

Lynn Grove High School

Lynn Grove, Gorleston, Great Yarmouth, NR31 8AP

Inspection dates

4–5 December 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Inadequate	4
Achievement of pupils		Inadequate	4
Quality of teaching		Inadequate	4
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that has serious weaknesses.

- Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4 has declined, and the proportion of students gaining five GCSEs at A* to C grades including English and mathematics is below average.
- Students who are supported by the pupil premium do not make enough progress, and the gap between their attainment and that of their classmates has widened.
- Too much teaching is inadequate or requires improvement. Teaching is not making enough impact on improving achievement.
- The information gathered about how well students are doing does not focus sufficiently on their progress, and it is not used to make sure lesson activities meet the needs of individual students at different ability levels.
- In some lessons teachers do not make effective use of the time available, and students are not encouraged enough to think for themselves or discuss their work.
- Students' work is not always marked, and where it is marked the comments do not always make clear to students what they need to do to improve their work.
- Not all staff make students aware of their learning targets.
- Some of the leaders in charge of subjects are not sufficiently confident in monitoring the work of their department and bringing about improvements.
- The steps taken to help any students who are falling behind have not had sufficient impact to improve their results.

The school has the following strengths

- The headteacher and senior leadership team have worked successfully to improve attendance, reduce exclusions and to raise achievement in some subject areas.
- A strong community spirit results in students feeling safe and being proud to be part of the school.
- There are many opportunities for students to take leadership responsibilities and make a positive contribution to the school.
- Senior leaders, supported by the governors, have taken some effective action to tackle underperformance in teaching.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 47 lessons. Ten of these were joint observations with members of the senior leadership team.
- Meetings were held with students, members of the governing body, and senior and subject leaders.
- The inspectors looked at past and current information about students' progress and the work in their books.
- Inspectors observed the work of the school and looked at a range of documentation, including the school's view of its own performance, its development plan, and policies and information about students' performance, attendance, behaviour and the quality of teaching.
- The inspectors took account of 70 responses on Parent View (the online questionnaire) together with the school's own survey of parents' views.
- The inspectors took account of the responses to 50 staff questionnaires.

Inspection team

Caroline Pardy, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Nicola Edward	Additional Inspector
Brenda Watson	Additional Inspector
Paul Bartlett	Additional Inspector
John Mason	Additional Inspector

Full report

In accordance with the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than it might in all the circumstances reasonably be expected to perform.

Information about this school

- Lynn Grove High School is larger than the average-sized secondary school. It converted to become an academy on 1 October 2011. When its predecessor school of the same name was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged to be outstanding.
- The majority of students are from a White British background and the proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is well below average.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is below average. The proportion supported at school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is well above average.
- The proportion of students for whom the school receives the pupil premium (additional government funding for students who are known to be eligible for free school meals, looked after by the local authority or from service families) is below average.
- In 2012, the last year for which results have been confirmed, the school met the government's floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- A small number of students in Years 10 and 11 currently spend one day a week at Easton College or Horatio House in order to support their achievement.
- The headteacher was appointed just before the school became an academy. The two deputy headteachers were appointed in April 2013.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of teaching to at least good by ensuring that all teachers:
 - make thorough and consistent use of information about students' attainment and progress to plan and provide lesson activities that are suitably challenging for all ability groups
 - making the best use of available learning time in lessons for productive work
 - give students more opportunity to think harder and discuss their work in lessons.
- Raise students' achievement by ensuring that:
 - all teachers mark students' work regularly, with clear advice on how to improve it, and make sure students act on this advice
 - all staff share learning targets with the students.
- Improve leadership and management by making sure that:
 - information about students' progress is used consistently, quickly and effectively by all leaders and teachers to support any students who are starting to fall behind in their work
 - the impact of activities funded by the pupil premium is monitored and reviewed with greater rigour by all leaders in order to close the gap in the achievement of eligible students
 - subject leaders have the skills they need to be confident in holding their teams to account.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is inadequate

