

Sheringham High School and Sixth Form Centre

Holt Road, Sheringham, NR26 8ND

Inspection dates 1–2 May 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected as an academy
	This inspection:	Good 2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management	Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Students attain well and make good progress over time. Individual students often make outstanding progress.
- The proportion of students gaining five A* to C grades including English and mathematics is significantly above average.
- Teaching is good and some is outstanding.
- Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well and reinforced from the time students first enter the school.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs are supported well in their learning and make good progress.
- The sixth form is good. It is well led and managed. Students make good progress and attainment is rising.
- Students feel safe and well supported. Parents agree that students are safe at all times.
- Behaviour is outstanding. Students readily take responsibility for supporting each other and have highly positive attitudes to their learning.
- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and has significantly improved teaching and achievement. Senior leaders and subject leaders lead their areas effectively.
- Governors offer excellent levels of support and challenge to the school and share the headteacher's determination that only the best is good enough.
- Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is a strength of the school. It is underpinned by very effective curriculum arrangements.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some teaching does not provide enough challenge to help students achieve the very highest standards.
- Progress slows for some students when they do not use the detailed advice provided in marking to improve their work.
- Students moving from Year 11 to 12 do not always have a deep enough understanding of the requirements of sixth form study.
- Teachers' skills in assessment and marking are not shared with other staff sufficiently and are not as consistently good as the school's own best practice.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 34 lessons taught by 34 staff. Six joint observations were carried out with members of the senior leadership team. Inspectors also observed a range of activities carried out by the school to support individuals and small groups of students.
- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, members of the governing body, a representative of the local authority, staff and four groups of students.
- In planning and carrying out the inspection, inspectors took account of the 50 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), the school’s own externally commissioned survey of parents’ views, and responses to an inspection questionnaire from 38 staff.
- The inspectors looked at the school’s improvement plan, its data on students’ attainment and progress, records of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching, a wide range of policies and procedures, and the arrangements for the safeguarding of students.
- An inspector attended an assembly.
- Inspectors carried out a scrutiny of students’ work jointly with subject leaders and members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors listened to students reading.

Inspection team

Michael Sutherland-Harper, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Piers Ranger	Additional Inspector
Martin Wyard	Additional Inspector
Elizabeth Macfarlane	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- Sheringham High School and Sixth Form Centre converted to become an academy school in November, 2011. When its predecessor school, Sheringham High School and Sixth Form Centre, was last inspected by Ofsted, it was judged good.
- The school is part of the North Norfolk Academy Trust. The school is currently in discussion with the local authority and Department for Education about sponsoring other local schools.
- The very large majority of the students are White British.
- A very small number of students are educated away from the school at the Holt Youth Project.
- The proportion of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported through school action is below the national average. The proportion supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is also below average.
- The proportion of students for whom the school receives the pupil premium is below the national average. This is additional government funding for particular groups of students, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, and those in the care of the local authority.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.
- The headteacher is due to retire at the end of the summer term, 2014. He is a local leader in education and is in discussion with trustees regarding a role in the future development of the North Norfolk Academy Trust. The current deputy headteacher has been appointed to the headship of the academy.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise the quality of all teaching and learning by:
 - ensuring that teachers' expectations of what students can achieve, and the level of challenge in the work they are set, are consistently high in all lessons
 - making sure that students use the feedback provided by teachers to improve their work
 - sharing the skills of the most effective teachers in assessment and marking with all staff so that the school's best practice becomes the norm in all subjects and year groups
 - ensuring that students moving from Year 11 to 12 have a better understanding of the requirements of sixth form study.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is good

