

The Hewett School

Cecil Road, Norwich, NR1 2PL

Inspection dates 22–23 May 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- From a typically low, and sometimes very low, starting point students make good progress and achieve well.
- The proportion of students reaching 5A*-C grades, including English and mathematics, while still below the national average, is rising steadily.
- The sixth form is good. It is well managed. Attainment is carefully tracked and students make good progress.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make good progress, including in the resourced provision for behaviour and autism.
- Teaching is good and sometimes outstanding because teachers typically have high expectations, strong subject knowledge and plan well-organised lessons which enable students to learn successfully from their different starting points.
- Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. Exclusions and persistent absence have fallen dramatically due to the school's good work. Students feel safe and well supported.
- The headteacher is working effectively with senior leaders, staff and governors to improve teaching and accelerate students' achievement.
- Subject leaders observe lessons regularly and carefully monitor work in their departments and this supports the school's accurate self-evaluation.
- Governors contribute well to school improvement through regular visits and the close attention paid to achievement and teaching.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength and they become good citizens.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Not enough teaching is outstanding. Occasionally, lessons lack challenge for the more able students and the opportunities for independent working are too limited.
- Attendance rates are improving but remain below average.
- The students' presentation of their work is not always of the highest quality.
- Students' responses to the comments teachers make about how to improve their work are not followed up swiftly in some classes.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 38 lessons taught by 37 teachers, including observations carried out jointly with members of the senior leadership team. They also listened to a sample of students read.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and senior leadership team, governors, staff, a representative from the local authority and groups of students.
- Inspectors took account of the 33 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), the school’s most recent survey of parents and carers, and the 59 staff questionnaires in planning and carrying out the inspection.
- Inspectors observed the school’s work. They looked at the school’s self-evaluation, which was discussed with the senior leadership team, the school’s improvement plan, a range of policies and procedures, and the arrangements for safeguarding students. The inspectors also reviewed data on students’ attainment and progress, monitoring procedures, records of behaviour and attendance and governing body documentation.

Inspection team

Michael Sutherland-Harper, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Paul Bartlett	Additional Inspector
Michael Sutton	Additional Inspector
Sherry Gladwin	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The school has applied to become an academy. It currently has specialist status in the arts.
- The very large majority of the students are White British.
- A small number of students arrive in the school mid-year.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of students for whom the school receives the pupil premium is well above average. The pupil premium is additional government funding for children in the care of the local authority, students known to be eligible for free school meals and children from forces' families.
- Alternative part-time education is currently provided for a small number of students at City and Easton Colleges in Norwich and at Norfolk Training Services. The school is in a sixth form partnership with Notre Dame, City of Norwich, and City Academy Schools and City College. Some students from these schools attend courses at the Hewett School.
- The school has specially resourced provision for students with special educational needs relating to behaviour and autism. Ten places are available in each unit.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of students by the end of Year 11.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching and learning to outstanding by
 - making sure all lessons provide sufficiently challenging work for more able students to maximise their achievement
 - ensuring that all marking consistently replicates the best practice in the school, encourages high quality presentation and swift responses by students to the advice given
 - increasing the opportunities in lessons for independent learning.
- Reduce persistent absence still further and raise attendance to be in line with or above the national average.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Students start Year 7 with attainment significantly below the national average. The school develops their skills in reading, writing and mathematics to equip them for learning in other subjects. Boys and girls make good progress due to good teaching in Key Stages 3 and 4 and achieve successfully. The number of school leavers not in education, training or employment is low and reducing.
- In 2012, the proportion of students achieving 5 A*-C grades, including English and mathematics, was below the national average but an improvement on previous years. School information clearly indicates that current students, including the more able, are on track to reach higher standards in 2013 than seen previously. Students entered early for GCSE examinations in mathematics make better progress than their peers, achieving the expected result at first attempt.
- Successful work in promoting literacy skills across the subjects they study has enabled all students to enjoy full equality of opportunity. For example, specific Key Stage 3 spelling sessions are ensuring greater success in writing during Key Stage 4. Students become fluent readers through lots of practice, read with expression and talk knowledgeably about what they have read.
- Sixth form results are improving steadily at both A and AS levels because any variations in students' performance between subjects are closely tracked. Students entering without GCSE qualifications in English or mathematics re-sit their examinations with high success rates. Attainment has been strong in film studies and geography and is improving in history and music because of appropriate school actions.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make good progress. Their needs are accurately identified, quickly supported and closely monitored with adjustments as necessary, for example, as part of the effective Year 7 catch-up programme.
- Students in the special units for autism and behaviour make good progress. Support systems meet the specific needs of each student because previous learning is carefully reviewed and then consolidated. Progress is aided by good communication between school and families to ensure work is on-going outside of lesson times.
- In 2012, students in receipt of pupil premium funding were four terms behind others in English and six terms behind in mathematics. Current data indicate that the gap between the two subjects and with other subjects is closing rapidly. Small group sessions, holiday revision and one-to-one tuition, address students' specific needs effectively and ensure speedy catch up.
- The attainment of students entering mid-year is carefully assessed. Some benefit from programmes such as the Year 10 session led by a specialist in English for speakers of other languages. Students educated elsewhere make at least similar progress to their peers. Their attainment and progress are carefully tracked with regular sharing of information to ensure good achievement.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is usually good because lessons are well planned, build on previous learning and meet students' different needs increasingly well. Teachers capitalise on opportunities to promote

students' literacy and numeracy skills.

