

# High Storrs School

High Storrs Road, Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S11 7LH

## Inspection dates

7–8 November 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Good</b>	<b>2</b>
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Good	2

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a good school.

- Students' GCSE attainment has been above the national average for the last three years and longer. The progress of most students is good or better over time.
- The sixth form is outstanding because teaching and outcomes for sixth-form students are outstanding.
- Teaching is generally good and sometimes outstanding. The proportion of weaker teaching is low and teaching is improving because of effective systems for professional development.
- Students' behaviour is outstanding. Their positive attitude to learning and contribution to the whole school community are exemplary at all key stages. Students feel safe.
- The school's curriculum allows students to undertake studies that are very well matched to their needs and that particularly allow more-able students to thrive.
- Students willingly participate in a broad range of extra-curricular activities, which strongly contributes to their social, moral, spiritual, and cultural development.
- The headteacher and other senior leaders are highly effective, with a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They check regularly on teaching and achievement and this is helping to improve students' learning further.
- Leaders and governors justifiably have the confidence of their community and are well placed to take the school forward.

### It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Outcomes are lower for some students of Pakistani heritage who speak English as an additional language and some lower-ability students. These students are not yet making the same good progress as others in the school, most notably in science and mathematics.
- Some teaching does not consistently match precisely all students' needs. Students are not always clear about how to improve their work.
- School leaders, including governors, do not make full use of performance information to secure consistently good progress for some students.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 48 lessons across Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4 and in the sixth form, during which they judged students' learning and the effectiveness of teaching. One lesson was jointly observed by the lead inspector and the headteacher. Inspectors did not observe the work of most teaching assistants as many were attending off-site training during both days of the inspection.
- Meetings were held with four groups of students, including one group representing disabled students and those with special education needs and another consisting of sixth-form students.
- Separate discussions were held with four members of the governing body, a representative from Sheffield local authority, and senior and middle leaders.
- During the inspection, inspectors scrutinised students' work including a sample they selected for closer analysis. They monitored the behaviour of students before, during and after lessons, and listened to students read.
- School leaders distributed the optional staff survey provided by Ofsted and inspectors considered the views of 20 teachers and support staff, who responded.
- Inspectors considered a sample consisting of 128 responses to Parent View and reviewed the school's own parental surveys conducted over time. They also considered the views of a very few parents who contacted the inspection team directly during the inspection. Two inspectors met with a parent who requested a meeting with the inspection team.
- Inspectors reviewed a wide range of school documentation and policies including the school's own data on achievement and student tracking. They also considered the school's evaluation of its own strengths and weaknesses, improvement plans, quality assurance documentation, logs of behaviour, and attendance analysis.
- Inspectors considered the school's procedures for safeguarding students and spoke with students about their views of High Storrs School's safety.

## Inspection team

Nigel Pressnell, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Pamela Hemphill	Additional Inspector
Wendy Bradford	Additional Inspector
Kathleen Yates	Additional Inspector
James McGrath	Additional Inspector

# Full report

## Information about this school

- High Storrs School is a much larger-than-average school with a growing sixth form of 440 students.
- The school is designated as a specialist school for performing arts, and mathematics and computing.
- The number of boys and girls in the school is approximately equal.
- The school has a lower proportion of students for whom the school receives the pupil premium than found nationally. The pupil premium is additional funding for students known to be eligible for free school meals, in local authority care or whose parents are in the armed forces.
- The proportion of students from ethnic minorities and those for whom English is not their first language is higher than found nationally. The majority of students are of White British heritage and a small minority are of Pakistani heritage.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is in line with the national average. The proportions supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs are much smaller than national averages.
- The school exceeds the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- A very few students, found at Key Stage 4, are educated part time at a range of alternative providers. These students extend their school experience at W.O.R.K, Recycle, Heeley City Farm, Sheffield College, and Red Tape (SMP Media Productions).
- The school has specialist resourcing for a very few students with speech and hearing impairment.

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

- Raise the proportion of outstanding teaching to ensure all students, and particularly some students of Pakistani heritage who speak English as an additional language and some lower-ability students, make equally rapid progress by the end of Key Stage 4 as others in the school by:
  - ensuring that in every lesson, the work is matched precisely to meet all students' needs, whatever their starting points
  - providing regular subject-specific feedback that tells students what they must do to improve, and which allows students frequent opportunity to act upon comments they have been given.
- Further strengthen leadership and management by making full use of information gained from the high quality systems in the school to check on the impact of actions on the outcomes for different groups of students most notably in English, mathematics and science.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