- Students enter the school with standards that are broadly in line with those found nationally, although significant variations are beginning to appear year-on-year. Students make good progress during their time at the school and some progress is outstanding but it is not consistently so across all subjects. In a small number of lessons, expectations and challenge are not high enough.
- The proportion of students attaining five A* to C grades, including English and mathematics, is significantly above the national average. English has been weaker than mathematics in the past but standards rose markedly in 2012 and 2013. Mathematics results decreased slightly in 2013 but remain significantly above national averages.
- Results in science, art and design and French are above national averages. In other subjects, such as music, drama and design technology, where results have been lower, the school has been working successfully with departments to ensure that they improve.
- Students' progress, both over time and in lessons, is good and sometimes outstanding. Students have highly positive attitudes to learning. More-able students make good and frequently outstanding progress; the percentages of students making more than expected progress in English and mathematics are above their respective national averages.
- Students supported by the pupil premium make good progress. The school has appointed specialist staff to ensure that progress rates continue to rise in English and mathematics and that the specific needs of individual students are fully met. Students eligible for the pupil premium were about a grade behind in English and mathematics in 2013 but the gap is now narrowing quickly as a result of the specialist programmes put in place by the school.
- The school has developed close links with feeder primary schools to ensure a successful transition from Year 6 to Year 7. It is looking at replicating this model higher up the school so that all students moving from Year 11 to 12 have a deeper understanding of the requirements of sixth form study.
- The achievement of disabled students and those who have special educational needs is good. Needs are diagnosed early and quickly addressed by programmes of study tailored to each student. Appropriate support is put in place whenever necessary to ensure that all students enjoy equal opportunities and that there is no discrimination of any kind.
- Students develop their skills in literacy and numeracy well. The Year 7 catch-up premium is well used to ensure that progress rates increase, especially in English and mathematics. Year 10 students, acting as reading coaches, are paired with students in Year 7. Reading 'master classes', which make good use of the excellent library facilities, ensure that reading remains a high priority throughout the school. The school's 'Ace and Nurture' programme uses specifically trained teaching assistants to deliver additional in-depth teaching. Revision classes reinforce skills in English and mathematics for examination groups.
- The school does not enter students early for examinations in English, mathematics or other subjects.
- The school checks regularly on the attainment and progress of the small number of students who are educated elsewhere. It ensures that they, too, achieve consistently well.

- Students in the sixth form make good progress. Retention rates have been lower than national rates in the past but are now improving significantly due to the school's emphasis on a 'best fit' between students and their courses. Results at A level are high compared to local figures and rising quickly against national figures, including for the more-able students. Rigorous reviews of attainment and progress, together with a careful match of subjects to students' interests and career plans, mean that they are now rising at AS level as well. Students who undertake vocational subjects are doing well. The number of students gaining places at university, higher education and apprenticeships is high. It has risen because students are well informed about the options in front of them, and the needs of all groups of students are carefully catered for by the strong pastoral support in place.

The quality of teaching is good

- Strengths of teaching include warm and trusting relationships between staff and students. Teachers' good subject knowledge is used to engage students' attention and promote interest in subjects. High-quality questioning encourages students to think deeply about their work and the world around them. Careful planning ensures that activities are usually well matched to students' interests and starting points.
- Literacy and numeracy are taught well. Literacy is promoted through the use of technical and subject-specific vocabulary, which students are encouraged to use at all times. The acquisition of confident reading and speaking skills is a focus area for the school and this ensures that communication skills are well taught. In one highly effective lesson, the links between mathematics and the world outside were brought home to students by a Year 9 stock market activity which required students to assess profit and loss in a real-life context.
- More-able students are stretched and challenged academically in most lessons. The activities which are set consistently extend students' thinking. A joint Year 10 and sixth form lesson in philosophy and ethics on the origins of the universe led to a lively debate between the two year groups and with the teacher. This helped students to deepen their understanding of this subject extremely effectively.
- In a small amount of the teaching, expectations of what students can and should achieve are not quite as clear and progress slows as a result. In addition, students do not always consistently and quickly follow up on the advice they are given about how to improve their work.
- Sixth form teaching is good and sometimes outstanding. Questioning and feedback are used skilfully to test and extend the depth of students' understanding. Good relationships between teachers and students enable high-quality discussions to take place and ensure that English and mathematics skills are reinforced. Approaches used in planning and delivering lessons are sometimes very imaginative. Teachers are frequently available to provide extra support and lessons, including outside of normal lesson times, which demonstrates their commitment to the individuals in their care. Opportunities to develop practical skills are good, for example in the course in motor vehicle maintenance work.
- Disabled students and those who have special educational needs are well supported by teaching assistants who recognise and respond well to their specific needs. Students are helped to access information and develop their understanding of the topics they are learning about but they also develop the confidence to work out solutions of their own when faced with challenges.
- Marking and assessment procedures are good but, in a few subjects, teachers do not always

