

# Stradbroke High School

Wilby Road, Stradbroke, Eye, IP21 5JN

**Inspection dates** 12–13 September 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.

- This is a rapidly improving school. The headteacher has ensured that the achievement of students has risen sharply, and there has been significant improvement in all aspects of the school. He has gained the respect of governors, staff, students and parents.
- Results are now above average. Students make good progress throughout the school in English and mathematics.
- Most teaching is good and some is outstanding. Teachers are experts in their subjects and training has been used well to improve teaching and equip them to deliver the newly introduced 100-minute lessons.
- The school is a friendly place where students feel highly valued as part of the community. Very good behaviour and improved attendance reflect that the school is a happy place.
- Through well-targeted spending of the extra money provided, staff are closing the gap that existed between the achievement of students known to be eligible for additional funding from the government (the pupil premium) and that of other students.
- Leaders at all levels take responsibility for improving the quality of provision. They use performance information very well to challenge class teachers and monitor students' progress.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Students do not always make as much progress as they might because the level of challenge in lessons is not always well matched to their abilities.
- Teachers' questioning does not always encourage students to extend their thinking enough.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed parts of 26 lessons, including six joint observations with senior leaders. Brief visits were made to other lessons.
- Inspectors observed assemblies, break-times and lunchtimes.
- Inspectors met with groups of students across the age and ability range to discuss achievement, teaching, behaviour, safety and improvements in the school.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders and groups of teachers and the school’s external adviser. A brief telephone conversation was held with a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors met with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Governing Body and two other governors.
- Inspectors took into account the 100 responses to the school’s questionnaire for parents and the 37 responses to the Ofsted questionnaire for staff. The Ofsted online parent questionnaire (Parent View) had too few responses for any to be displayed.
- Inspectors checked the school’s records of attainment and progress, the school’s self-evaluation, lesson monitoring documents and teachers’ performance management records. They also looked at the school’s figures for attendance and exclusion, safeguarding and child protection records, behaviour records and the minutes from governing body meetings. They evaluated the ways in which the school checks the quality of teaching and the plans for improvement.
- 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.

## Inspection team

Adrian Lyons, Lead inspector

Her Majesty’s Inspector

Susan Lewis

Additional Inspector

Jane Ladner

Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- Stradbroke High School is a smaller-than-average secondary school that serves students from the village of Stradbroke and its surrounding areas. It is a rural community and the vast majority of students come from six local primary schools that form the Stradbroke Pyramid. Approximately 80% of the students come by bus to the school from a wide area.
- The proportion of students supported at school action is above the national average. The proportion at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also above average.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals and supported through the pupil premium is below average. The proportion of students who are in the care of the local authority is comparatively high.
- The overwhelming majority of students are of White British heritage. The proportion from other ethnic groups is low.
- The proportion of pupils who speak a first language other than English is low.
- More students join the school after the start of the academic year than is the case in most schools.
- In March 2012 the school became an academy. When the predecessor school, Stradbroke Business and Enterprise College, was last inspected by Ofsted in September 2010 it was judged to be good.
- The school has a formal partnership with Worlingworth CEVC Primary School, which has 47 pupils and is located approximately seven miles from the high school. The headteacher is executive headteacher at Worlingworth. Senior staff visit each week and work alongside the newly appointed head of school.
- Six Key Stage 4 students follow work-related courses on one day a week at the North Suffolk Skills Academy and Otley College.
- 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 students of all abilities make even more progress by:
  - setting work that always challenges students and moves their learning forward quickly
  - using more questions that make students think deeply and explore one another's ideas.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils is good

- GCSE results have risen sharply this year. Students arrive at the school with attainment that is on average below that in other schools. The proportion of students gaining five GCSE passes at grade C or above including English and mathematics is now above the national average. Students in all year groups, and nearly all ability groups, including the most able students, those with a disability or special educational need and children looked after by the local authority, make better progress from their starting points than students in most other schools, particularly in English and mathematics.
- Students make good progress in the large majority of lessons because teachers are knowledgeable and confident, and lessons proceed at a brisk pace. In a few lessons the most able students are insufficiently challenged.
- Pupil premium funding is used effectively to support students who are known to be eligible for additional help. Students supported by the funding in 2012 gained on average more than one grade lower than other students in GCSE English. The gap was smaller in mathematics and by 2013 the gap in English had reduced sharply.
- Leaders have rightly recognised that good examination results depend on good attendance and have worked hard to improve attendance for all students. This is having a significantly positive impact on students' achievement.
- There is a policy of entering some students early for GCSE mathematics. This is treated as a practise run, and unless students are unable to improve further, they take the examination again at the normal time.
- Nearly all groups of students, including more able-students and those students with special educational needs supported at school action plus, make equally good progress. However, school leaders recognise that students supported by extra funding through the pupil premium have not done as well as other students in the past. They have identified this as a top priority and have taken successful steps to improve progress for these students.
- The very few students who attend courses on other sites make good progress.
- The Year 7 catch-up premium has been used for small group work for low prior attainers in Year 7. For students who had special educational needs, literacy and numeracy programmes were used including Units of Sound, Sound Discovery, Catch up Numeracy and Catch up Literacy. The school's monitoring records show that low attainers make progress largely in line with their classmates and some make accelerated progress.