- The proportion of students gaining five A* to C grades at GCSE including English and mathematics has declined steadily over the period since the academy opened. In 2013 it was below average, reflecting inadequate progress given these students' starting points.
- Progress in English is inadequate because the proportion of students achieving nationally expected progress in English was below average, and the proportion exceeding expected progress was also below average. In mathematics the proportion of students achieving expected progress was above average, but the proportion exceeding expected progress was below average.
- The proportion of students gaining grade C or above in English was well below average in 2013. Current school data show that attainment in Year 11 is improving.
- Year 11 attainment in science was well below average in 2012 and 2013. Although school data show an improvement in progress, it is still below expected levels for students of middle and lower ability. The proportion of higher grades achieved in biology and chemistry is slightly better than in science. Students attain below-average GCSE results in French and in some design and technology subjects.
- The attainment of students in mathematics has been average, although the proportion of higher ability students gaining A* and A grades has been below average. In order to improve their chance of gaining the top grades, the school no longer enters more-able students early for GCSE mathematics.
- The achievement of students supported by the pupil premium is inadequate and remains below that of their classmates. In 2012 and 2013 these students achieved at least a grade below their classmates in English and about a quarter of a grade below in mathematics. In 2013 the number of students supported by the pupil premium who gained five or more A* to C GCSE including mathematics and English was significantly fewer than their classmates. School data indicate that in the current Key Stage 4 this gap is narrowing. However, it is not narrowing rapidly enough in all other year groups.
- Students who attend college for one day a week are achieving well in their work-related courses and are making good progress in their GCSE subjects.
- The progress made by disabled students and those who have special educational needs requires improvement, particularly in English and science.
- The progress of Year 7 students who are eligible for additional help with their reading has improved over the last two years, with students in Years 7 and 8 making better progress than those in Year 9. Students who receive support read confidently and show good comprehension as the teaching in these sessions is personalised to meet the individual needs of the students. Inspectors observed several opportunities for students to read in class.

The quality of teaching

is inadequate

- Teachers' expectations for what students should achieve vary within departments as well as across the school, but too often they are not high enough. Some classes are set work that is not

challenging, so students are not developing their knowledge and skills well enough.

- The marking of students' work varies considerably. Inspectors saw examples of books that were thoroughly marked with clear guidance on how to improve, where students had acted on the advice and as a result made progress. However, this practice was rare and inspectors saw far too many books in different subjects that were either unmarked or where the comments gave no advice to students on how to improve their work. In these subjects achievement was often inadequate.
- Homework is set fairly consistently, but its contribution to learning varies as teachers do not always use homework tasks to either go over learning or to prepare students for the next stage of their learning.
- In too many of the lessons seen, learning time was lost due to students writing down learning objectives, which they often did not understand, or because the pace of learning was too slow for pupils to complete the work set. In lessons where students were involved in group work or encouraged to think for themselves, they showed interest and enthusiasm.
- In lessons where teaching was inadequate or required improvement, the activities were not set at the right level of difficulty for all ability groups as teachers had not used information about students' attainment and progress well enough in their planning. The questions teachers asked in these lessons were not followed up by giving students the opportunity to think before answering, or there was too little opportunity for the students to discuss their ideas with a partner. As a result, their answers often lacked depth.
- In lessons where teaching was good or better, inspectors observed students working in groups on activities that were challenging but not too difficult to achieve. They were able to talk about their work, and teachers skilfully used questioning to develop their ideas and understanding.
- Adults who support students' learning within the classroom are effective when the teacher shares the lesson with them. Inspectors observed some good practice which needs to be shared across subjects to improve the achievement of students receiving support.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Students' attitudes to learning are not always sufficiently positive. In lessons where the work engages their interest and makes high demands on them, students show an interest and enthusiasm for learning and demonstrate good learning behaviour. However, there are also lessons when students do not take enough interest, so they become passive or talk quietly to one another rather than listening to the teacher.
- Students told the inspectors that there are times when inappropriate behaviour interrupts their learning, although no significant examples were seen during the inspection.
- The relationships between students and teachers in lessons are mostly positive, and one group of students interviewed commented that their teachers like them. When students work together in groups they show that they are able to do this well, but teachers do not plan enough activities that allow them to take control of their work, so they sometimes rely too much on the teacher to guide their learning.
- The behaviour of students around the school is good. They mix well and show respect for one another and adults. They move around the school in a purposeful and orderly manner. Students

are polite and courteous, and help one another if they can.