ensure that students follow up on the detailed feedback they are offered and improve their work. The best examples of the feedback offered by teachers are not always shared with colleagues so that other staff can reflect upon and develop their own practice.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The behaviour of students is outstanding. Students display a consistent thirst for knowledge and interest in learning in all scenarios. This was particularly seen during the inspection in activities taught during the 'flexible curriculum' day, where students explored topics such as attitudes to drugs and alcohol in a very responsible way. Similarly, the headteacher delivered an inspiring assembly during the inspection on the importance of education in our world. Students report that assemblies are always 'really good because they make you think'. Students are punctual to lessons and settle to work very quickly. Their behaviour around the school at break and lunchtime is of a very high standard.
- Students enjoy very good relationships with staff and with each other. They respond promptly to instructions, listen to each other and work co-operatively in lessons and in extra-curricular activities. Older students are ready to provide practical support for students lower down the school; for example, in helping them read. Members of the school council are positive about their role in helping to improve the school and spoke confidently about how their suggestions and concerns are actively responded to by school leaders and managers.
- Students are clear that the standards for behaviour set by the school are high and are met consistently by students. The rigorous behaviour and rewards systems, which are currently being reviewed and enhanced, contribute significantly to the positive climate in classrooms and around the school. Students know that any poor behaviour will be quickly dealt with but say that such behaviour is extremely rare. Students are very well supported by the pastoral systems in place. Parents agree that behaviour is of a very high quality.
- Sixth form students demonstrate positive attitudes to learning in and out of lessons, responding quickly to teachers' instructions. Students take pride in their work and co-operate very well with one another during group activities. They are positive role models for younger students, including in lesson support. They are good ambassadors for the school, recognising that such activities develop personal skills which complement their academic work. They feel safe and well supported in the sixth form.
- Students say that there is little, if any, bullying in the school. They have a well-developed understanding of the different forms that bullying may take, including name-calling and homophobic bullying. They know how to use the internet responsibly and how to avoid cyber-bullying. They readily acknowledge that there is always someone to turn to if a difficulty of any sort arises.
- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding. Students say that they feel safe at all times and parents agree. Staff and students are vigilant about the site at all times. The school's work on philosophy and ethics encourages students to think about right and wrong. This makes an extremely positive contribution to students' awareness of safety and tolerance of others.
- Attendance is broadly average but rising. Levels of persistent absence have dropped significantly over time. Attendance is carefully monitored so that any students in potentially vulnerable circumstances are quickly picked up. Exclusions have also reduced significantly over time due to the school's strong and effective systems for supporting individuals. Racist incidents and episodes of bullying are extremely rare. Students know that they are in school to learn and to

