

# Hobart High School

Kittens Lane, Loddon, Norwich, NR14 6JU

**Inspection dates** 18–19 June 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
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 average starting points, students make good progress and are on track to gain above average GCSE results in a wide range of subjects. Achievement in English and mathematics is particularly strong.
- Teaching is good, with some outstanding. Teachers have high expectations of students and develop good working relationships in the classroom.
- Students enjoy being at school. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Students have positive attitudes towards their learning.
- Students feel safe and have a clear understanding of how to stay safe. Bullying is rare and dealt with quickly.
- Students receive good information, advice and guidance, which help them to make well-informed decisions about future employment, education and training.
- The headteacher is ably supported by his senior leadership team. They have a deep understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.
- The governing body and senior leaders have a clear vision for improvement in the school. They have worked relentlessly to remove weak teaching and to improve the consistency of practice.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Teachers occasionally do not make sure that work is closely matched to students' needs and abilities, and so their progress slows.
- Sometimes students are not given enough opportunities to learn without the help of the teacher, and so they do not make quite as much progress as they could.
- Students do not have enough opportunities to check each other's work and so understand how to improve their own work.
- While overall attendance is in line with the national average, some students' attendance is too low and so they do not make the progress they should.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 40 lessons, including joint observations with members of the senior leadership team. In addition, inspectors made short visits to other lessons, observed a school assembly and scrutinised students' work.
- Meetings were held with groups of students, the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team, heads of subject departments, year leaders, teachers, members of the governing body, and the school improvement partner.
- Inspectors scrutinised a variety of school documents, including the school's self-evaluation, the school development plans, safeguarding records, behaviour records, governing body documents, and documents relating to the management of teachers' performance.
- Inspectors also considered the views expressed in 56 questionnaires returned by school staff, along with the 71 responses submitted by parents and carers to the online Parent View survey.

## Inspection team

Keith Brown, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Rosemary Barnfield	Additional Inspector
Martin Wyard	Additional Inspector
Piers Ranger	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The school converted to become an academy school on 1 February 2013. The predecessor school of the same name was judged to be outstanding when last inspected by Ofsted in March 2009.
- Students come from a wide geographical area, including Loddon and the surrounding villages.
- Current Year 7 students were admitted from 27 different primary schools.
- The proportion of students for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional funding for those, in this school, who are known to be eligible for free school meals and the very few looked after by the local authority) is below average.
- The proportion of students receiving extra support through school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or through a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- 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.
- A very small number of students are taught in alternative provision away from the school site at Back on Track.

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

- Increase the amount of outstanding teaching across the school by ensuring that:
  - teachers plan and structure lessons so that students of all abilities have work which is challenging and meets their needs
  - students are given more opportunities to take an active part in their learning and find things out for themselves
  - time is provided in lessons for students to check each other's work, so that they gain a better understanding of how to improve their own work.
- Work closely with parents and carers to improve student attendance and reduce persistent absence.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Students join the school with levels of attainment which are typically around average. They make good progress, especially in English and mathematics. Students are on course to achieve above average GCSE results this year. No students are entered early for GCSE examinations.
- The school works well to ensure that students' reading, writing, communication and mathematics skills are used effectively across different subjects. The school makes good use of tutor time to develop these skills.
- Students' skills in reading are developing quickly. They enjoy reading and read widely. Year 7 students eligible for additional support in reading from the government's catch-up premium are being well supported through targeted provision, including small group tuition. As a result, they are making good progress in improving their reading skills.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs make similar progress to other students because the school has identified students' individual needs early and arranged the extra help needed. They receive knowledgeable and sharply-focused support from both teachers and teaching assistants.
- Students for whom the school receives additional funding through the pupil premium are taught in small groups, and benefit from extra educational resources and assistance with going on trips and with music tuition. The faster progress these students are making shows that the school is narrowing the current one third of a GCSE grade gap in their attainment in English and mathematics compared with their classmates.
- The welfare and progress of the very few students following the off-site course is monitored carefully. Students attend regularly and their needs are met through very well tailored support.
- Students are successfully prepared for the next stage of their learning. Currently, they are all on track to leave school at the end of Year 11 with a placement in education, training or employment.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Lesson observations, scrutiny of students' work and the school's sharp monitoring data show that teaching is improving. Teaching is enabling students to achieve well over time. There is some outstanding practice in all subjects and this is being increasingly shared across the school to raise the overall quality of teaching still further.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge and clearly explain what they want the students to do. Teachers create a positive atmosphere in the classroom that encourages students to succeed and to share in one another's successes. Work is carefully modified for disabled students and those who have special educational needs.
- Where teaching is at its best, teachers have high expectations and use questioning effectively to check students' understanding. They set work to challenge students of different abilities, and ensure that the pace of learning does not slow at any point. They provide well-focused feedback to the students.

