

# East Bergholt High School

Heath Road, East Bergholt, Colchester, CO7 6RJ

**Inspection dates** 12–13 September 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	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.

- Students now make good progress from their individual starting points. Previous weaknesses in mathematics have been tackled effectively and students achieve well in this subject.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs achieve well. Students supported by the pupil premium achieve as well as their classmates in lessons.
- Most teaching is good in the school and some is outstanding.
- Students behave well in lessons and around the school in general. They feel safe and incidences of bullying are rare.
- Students who face personal challenges are well cared for, and make positive gains in their learning.
- The choice of subjects meets students' needs well. Students can opt for a wide range of qualifications and they are supported well by their teachers.
- The school works well in partnership with other organisations to secure good outcomes for its students.
- The headteacher, supported by his leadership team and the governing body, has earned the respect of the staff and has raised standards in the school since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching is monitored well. Consequently, this is a school which continues to improve.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- A small proportion of teaching still requires improvement because not all teachers are making good use of information on students' achievement when planning lessons.
- Although there are some good examples of the development of students' literacy, there is no clear strategy in place for developing literacy skills across the school.
- Not all teachers' marking offers clear guidance to students as to how they can improve the quality of their work.
- The impact of teaching assistants' work is inconsistent.
- The governing body's access to training on interpreting information on students' achievement has been limited.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors saw 34 parts of lessons taught by 33 teachers and one higher-level teaching assistant, in some cases accompanied by members of the senior leadership team. In addition, inspectors visited a number of lessons for a shorter period of time to focus on the progress of disabled students and those who have special educational needs.
- Meetings took place with the headteacher and other senior leaders, as well as with heads of subject areas and years groups. In addition, inspectors met with different groups of students, two members of the governing body and a representative from the local authority.
- During this inspection, inspectors asked additional questions designed to ascertain the school's view of the impact and effectiveness of local authority services to support school improvement. This information will contribute to work being carried out by Ofsted to assess the use, quality and impact of those services.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and carers, 132 of whom responded to the online questionnaire (Parent View). They also took into account the views of staff by considering 56 responses to the staff questionnaire. Three letters were received from parents and carers of students at the school.

## Inspection team

John Daniell, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

Josephine Lewis

Additional Inspector

David Davies

Additional Inspector

Kevin Harrison

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- East Bergholt High School is smaller than the average-sized secondary school and the majority of its students are of White British heritage.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for children in the care of the local authority and for children known to be eligible for free school meals, is well below the national average.
- The proportion of students who are disabled or have special educational needs and are supported through school action is broadly in line with the national average. A below-average proportion of students supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs attend the school.
- A small number of students in Years 10 and 11 attend off-site provision. Providers include Hadleigh High School, Holbrook High School, Suffolk One and Otley College of Agriculture and Horticulture.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum levels expected for students' attainment and progress.

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

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching, and eradicate teaching that requires improvement, by:
  - ensuring that all teachers make best use of information on students' expected levels of progress when planning lessons so that work is matched to all students' capabilities
  - making sure that all teachers' marking clearly indicates how well students are achieving, and tells students clearly how they can reach the next level of attainment
  - expecting all students to respond to their teachers' marking in some way
  - deploying additional adults in the classroom more effectively.
- Implement a whole-school literacy policy as soon as possible.
- Make sure that the members of the governing body strengthen their understanding of information on the achievement of different groups of students by ensuring they have access to up-to-date training.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- Students achieve well over time. From above-average starting points they make good progress. Previous underachievement in mathematics has been successfully tackled, and students make good progress in this subject across the school.
- The proportion of students gaining five or more A\* to C grades at GCSE including in English and mathematics rose sharply in 2013, and places the school well above the national average for national standards achieved in 2012.
- The majority of parents and carers rightly believe that their children are making good progress at the school. Students benefit not only from good teaching in the classroom, but also from well-targeted support beyond the classroom through small group work or one-to-one sessions.
- Inspectors witnessed the majority of students making good progress in lessons in all year groups and across a range of subjects. This is because school leaders are effective at promoting equality of opportunity, fostering good relations and tackling discrimination.
- Disabled students and those who are supported through school action, school action plus or a statement of special educational needs make good progress from their different starting points.
- In 2012 the attainment in English and mathematics of the few students known to be eligible for the pupil premium was just less than a grade lower than their classmates at GCSE level. Evidence gathered during this inspection shows that these students are making better progress than previously, and that the gap between these two groups is narrowing.
- Despite the lack of a strategic plan for literacy, inspectors saw students' literacy skills being developed well in a number of lessons, and students enjoy reading both within and beyond the classroom. Students' mathematical skills are developed effectively across a range of subjects.
- The school has made effective use of the Year 7 catch-up premium (extra funding to support those pupils who did not achieve Level 4 in reading and/or mathematics at Key Stage 2) to ensure that the vast majority made expected progress or better.
- The most able students learn well in the school. The proportion of these students gaining top GCSE grades was above the 2012 national average in a number of subjects including art and design, biology, chemistry and physics, English literature, geography, physical education, religious education and statistics.
- Students who attend off-site provision achieve very well to gain qualifications in health and social care, hospitality and catering and agriculture. Consequently, they develop the necessary skills which prepare them well for the next stage in their lives.
- The school operates an early-entry policy for GCSE in mathematics. The most able students are not disadvantaged by this policy and the vast majority achieve top grades at GCSE.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Students mostly experience good teaching and a small proportion is outstanding. Equally, a small proportion still requires improvement.