secure their futures.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The headteacher has made the raising of achievement and the pursuit of consistently high-quality teaching priorities in the school improvement plan and has continued to improve the quality of both. He has emphasised the importance of regular attendance and positive attitudes to learning as key components for success. The headteacher is very well supported by his senior team, who share his belief in, and aspirations for, the school and by its students. He has worked closely with governors to ensure a smooth transition when the new headteacher takes up post in September 2014.
- The capacity for sustained improvement is excellent. Achievement is rising, teaching is good, self-evaluation is broadly accurate and governors are working very closely with the school to ensure that its high standards are maintained and further improved. The school is very committed to supporting and enriching learning locally.
- Subject leaders have well-defined roles in developing and managing their subject areas. The recent focus on their development has led to the appointment of heads of learning to ensure that teaching skills are shared across departments in order to raise all attainment to a consistently high level. Detailed departmental development plans mirror the clear priorities in the main school plan.
- Leadership and management of the sixth form are good. The new head of sixth form has acted quickly and effectively to make his expectations of staff and students clear and to ensure that programmes of study are as effective as possible. He has enhanced the already robust pastoral systems and widened the range of subjects on offer to best prepare students for the future and to meet local needs. This includes collaboration with other vocational initiatives and local businesses. The school has successfully entered students for Cambridge for the fourth year in a row. Attainment and progress are closely monitored to provide very clear programmes of study and ensure successful follow-on in employment or higher education. As part of the process, the school has rightly emphasised the need for students to develop the study skills required in further education and has begun work to improve the transition from Key Stage 4 to Year 12.
- The range of subjects on offer provides students with excellent breadth and preparation for the next stage of their education. Through imaginative initiatives such as 'flexible curriculum' days, the school has been able to motivate students and promote highly positive attitudes to learning. The curriculum is especially strong at Key Stages 3 and 4 because of the close attention the school gives to ensuring a careful balance of academic and vocational skills that also meet the needs of the local community. The curriculum is well buttressed by the philosophy and ethics programme, which successfully links citizenship and religious education.
- Students in the sixth form and the main school have access to good-quality careers advice, both within the school and from outside, and are well prepared for the choices they will make after they leave school. The school harnesses the expertise of local and county representatives of industry and commerce well so that students can make an informed and independent decision on their future pathways.
- The promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is outstanding. It is a strength of the school because the subjects and opportunities on offer ensure that spiritual understanding is well promoted and that students have a strong sense of right and wrong. Regular visits, including abroad, enhance students' perceptions of the world around them as well as of their local area.

- Staff performance is closely and effectively managed to ensure that teaching results in good or better attainment and progress. The programme of staff development is linked closely to the school development plan. Promotion up the pay scales has been deferred when targets are not met because the school takes rigorous action where performance in the classroom is less effective than expected.
- Links with parents are very good. The school has commissioned parent surveys, which show high levels of parental satisfaction. Regular newsletters keep parents very well informed.
- In the past, the school has enjoyed appropriate levels of support from the local authority. The new academy trust is working with the local authority to contribute to school improvement in the surrounding area.
- Safeguarding procedures meet all current requirements. Staff training is regularly reviewed and updated. Several governors are trained in safer recruitment.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - Governance is a strength of the school. Governors are very committed to the school. They spoke knowledgeably to inspectors about aspects of its work and subjects in which the school is working relentlessly to raise attainment to the very highest level. They bring to their roles a wide range of experience and a deep understanding of the local area. Regular visits show governors' support for the school. Governors' attendance at parents' evenings enables them to pick up parental comments and quickly address any concerns. Governors use data well to challenge the school about results and future developments, including its precise role as an academy. They use this knowledge to contribute effectively to the school improvement plan. Visits enable governors to see where teaching is best and to assess how to provide opportunities for staff career development and progression. Teachers' performance is rigorously assessed against the *Teachers' Standards* and school improvement priorities. Governors are clear about which areas require further work. The allocation and impact of pupil premium funding is reviewed regularly to ensure that its use is continually refined and this has resulted in the detailed programmes which enable eligible students to make a very good and positive start to their time at Sheringham High School and Sixth Form Centre.

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	137621
Local authority	Norfolk
Inspection number	428930

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	786
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	160
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Gill Baker
Headteacher	Tim Roderick
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected as an academy
Telephone number	01263 822363
Fax number	01263 821413
Email address	office@sheringhamhigh.co.uk

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