is good

- Students join the school with generally above-average levels of prior attainment. They mostly make good progress across a range of subjects including English and mathematics, irrespective of their starting points. Achievement is good and most students achieve standards by the end of Key Stage 4 that are consistently well above the national average.
- In 2013, the proportion of students attaining five or more GCSE grades A\*–C including English and mathematics was marginally lower than in some previous years, but still well above the unvalidated national average. Students attain highly in a broad range of subjects, including those subjects contributing to the English Baccalaureate. In 2013, 28% of students achieved the English Baccalaureate.
- Although overall attainment is well above average in mathematics, test results dipped in 2013 because a few students, including those for whom English is an additional language, made less progress than in previous years. While progress overall in English also dipped a little in 2013, more students exceeded the progress expected of them and attainment remained well above average for most students.
- Most students read well for their ability and the school's strategies for improving literacy are highly effective, as indicated by the high success rates achieved in English.
- The most-able students make good progress because the school's curriculum and the quality of teaching provide them with appropriate challenge to enable them to attain high standards.
- Students of Pakistani heritage and those students who speak English as an additional language do not always make good progress by the end of Key Stage 4. These students do not attain as highly as other students, particularly in science and mathematics. Lower-ability students made less progress in English and mathematics in 2013. The tracking of these students is good but outcomes remain weaker than for many other students at the school.
- Pupil-premium students, who include those known to be eligible for free school meals, generally make similar good progress to other students. The overall gap between the performance of these students and others narrowed between 2011 and 2012, but has widened in 2013 for English and mathematics. Overall, there remains an average gap of about one GCSE grade between students known to be eligible for the pupil premium and other students.
- The school uses the pupil premium funding to provide additional staffing including an education welfare officer, a specialist mentor and student support assistants. These appointments are having a positive impact on raising attendance and attainment of Pakistani-heritage students and represent one of many examples of the school's strong commitment to equal opportunities.
- The design of the school's curriculum features a three-year Key Stage 4 and the effectiveness of this policy and of early entry for GCSE examinations is regularly reviewed by governors and senior leaders. Inspectors agree with the school's current analysis, which shows the school's three-year Key Stage 4 strategy has contributed positively to the proportion of students attaining higher grades by the end of Year 11.
- Students make outstanding progress in the school's inclusive sixth form. From broadly average starting points on entry, they attain high standards in most subjects. Attainment has improved in the sixth form over the last three years at A Level, and in particular AS Level, so that results are above the national average.
- A very few students attend off-site provision in order to access specialist teaching. This provision is tracked effectively by senior and middle leaders to ensure students make good progress and the experience enriches their studies in school.
- Disabled students and those with special educational needs make broadly similar progress to their peers. In particular, their progress in English over time is improving; however, their progress in mathematics in 2013 was not as good as expected. A very few students are placed with the school's specialist resourcing for students with speech and hearing impairment. These students were found to be well supported by specialist staff and making equal progress to other students in classes in which they were observed.

- There are almost no students at the conclusion of their education who do not enter employment and/or remain in education or training, whether leaving in Key Stage 4 or at the end of their time in the sixth form. The school offers sound guidance for students seeking careers and making applications to higher education.

### **The quality of teaching**

**is good**

- Most teaching in the school is good over time and a proportion of that seen during the inspection was judged to be outstanding. Inspectors agree with the school's own evaluation of the quality of teaching and confirm that the proportion of teaching that is not yet good is very small.
- In lessons where the teaching is good or better, teachers capitalise on the positive climate for learning provided by the students' outstanding behaviour to make a sharp start to learning with purposeful introductions. Teachers demonstrate excellent subject knowledge; their strong planning takes account of individual students' needs and teaching builds successfully on students' prior learning.
- In better lessons, teachers make good use of assessment. They adjust their teaching to address gaps in students' understanding, or prepare more challenging work to accelerate students' progress. In an outstanding science lesson, the teacher made excellent use of open questioning to encourage the class to think and deepen their understanding.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge in teaching literacy and mathematics. These skills are extended across a range of subjects, ensuring students apply their skills in different situations.
- Inspectors found that in subjects where teachers had high expectations and stronger routines, students' work, particularly that in their books, showed at least expected progress. Although inspectors found examples of good marking with clear advice provided and instances where students had systematically responded to the teachers' advice, too much variation was found in the quality of marking between subjects. Students are not always clear how to improve.
- In the few lessons where teaching is not yet good, planning does not sufficiently cater for the needs of individual students; the pace of learning is too slow and the needs of students are not fully met.
- Students make good use of their planners to record homework, which is widely set. The overwhelming proportion of parents responding to Parentview believe their children receive appropriate homework for their age and inspectors agree.
- Teaching in the sixth form is outstanding. Teachers ensure that students are making outstanding progress by providing high quality lessons and supportive tuition where additional assistance is required. For example, in a sixth-form drama lesson, outstanding teacher-student dialogue, questioning and reflection enabled students to make rapid progress in performance and review to deepen their understanding of character.