- Typically, good teaching is characterised by teachers' high expectations, secure subject knowledge and skilful questioning. These teachers make good use of available information on students' prior achievement when planning their lessons so that all students' capabilities are met.
- In a Year 10 science lesson dealing with genes and gender, students were engaged in their learning from the very start because the teacher used a wide range of successful strategies which challenged students. The teacher checked for students' understanding at regular intervals, and it was evident that all students made great gains in their learning.
- A small proportion of teaching does not meet students' needs fully. These teachers often expect all students to do similar work because they have not used available information on students' expected progress well enough. Consequently, the capabilities of all students are not always met, and students tend to become too passive in the classroom.
- Additional adults in the classroom are most effective when they have been involved in the planning of the lesson and help students to understand for themselves how they can achieve the goals of the lesson. Currently, some additional adults are more effective at doing this than others.
- Teachers mark work regularly. Their marking is at its best when they tell students how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve the quality of their work. However, there are few opportunities for students to respond to this high-quality marking. A few teachers' marking offers praise, but does not indicate clearly enough how to improve.
- Teachers often make references to literacy and numeracy in lessons. Students are offered many opportunities to read aloud or in silence. The school's Learning Resource Centre provides good opportunities for students to extend their knowledge.
- The Gifted and More Able Provision (GAMA) provides suitable opportunities for high attaining and gifted and talented students in the classroom to develop their research skills and to excel. This is supplemented by a range of additional activities including lunchtime and after-school clubs and visits.

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

- Students behave well in the school. They display positive attitudes to learning as a result of good and better teaching. They move around the school sensibly and with purpose.
- There are very few recorded incidences of bullying, and students struggled to provide examples of such incidents as they are so infrequent. However, should bullying occur, they know who to speak to and are confident that any issues will be resolved quickly and to their satisfaction.
- The proportion of fixed-term exclusions is low. Students' attendance is in line with the national average. School leaders monitor students' attendance at off-site provision, and receive regular reports on the progress they are making with their studies.
- Students told inspectors that they feel safe. The Student Support Centre offers good-quality support, and the 'Support Our Students' initiative provides effective training to students in Key Stage 4 in order to become peer mentors and work with students facing personal challenges.

- Students are offered a range of opportunities to develop their leadership skills and improve their self-esteem. As well as being offered the chance to become prefects, students have been keen to become Learning Ambassadors, which involves training them to observe teachers and offer their comments. This initiative has been welcomed by teachers. One teacher took on board students' comments, and invited them back to re-observe their teaching.
- Students who are at risk of underachieving or who have challenging personal circumstances are supported well. Case studies of these students made available to inspectors, and subsequent discussions with students, support the school's belief that these students feel as equally valued as others in the school.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is promoted well both in lessons and through an extensive range of enrichment activities including clubs, sporting events and musical performances.
- The promotion of equal opportunities has a high profile in the school. Leaders monitor the performance of different groups of students well to ensure gaps in attainment between them are narrowing.

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

- The headteacher and his leadership team have focused on key priorities by taking decisive action to raise standards, particularly in mathematics. They have successfully improved the quality of teaching, and have rightly gained the support of staff, students and members of the governing body.
- Systems for monitoring the impact of actions taken are clear and robust. Inspectors agreed with all of the judgements made in the school's self-evaluation document.
- Subject leaders and heads of year work well together to monitor the progress of students in their care, and work well with senior leaders to ensure appropriate support is correctly targeted at those students who are at risk of underachieving.
- Pupil premium funding has been used well to improve outcomes for the small proportion of students who are eligible. Successful strategies have included additional support for small groups of students, the appointment of additional teaching assistants, and financial support for eligible students towards school trips.
- Teaching is managed well as a result of accurate monitoring and well-chosen training. Inspectors agreed with all of the judgements on teaching made by senior leaders during lessons which were jointly observed. Teachers welcome the opportunity to observe their colleagues in order to share existing good practice.
- The choice of subjects offered to students is broad and is well matched to their ever-changing needs. Great emphasis is placed on students' development of information and communication technology skills in Year 7, so that they gain a Level 2 qualification (equivalent to GCSE) in Year 9. The subject offer is further enhanced through excellent links with partner schools and colleges.
- Teachers' performance is managed well and only effective teaching is rewarded with progression up the pay scale. The management of teachers' performance is closely linked to school

improvement priorities.

- Leaders and managers make a great effort to work with parents and carers. The informative termly magazine 'Bergholt Beacon' reports on students' achievements. The Parents' Forum meets once a term and minutes are published on the school's website. Special events such as the 'post 16 information evening' support parents and carers well in working with their child to choose the next step in their learning.
- Although the school has academy status, it continues to draw on the expertise of the local authority's learning and improvement services. The local authority has provided valuable support by reviewing the school's performance and by working with senior leaders and governors to raise standards in mathematics. This support, coupled with other improvements triggered by the school's leaders and managers, has secured improved outcomes for students.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Members of the governing body play an active part in school improvement planning and have confidence in the school's leaders. They demonstrate a good awareness of where the best teaching is to be found in the school and have set up a series of visits to the school to gain a deeper insight into students' experiences in the classroom by observing teaching and meeting with groups of learners. They speak positively of the training opportunities provided through the local authority. Although their knowledge of pupil premium funding is good, their ability to interpret key information relating to students' achievement is not yet strong. They receive regular reports on the quality of teaching, and management of teachers' performance, which informs decisions as to whether or not they progress up the pay scale. They know what the school is doing to tackle any underperformance. Governors make sure that safeguarding arrangements are in place, and that statutory requirements are met.

## 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>	137218
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	425335

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy converter
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	908
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Peter Espley
<b>Headteacher</b>	Colin Turner
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 February 2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	01206 298200
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