- Students are aware of different types of bullying, including cyber bullying. They know about the potential dangers of using the internet and told the inspectors about the support the school has provided in helping them to keep safe.
- Students say that incidents of bullying in the school are rare, and they feel safe in the school. One group of students stated that one of the strengths of the school is that it is a community where 'we all respect one another'. These views are supported by the low number of incidents of bullying recorded.
- The number of exclusions has dropped in the last three years due to the use of the in-school 'inclusion centre' which helps students to manage their behaviour.
- Students attend school regularly and on time. School leaders have worked hard to improve attendance by challenging poor attendance and working closely with parents.
- The school provides a wide range of opportunities for students to take up positions of leadership and responsibility and out-of-school activities. Students serve as sports leaders, language leaders, mathematics leaders, prefects, members of the school council, music leaders and pastoral ambassadors.

The leadership and management

requires improvement

- Despite a number of improvements made under the current headteacher, including this year for current students in English, the effectiveness of leadership and management varies and requires improvement. Senior leaders have not made sure that data are always used effectively to raise achievement, including for those eligible for the pupil premium, and some subject leaders are not yet contributing enough to improving teaching or raising achievement in their departments.
- The school collects a lot of data about how well students are doing. However, this has focused too much on target grades rather than measuring progress. Leaders have reviewed this practice this year and are now starting to monitor the amount of progress each student is making in all subjects. The data provided by the school show that progress for some groups of students has improved as a result. However, teachers do not yet make full use of this information when planning lessons.
- The leadership of subject areas is improving. Subject leaders are able to identify the strengths and weaknesses within their subject, and the outcomes of any actions taken. For example, some were able to demonstrate that as a result of their monitoring, students were attending additional lessons and making better progress. However, a small number of subject leaders are still not monitoring the work of their department rigorously enough.
- The school has revised its system for managing staff performance, which is now much more rigorous. Senior leaders are accurate when judging the quality of lessons, and their evaluation of the impact of strategies such as the use of Year 7 'catch up' funding is accurate. The findings from lesson observations are used appropriately to identify the development needs of staff.
- The curriculum has been reviewed and now provides a full range of subjects at Key Stage 3 and the opportunity for all students to take the English Baccalaureate at the end of Key Stage 4. Students follow a range of GCSE courses and a few work-related courses that meet their needs. However, some of these changes are too recent to have had a positive impact on achievement.

- The headteacher challenges underperformance and staff who fail to meet their targets are not financially rewarded. There is a support programme for staff who fail to meet the required standards. The headteacher is well supported by the governing body in ensuring that pay is linked to teachers' performance.
- Since her appointment the headteacher has reviewed the work of the school and introduced a number of new systems for improving teaching, learning and behaviour. She has invested time into developing staff so that they have the skills to bring about this change. Her actions have resulted in a decrease in the number of exclusions, better attendance, especially by students who were previously persistently absent, and higher achievement in some areas, especially work-related subjects.
- The headteacher has also worked to improve the involvement of parents with the school. As a result more now attend parents' evening and information sessions.
- The school provides well for students' spiritual, cultural, social and moral development. This has resulted in an environment where students feel safe and secure, and learn the benefits of good citizenship as they have the opportunity to become involved in community projects.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - In the past the governors' view of the standard of education has not been accurate enough. However, this is changing and they have reviewed their roles this year to make better use of their expertise. As a result they now take a more active role in driving the school forward. For example, they monitor the work of departments by taking part in departmental reviews, and they have resolutely made some difficult staffing decisions. They are aware that the money used to support students eligible for the pupil premium has not had enough impact, and consequently are working alongside the deputy headteacher to ensure this money has the desired result. As a result of their actions there is already an improvement in the progress of pupils supported by the pupil premium, especially in mathematics. They have undertaken a range of training on areas such as understanding school data, and as a result meet with heads of subject to challenge them about their performance. Governors make sure the school meets statutory requirements for safeguarding students.

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	137541
Local authority	NA
Inspection number	425437

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	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1115
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Antony Oliver
Headteacher	Alison Mobbs
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01493 661406
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