- In the best lessons, challenge and a variety of teaching methods, activities and resources engage students and allow all groups, including the more able, to extend their skills. For example, in a Year 10 information and communications technology lesson applying spread sheet skills to a business context, all students made rapid progress because high expectations and thought-provoking questions stimulated their thinking and made them eager to start work on their own. Individuals were carefully coached and encouraged to check each other's work for accuracy.
- Teachers and support staff adapt work quickly and effectively so that disabled students and those who have special educational needs learn successfully. Teachers have regular opportunities to improve their practice through close work with an outstanding local special needs school.
- Effective teaching in the specialist units for behaviour and autism enables these students to make good progress. There is a very clear understanding of how to engage with students who have autism or who may have difficulties with social and communication skills. Approaches result in students showing good interest and building confidence as learners.
- Sixth form teaching is good and some is outstanding due to teachers' high expectations, strong specialist knowledge and well-organised lessons which take careful account of students' starting points. Students are encouraged to evaluate their own learning during lessons.
- A small number of lessons require improvement in various ways, such as: matching work to better meet needs, ensuring tasks are challenging, providing independent learning opportunities and always insisting on good behaviour. Where these aspects are not right, learning is slower because the teacher has to spend more time addressing minor behaviour matters or re-explaining key points.
- The teaching of reading is a strength. Teachers provide regular guidance for the youngest readers in linking sounds and letters to encourage fluency. English lessons allow students to regularly read aloud, including through the provision of free books in Year 7. Students make regular use of library facilities. As a result, most students develop into good readers.
- Marking is generally very effective. Students know their targets and what they need to do to improve. Progress is well tracked through regular assessments and homework. However, not all marking insists on consistent high quality presentation of work. Students do not always follow up swiftly on guidance given to ensure that errors are not repeated and that rapid improvement continues.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Students' attitudes to learning are good. In the best lessons, they are outstanding but in the few lessons which require improvement, students are more passive learners. In and around the school, behaviour is calm and civilised. Students are generally courteous and well-mannered towards each other and adults and speak positively about their school's level of care.
 - The school's management of students' behaviour in lessons is effective and well organised.
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Incident logs are up to date with good record keeping about incidents, rewards and sanctions.

- Permanent and fixed-term exclusions have fallen dramatically over the last three years. The school's work to follow up and support these students has had a marked impact through provision of phased support to re-engage with their studies. The school's policy of 'time out from lessons' works well.
- Students are aware of the various forms of bullying, including e-safety, and how to deal with them. The bullying log shows few incidents. Systems in place monitor rates and patterns of any bullying and record appropriate action taken. The few incidents of racism are followed up quickly with referral to outside agencies as needed. There is very little evidence of discriminatory or derogatory language.
- Students say they feel safe in school and parents and carers agree. Students understand and can respond to risk, know how to stay healthy and feel that behaviour has improved at the school because of the climate of mutual respect.
- Attendance is currently just below average but with an improving trend despite the effect of the recent norovirus. Punctuality to lessons is good. Strategies to improve attendance, including clear rewards and sanctions, and good follow up by the school in liaison with the local authority, have lowered persistent absence rates but some improvement work still remains.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher has led the school steadily upward. He is ably supported by the senior leadership team in creating a tangible sense of team spirit. Questionnaire responses show that staff are proud to work for the school and highly committed to its success.
 - Leaders have an accurate view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are driving improvement. Well-focused targets, which are regularly reviewed, are the main force behind the good improvement since the previous inspection.
 - Thorough checks on teaching quality are backed up with staff training and opportunities to see best practice. The improving picture in attainment and teaching mean that the school is achieving its goal to 'help every student to move forward'. The school recognises that there is still some work to do to move all teaching up to the highest standard and improve attendance.
 - Subject leaders are involved closely in robust departmental monitoring systems, supplemented by coaching sessions for staff and work on transition arrangements. Subject leaders participate actively in lesson observations and track students' progress closely to ensure on-going improvement.
 - The broad range of subjects offered to students is good, well-matched to their needs and interests and includes many opportunities to develop artistic skills in line with the school's specialism. Students who attend off-site provision benefit from the opportunity to follow relevant programmes. Early skills development is emphasised through fortnightly Year 7 skills days which help students make a successful start to new subjects through in-depth work on aspects like problem solving.
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- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is strong. The school places great emphasis on making students good citizens through programmes recognised locally as 'model provision'. Social responsibility is promoted well by attractive displays emphasising the importance of helping others to be safe, healthy and creative members of society.

 - Leadership and management of the sixth form are good. Students are carefully assessed throughout their courses and guided towards appropriate pathways after they finish their education or if they leave part way through. The number transferring to higher education is increasing.

 - The local authority now provides light touch support following a period of intensive help with school improvement.

 - Safeguarding procedures meet all current requirements.

 - **The governance of the school:**
 - Governors, some long-serving, bring many skills to the school. They visit the school regularly to check on the quality of teaching and learning and ensure 'the school is a safe place that enables the child to explore their unique opportunities and achieve them'. Governors have worked closely with senior leaders to improve teaching and achievement through clear action plans, regular subject reports and good understanding of data to compare the school's performance with other schools. Teachers' promotion up the pay scales is not automatic and is closely linked to results. Governors know how the pupil premium is spent, including in raising students' aspirations from the moment of entry and in improving attendance because 'the most important thing is to be here'. They review the impact of strategies regularly.
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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

Unique reference number	121173
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	406004

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
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	829
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	180
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Marion Morse
Headteacher	Tom Samain
Date of previous school inspection	18 May 2011
Telephone number	01603 628181
Fax number	01603 764129
Email address	head@hewett.norfolk.sch.uk

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