### The quality of teaching is good

- Teaching is good; the school's own evaluation of the quality of teaching over time agrees with this. Parents, carers and students concur. Most of the teaching seen by inspectors was judged as at least good. Students are very positive about the newly introduced 100-minute lessons. Teachers use the time well to ensure that students make good progress in each subject through varied and well-planned activities.
- In the best lessons, teachers are skilled at tailoring their questions and comments to groups and

individuals, so that students' learning is accelerated through working things out for themselves. Excellent examples were seen in some history, English and music lessons. In a few lessons, questioning is not used well enough to check the understanding of different groups of students, nor are different tasks set or different resources made available to make good progress. In some Year 7 lessons work did not build on the skills and knowledge that students brought with them from primary school.

- In many lessons observed across a range of subjects, basic skills such as literacy and numeracy were extended and applied, as well as students making very strong progress in their subject-specific understanding. An excellent example was seen in a Year 11 music lesson where students played a 'musical maths' game, using the number of beats represented by musical notation to do mathematical calculations.
- Teaching assistants generally make a good contribution to the learning of students they support in lessons, particularly in group work and where the learning planned for different groups of students is clear in teachers' plans.
- Very positive relationships between teachers and students enable learning to proceed at a good pace.
- Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is generally promoted well by teachers. Examples include skills of empathy being developed well in history; cultural awareness of different art styles developed through excellent art work in lessons and on display; and consideration of different religious and non-religious views of an after-life in religious education lessons.
- There is clear evidence that many teachers have developed well as a result of the school's training. Making the most critical contribution to the improved teaching is that most teachers use the information they have about students' prior attainment very well to plan their lessons. Teachers are ambitious for their students to exceed their targets.

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

- Behaviour around the school, in corridors, at lunchtime and at the end of the day is very good. Students are friendly, courteous and helpful. While establishing a more rigorous approach to achievement, the highly caring ethos of the school has been maintained by staff and students.
- Attitudes to learning are positive and any low-level disruption in lessons is rare. Parental questionnaires issued by the school and staff questionnaires issued by Ofsted indicate that parents and staff are overwhelmingly positive about behaviour and safety. However, teachers do not yet give students enough opportunities to demonstrate a thirst for knowledge and do things for themselves.
- Students feel safe and free from all forms of bullying, and know which staff to talk to, should incidents occur. They know the staff's expectations of them and they understand the procedures for using computers and mobile phones safely. Regular personal, social and health education lessons teach students how to keep safe and avoid harm.
- Attendance is above the national average, and has improved due to the pastoral leaders working hard with the education welfare officer. Any poor attendance is not linked to specific groups.
- There have been very few exclusions. Disruptive behaviour is rare and any problems are

immediately discussed with parents or carers.

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

- Exceptionally positive feedback from staff was reflected in comments such as that under the headteacher's leadership 'we are swiftly moving from strength to strength.' Evidence gathered by inspectors supports this view. Governors work closely with senior leaders and departments to initiate and monitor change. Governors and leaders have a firm understanding of the school's strengths and areas for further development.
- Teaching has improved sharply because of rigorous performance management and high-quality training. Robust action has been taken to confront and deal with ineffective teaching. Teachers' progress up the salary scale is linked to their performance.
- Senior leaders have adopted an effective system to track progress and improve teaching. The system used to monitor students' progress is valued by teachers. Senior leaders check teaching and the work of subject leaders. The management structure has changed so that senior leaders help other leaders to bring about improvement. Most middle leaders are effective in ensuring good-quality provision in their subjects. They have taken over responsibility for the effective and regular subject reviews.
- The school's leadership team contributes towards school improvement in the local area. The headteacher is executive headteacher of a local primary school and the deputy headteacher supports leadership to improve provision in the primary school.
- The curriculum is good. Given the small size of the school, there is a wide range of subjects available to meet the different needs and interests of students. Flexibility is enhanced through the use of additional lessons outside the timetabled school day.
- A very small number of students take work-related courses at specialist centres and their progress is monitored well. Students are given opportunities to explore their spiritual, moral, social and cultural abilities through a wide range of popular activities such as sport, music and humanities clubs. Careers education has not yet fully adapted to new requirements introduced last September. Opportunities for students not wishing to follow a GCE A-level route after the age of 16 are very limited. The school seeks and sometimes gains apprenticeship opportunities with local small employers.
- The impact of the local authority's support and challenge over time in helping the school to improve has been minimal. Where the school has bought in expertise from the local authority, such as support to improve provision in English and mathematics, clerking or human resources support for governors, it has been of high quality. Requests for such support have been initiated by the school, with little evidence of challenge by the local authority even when, in the past, the school was performing much less well than it is now. The local authority has not done enough to ensure that students have realistic opportunities to participate in education or training beyond the age of 16.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are well informed and visit the school frequently. They have a very good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses as a result of training in understanding performance information. They regularly and formally monitor the quality of the departments that they are linked with. The governors hold to account the headteacher and senior leaders in their management of resources. They ask pertinent questions about teaching and

achievement. Governors are well informed about the achievement of students and demonstrate a good understanding of how to measure students' attainment and progress. They have a good understanding of issues regarding the safeguarding of students having had training in child protection, and make sure all national safeguarding requirements are met. Governors are very active in ensuring that the school offers good value for money, including the effective use of the pupil premium to secure good progress. The Board of Governors could usefully be strengthened by recruiting members currently employed in business leadership to strengthen links with employers.

## 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>	137901
<b>Local authority</b>	Suffolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	425436

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Non-maintained
<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>	298
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andrew Smith
<b>Headteacher</b>	Andrew Bloom
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
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