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

**are outstanding**

- Behaviour at High Storrs School is characterised by very good manners, inclusiveness and outstanding student participation. This is a harmonious school in which staff and students model exemplary conduct and respect for one another. Learning is accelerated through mutual cooperation and the students' keen desire to find out for themselves.
- Behaviour is also outstanding in the sixth form. Those students to whom inspectors spoke were unanimously positive about sixth-form life. Their thirst for knowledge is a strong factor in their rapid progress in lessons.
- Students are justifiably proud of their school and the contribution they make to the school and wider community. The students' tolerance and appreciation of differing religious and cultural backgrounds are tangible. Students are familiar with the different forms of bullying behaviour and racist, homophobic or other discriminatory language is not tolerated by students or staff.

- Almost all of the parents responding to Parent View believe their children are safe at High Storrs School and inspectors share this view. Students told inspectors that instances of bullying are extremely rare and students are very confident that any concerns they express will be dealt with promptly by tutors and pastoral leaders.
- Students' attendance is gradually rising in response to more rigorous procedures and is in line with the national average. The rates of persistent absence are low. Punctuality for school and between lessons is outstanding. The school's rate of exclusion is low, reflecting the effectiveness of the school's behaviour-management strategies.
- Students of all ages are aware of how they should keep themselves safe and have a very good understanding of e-safety. An outstanding feature of the school is the way in which students ensure the well-being of their peers. This is evident, for example, through the work of the e-safety committee to which students contribute, sixth-form students employed as lunchtime supervisors, and the mentoring facilitated by multi-age tutor groups.

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

- The integrity and strong leadership of the headteacher have resulted in a clear focus on improving standards at High Storrs School. This ambition is widely articulated by senior and middle leaders as well as the experienced governing body. The school's leaders have a detailed and honest understanding of the school's many strengths as well as emerging areas for school improvement. Actions are precise and effective.
- The school has excellent systems for tracking the performance of students who are kept well informed of their appropriately rigorous targets. However, the wide range of student information available is not always used effectively by some leaders and teachers. As a result, while outcomes in the school are good for most students, school leaders have not yet secured equally good achievement over time for some students of Pakistani heritage who speak English as an additional language and some lower-ability students.
- Leaders closely monitor the quality of teaching and this has led to some exemplary practice in several subjects. However, a few improvement issues remain, as for example, ensuring consistency in marking so that all students are clear as to the next steps to be taken to improve their work.
- A positive result from this regular monitoring is the practice of coaching and training provided for staff, including non-teaching staff. This culture of striving for continual advancement, together with accurate self-evaluation, shows the school's continued capacity to improve.
- The curriculum is rich and varied. The school very effectively promotes students' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development by providing a diverse range of enrichment activities in all subject areas. The school has many sporting teams and extensive opportunities are embraced by students enjoying expressive and performing arts. A room is set aside for multi-faith prayer and some students meet regularly as a Christian Union.
- Leadership and management in the sixth form are outstanding because the head of sixth form is ensuring standards are improving and outcomes for students are high given their starting points. The sixth-form curriculum offers an outstanding range of courses supplemented by highly effective partnerships with two other local post-16 providers. The wide range of visits and external experiences contribute to students' rich extra-curricular experience in the sixth form.
- The local authority works collaboratively with the school, for example effectively benchmarking the school's performance against other schools locally and nationally.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - The governing body brings a wide range of professional and lay expertise to the school. Governors demonstrate a very high commitment to the school and work to support and challenge the school as critical friends. They make good use of the training they have undertaken, for example in analysing school performance data to interpret the school's results, and check how well students are performing compared with other schools. Although they have identified the gap in progress between different groups of students, they have not yet secured

equally good outcomes for all at Key Stage 4. Governors are well informed about the quality of teaching.

- The Chair of the Governing Body is well informed and speaks convincingly for the governing body of governors' desire to engage fully with the school's diverse community. Governors actively seek the views of parents and students, for example listening to the opinions expressed by students when governors perform quality assurance visits, or when senior students attend governors' meetings.
- Governors carefully manage the school's finances, including overseeing the impact of the pupil premium spending. They demonstrate a sound appreciation of their role in ensuring that the performance management system operated by the headteacher is fairly aligned to employees' remuneration.



## 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>	107139
<b>Local authority</b>	Sheffield
<b>Inspection number</b>	425962

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Gender of pupils in the sixth form</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,680
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	440
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Andrew Child
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ian Gage
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	3 December 2008
<b>Telephone number</b>	0114 267 0000
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