- Teachers are often skilful at measuring how well students are grasping new ideas and intervening at the right time to clarify a misconception or provide another example to reinforce a key idea. For example, in a high-quality Year 7 French lesson students worked on a range of tasks about different sports. The teacher's questioning and use of practical examples helped students to learn vocabulary quickly and confidently.
- In a very small minority of lessons, students do not progress as well as they should because the challenge is insufficient and the pace of learning is not fast enough. Typically, this is because the teacher does not check carefully enough if students are finding the work too easy or too difficult or the teacher talks for too long. On a few occasions, teachers did not include opportunities for students to learn actively and independently.
- The marking of student's work is thorough. Teachers praise high-quality work appropriately and provide clear guidance on what the students need to do to improve. However, there are insufficient opportunities for students to learn from each other by checking each other's work more regularly in lessons, so that they can understand better how to improve their own work.

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

- Students are polite and confident in conversation with staff and visitors. They have positive attitudes towards their learning. Students' good behaviour in the school contributes to the purposeful, harmonious atmosphere. Parents and carers are positive about behaviour in the school.
- Students know about different types of bullying, including cyber bullying and prejudice-based bullying, and know what to do if it occurs. Students say bullying is rare but, if there are any incidents, they are confident that they would be dealt with quickly and effectively. Students say the 'Harry Hobart' website is very useful for students, parents and carers to express any concerns over bullying.
- Students say that they feel safe in school, and parents and carers concur. It provides a safe and secure environment that is valued and appreciated by everyone. Students have a good understanding of the issues relating to safety. They know how to keep themselves safe in a variety of situations, such as when using the internet and social networking sites.
- Robust action by the school is leading to improved attendance, which is now average. Persistent absence is dropping. The school is aware of the need for closer work with parents and carers for this improvement to continue.
- Older students are keen to accept extra responsibilities and they take these very seriously. They enjoy being mentors to younger students. Students also undertake various projects within the local community which enriches their personal development as young citizens.

### **The leadership and management** are good

- The headteacher and senior leaders provide strong leadership. Governors and staff are clearly determined to make sure that all students achieve the highest standards they can. Staff morale is high. Almost all responses to the staff questionnaire were positive.
- An increasing proportion of teaching is outstanding because lesson monitoring is rigorous and is

linked closely to well-focused professional development. Teachers are held accountable for the progress of students they teach. Senior, Key Stage and subject leaders are held accountable for their areas of responsibility. There is a clear link between teachers' performance in the classroom and salary progression.

- Self-evaluation is accurate and identifies sharply the school's priorities. The school development plan is well targeted and shows clearly how the school intends to achieve its ambitious targets.
- Leaders are focusing well on their tracking and analysis of students' progress. New software is helping them to spot underachievement more quickly. Well-targeted support for students is then put in place.
- The broad range of GCSE subjects offered meets students' needs in Key Stage 4. Work-related options are being carefully developed to ensure greater student engagement.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength. It is promoted by a wide range of arts, drama, music and sports activities. Students have many opportunities to go on trips abroad, such as German and French exchange trips and to Romania to work in an orphanage.
- The school commissions the support it needs effectively. Governors say they value the local authority's induction training. The school improvement partner has provided robust support and challenge for the school's senior leaders.
- The school's arrangements for safeguarding meet statutory requirements.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are rigorously holding the school to account. They have a good knowledge of the quality of teaching. Governors have an accurate view of how well the school is doing in relation to similar schools. They undertake training to strengthen the impact of their work and visit the school regularly to gather first-hand evidence of students' achievement. The governing body oversees the management of finance and resources efficiently and ensures that the salary progression of staff is justified. Governors make sure that the use of additional funds from the pupil premium raises the attainment of the students entitled to it.

## 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>	139311
<b>Local authority</b>	N/A
<b>Inspection number</b>	420771

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>	Maintained
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	827
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Peter Fraser
<b>Headteacher</b>	Samuel Griffin
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not applicable
<b>Telephone number</b>	01508 520359
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