes good relations and will not tolerate any form of discrimination.
- Students' attendance is consistently above average. Attendance is monitored closely to maintain this high level.
- The frequency of fixed-term exclusions is much below average.
- The school checks that students attending off-site alternative provision attend regularly and that there are no concerns with their welfare.
- The overwhelming majority of parents and carers who expressed a view considered that behaviour is managed well. They also said that their child is happy at the school and feels safe.

The leadership and management are good

- School leaders set high expectations of staff and students. They have taken effective action to raise students' attainment and standards of teaching. The headteacher's commitment to further improve all aspects of the school is shared by all staff and governors.
- When results in mathematics dipped, the school's leaders took quick action to remedy this weakness, appointing several new staff, changing the GCSE syllabus used and improving the quality of teaching in this area.
- The management of teaching and its impact on learning is good. Joint observations during the inspection showed that the school's judgements on the quality of teaching are accurate. The

school's leaders are focused on supporting staff to become outstanding practitioners.

- There is regular monitoring and evaluation of students' achievement. However, the school's tracking information is not always used to compare the progress of different groups of students, such as those eligible for the pupil premium, and there is not a strategic overview in this area.
- The school's improvement plan is based securely on its self-evaluation and is focused on the key areas for improvement.
- The results of departmental evaluations are used to provide a wide variety of appropriate professional development which responds to the needs of the staff, including developing leaders.
- The system of performance management is well organised and it has been updated to respond to recent national changes. There is evidence that salary progression is taken seriously and that it occurs only when merited by sustained good performance.
- The school's range of subjects and courses provides well for the needs and interests of its students. In Year 9 there is the opportunity for more able students to join an accelerated curriculum programme. Key Stage 4 provision comprises mainly GCSE courses, with the addition of a small number of high quality vocational courses. The school reviews its provision each year to ensure that it is responsive to change.
- Students' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good overall, both in the curriculum and in the wider life of the school. It is fostered by visits and by the wide variety of opportunities in music, art, sport, drama and effective school assemblies, and through religious education lessons that give many opportunities for students to reflect on serious issues.
- All aspects of safeguarding are fully met. The governing body and senior leaders consider that keeping students safe is one of their prime responsibilities.
- Parents and carers agree that the school is well led and managed and this view is supported by the school's staff. Of the parents who offered their views, almost all would recommend the school to other parents and carers.
- The school purchases services from the local authority and has continued to employ the previous school improvement partner to provide advice and support.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is effective and is strengthened by regular training. Governors have a good knowledge of how well the school is doing and the quality of teaching. They can speak confidently about data, including recent examination results and the actions that have been taken to bring about improvement. They also check the school's performance through reports from senior and middle leaders and discussions with relevant staff. They make sure that the pupil premium is targeted correctly and have started to evaluate its impact. Governors are fully involved in the performance management system for all teaching staff; all promotions, with their financial consequences, are discussed in governor committees.

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	136860
Local authority	Swindon
Inspection number	411844

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	913
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Phillip Wirth
Headteacher	John Saunders
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
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