

West Hatch High School

High Road, Chigwell, Essex, IG7 5BT

Inspection dates 19–20 September 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.

- GCSE results have gone up every year since the previous inspection to be well-above average. This is due to senior leaders' and governors' attention to detail and their persistent, successful focus on improving teaching.
- Students' progress has improved in English and mathematics and is now good overall throughout the school.
- Most teaching is good and some is outstanding. Strengths include teachers' subject knowledge and questioning.
- As a result of carefully planned lessons, disabled students and those who have special educational needs make good progress.
- Those students eligible for support through pupil premium funding also achieve well, as do those who speak English as an additional language.
- The sixth form is good. Students make good progress from modest starting points.
- Behaviour is good in and around the school. Students feel safe and parents and carers agree. Attendance is above average.
- Students' attitudes to learning are positive and these contribute to the good progress they make in lessons.
- Teachers use every opportunity to help students develop their reading and writing skills.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. Students are keenly aware of and sensitive to the needs of others.
- Governors have a good understanding of the school's performance and what needs to be done to improve the school further.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Most teaching is not outstanding. A very small amount requires improvement because it does not provide sufficient pace and challenge.
- Teaching assistants are not sufficiently involved in planning.
- Progress is inconsistent between subjects in the sixth form.
- Teachers do not consistently monitor the targets that students set themselves and each other. As a result, they are often not specific to the topic being taught.
- There are not enough opportunities for students to take the lead and make choices in their learning.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 42 lessons, of which five were observed jointly with senior leaders. In addition, the inspection team made a number of other short visits to lessons and observed an assembly.
- They held discussions with students, senior leaders, teaching staff and representatives of the governing body. A representative from the local authority attended a meeting at the school.
- They checked students' work as well as a range of documents, including the school's self-evaluation and information about students' progress. Inspectors also looked at documents relating to behaviour, attendance and safeguarding.
- The results of the 84 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire (Parent View), the school's own surveys with parents and carers and 89 staff questionnaires were also considered.

Inspection team

Christine Mayle, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Sa'ad Khaldi	Additional Inspector
Joanna Jones	Additional Inspector
David Webster	Additional Inspector
Andrew Lyons	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- West Hatch High School is larger than the average-sized secondary school. It converted to an academy in June 2011.
- The majority of students are from White British backgrounds, with other students coming from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. A below-average number of students speak English as an additional language but this is rising.
- About 20% of students are known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which is below average. This is additional government funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals, those in local authority care and those from some other groups.
- A small proportion of Year 7 students are eligible for catch-up funding which is for students who did not achieve the expected Level 4 in reading or mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is slightly below the national average, and the proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is above average.
- Alternative part-time education is provided for a small number of students in Year 10 and Year 11 who follow courses at Epping Forest College, Redbridge College, Grace College and New Craft in Hainault.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which sets the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching from good to outstanding by ensuring that all teachers:
 - provide opportunities for students to take the lead in lessons and make choices in their own learning
 - make sure all lessons have sufficient pace and challenge
 - plan with teaching assistants the work to be provided for students receiving their support
 - check the quality of the written targets that students set for themselves, and each other, so that they are challenging and specific to the subject being taught.
- Enable students to make consistently good progress across all subjects in the sixth form by:
 - monitoring and tracking more closely students' progress so that interventions can be put in place more quickly to support students who are at risk of underperforming.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students join the school with attainment that is broadly average. The proportion of students who make expected, and better than expected, progress in English and mathematics is improving and is now above national figures. The more able students also make good progress and achieve well.
- The proportion of students achieving five GCSE A* to C grades including English and mathematics is well above the national average and increasing. Robust school data show further improvement for 2014.
- From below-average starting points, students in the sixth form, many of whom come from other schools, make progress that is above average and achieve standards that are at least in line with national averages and sometimes above. The proportion of students who remain to the end of the year having started a course is also above the national average. However, the tracking of students' progress in the sixth form is not as rigorous as in the main school and, as a result, interventions are not put in place as soon as they could be. As a consequence, progress is inconsistent between subjects.
- The school uses the government's additional funding well to target those students in Year 7 who have fallen behind in literacy in their primary schools. As a result, the school is narrowing the gap between these students' achievement and that of their classmates.
- The small numbers of students who attend courses at other providers make good progress. The school makes regular checks on their attendance and safety, and collects data as part of their progress review. A member of staff has responsibility for visiting these students and also undertakes home visits. All students from last year's group were successful in gaining places on their chosen post-16 courses or apprenticeships.
- As a result of teachers setting work in lessons that is at the right level to support and challenge them, disabled students and those who have special educational needs make good progress. The small number of students for whom English is an additional language also achieve well.
- Students' literacy skills are good. Students are articulate and confident when answering questions and expressing their thoughts. They take pride in their written work. In all subjects, there is a focussed approach to developing literacy skills through the use of key words, and an emphasis on punctuation and grammar when marking work.
- The school has a clear and effective policy for early entry to GCSE examinations, particularly in mathematics. Students are entered when they are ready and Year 11 students spoken to by inspectors said this approach motivated and encouraged them to achieve their best.
- In 2012, students eligible for the pupil premium did not make as much progress as their classmates and attained, on average, three quarters of a GCSE grade lower in both English and mathematics. The gap overall in attainment between pupil premium students and their peers is less than the national in all years groups and is narrowing overtime.

The quality of teaching is good

- Teachers have high expectations of students and ensure that they can achieve them by carefully planning lessons to meet individual needs. Teachers set targets that challenge all students, regardless of the speed at which they work. The school has improved this area of its work since the last inspection so that all students make at least good progress in most lessons. A very small amount of teaching requires improvement so that the pace and challenge allows students make good progress.
- Teachers regularly check students' understanding as lessons proceed and adapt their approach accordingly. This is building students' confidence whilst consolidating their knowledge and skills, so they are able to tackle more challenging work.
- In most lessons, positive relationships built on mutual trust and respect allow students to discuss their work in depth and extend their ideas. Teachers have strong subject knowledge, use questioning effectively and, through well-chosen, active and engaging activities, move learning forward briskly. As a result, students enjoy their learning, are motivated and make at least good progress. However, there are not always opportunities for students to take the lead and make choices in their learning.
- Teachers use every opportunity to help students develop their reading and writing skills. Marking focuses well on literacy and the use of accurate and appropriate language. Students are often given time to assess their own and their classmates' work and set next steps to improve it. However, teachers do not always monitor these so that they are challenging and specific to the knowledge and skills needed within the topic being studied.
- Teaching caters well for the needs of disabled students, those with special educational needs and the more able so that they make good progress. However, teachers and teaching assistants do not always plan effectively together to support students' learning. Consequently their support is not always focussed on what the students need to do to improve outcomes.
- Sixth form teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. Teachers use imaginative strategies to enhance the students' interest, deepen their subject knowledge and extend their research skills. For example in geography, the teacher used a variety of images of physical features to develop definitions, in English, students were encouraged to support their views in a non-formulaic way and, in chemistry, students used information and communication technology (ICT) to broaden their research skills and widen their reading so that they made outstanding progress.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Staff have high expectations of behaviour, which is carefully supervised during the school day.
- The school's attendance policies are effective and attendance is above average. Students say they enjoy attending school and are punctual to school and lessons. Fixed term exclusions are low and there have been no permanent exclusions in the last two years.
- Students' attitudes to learning are positive and this contributes to the good progress that they make in lessons. They are keen to learn, work well together in groups, support each other in their learning and show respect to staff. However, they sometimes lack the confidence to take the initiative in their own learning.

- Students feel that behaviour is good and, when low-level disruption arises, staff deal with them promptly and appropriately. They contribute well to the school community by being role models, running clubs and being 'buddies' to younger students. The school is successful at combating discrimination and ensures equality of opportunity for all its students through the emphasis on co-operation and community.
- Bullying is rare. Students are confident that when an incident is reported to staff it will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Students have a good awareness of the various forms of bullying, including as name-calling, cyber and homophobic bullying.
- Students say they feel safe and are helped to keep themselves safe, especially with regard to the internet. They regard a strong feature of the school as the way in which everyone, of different ages and from a range of backgrounds and cultures, gets on well together. Parents and carers also feel that the school keeps their children safe.

The leadership and management are good

- The headteacher, together with senior leaders and governors, have accurately identified areas for development and have successfully improved achievement and teaching since the last inspection to move the school rapidly forward.
- Students' progress is monitored closely and interventions put in place quickly when students are identified as underperforming. This process is not as rigorous for sixth form students and the school is already taking action to improve this.
- Advice and guidance for students making choices at Key Stage 4, sixth-form students going on to university, further education or training, and those about to enter into the sixth form are good.
- Arrangements for monitoring and improving the quality of teaching are thorough. These are clearly linked to the targets set for teachers, their pay and career progression. Training is matched closely to teachers' needs. Joint observations with inspectors show that senior leaders are effective at identifying strengths and weaknesses in teaching, and they have made subsequent improvements where needed.
- Students across the school benefit from a wide variety of activities that engage their interest. The school offers a good range of subject choices and courses at both Key Stage 4 and sixth form that meet the needs of all students well. This prepares students well for the next stage of their lives.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength. All aspects are well developed in this multi-cultural community. Students are helped to be keenly aware of and sensitive to the needs of others. For example Year 7, students were blindfolded to experience being led by trained guide dogs as part of their charity fundraising activity. Assemblies are used effectively to develop students' sense of community and highlight their positive contribution to learning.
- Students are especially proud of the wide range of clubs and sporting activities that are available. Students enjoy participating in after-school activities that help them develop interests and experience beyond the school gates. For example students spoke extremely highly of the school's musical production of 'Oliver' in which they had been involved.
- The school works very well with parents and carers and gathers their views regularly through

surveys and focus groups. The positive responses from the school's parental survey reflected this strong partnership. One parent wrote: 'Very good school, strong leadership. Caring supportive staff that have brought out the best in my child'.

- The school has a positive partnership with the local authority, which offers suitable support whenever needed.
- Safeguarding procedures meet all requirements and are well-managed. All relevant staff undergo regular training in safeguarding, safer recruitment and child protection.

■ **The governance of the school:**

Governors have an in-depth understanding of the school's performance, the quality of teaching, performance management systems and the link to teachers' pay. They use their knowledge of data and their skills well to hold the senior leadership to account and ask challenge questions on all aspects of the school's work, such as closing the attainment gap between those students eligible for the pupil premium funding and those who are not, the progress of more-able students and the effectiveness of early entry to GCSE examinations. They have strong financial and budgetary understanding. Funding for those students eligible for pupil premium, and those Year 7 students who did not achieve the expected Level 4 in reading and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2, is carefully monitored and governors regularly track its impact on attainment and progress. They are aware that this is an on-going task and have appointed a member of staff to lead in this area of the school's work. Governors are fully involved in discussions and decisions about strategic direction and school development.

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	136758
Local authority	Essex
Inspection number	427169

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy converter
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	1272
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	341
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	John Haley
Headteacher	Frances Howarth
Date of previous school inspection	25 April 2012
Telephone number	020 8504 8216
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