

# Sprowston Community High School

Cannerby Lane, Sprowston, Norwich, NR7 8NE

## Inspection dates

10 March–22 April 2015

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Requires improvement	3
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Leadership and management		Require improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Require improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Sixth form provision		Requires improvement	3

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Standards have not risen quickly enough since the last inspection. GCSE results in 2014 show that too many students, including the most able, made insufficient progress from their starting points.
- The progress of disadvantaged students and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs has not been rapid enough to narrow the attainment gaps in English and mathematics between them and other students in school and nationally.
- The work of subject leaders has only recently led to marked improvements in the quality of teaching which has yet to be demonstrated in raised standards.
- The quality of teaching is too variable to raise the achievement for different groups of students rapidly enough. Some teachers do not yet have high enough expectations of the quality and quantity of work that students will complete.
- Where lesson activities are not matched to the needs of learners, their attitudes to learning deteriorate.
- The school's work to address under-achievement in the sixth form has not yet led to enough improvement in A level results.

### The school has the following strengths

- Effective target-setting, marking and feedback are steering improvement and accelerating students' progress. Leaders make good use of assessment information to target support for individual students.
- Senior leaders and governors are demonstrating success in driving improvements to teaching that has resulted in the faster progress of groups since September 2014.
- The school makes good provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of students, both in lessons and through other opportunities within the school day.
- The school's provision for the safety of students is good. It has effective policies in place to protect them, and strategies to tackle bullying are valued by students.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors visited 50 lessons in a range of subjects and across the three key stages. Eight joint observations were carried out with members of the school's senior leadership team.
- Inspectors also observed the school at work at other times in the school day, and saw staff working with small groups of students.
- The inspection team held meetings with four groups of students, with members of the governing body, two representatives of the local authority, the headteacher and staff.
- Inspectors considered the 176 responses received through the Parent View online survey.
- Inspectors scrutinised the school improvement plan, records relating to the quality of teaching, data relating to the attainment and progress of students, school policies and procedures, and the arrangements for safeguarding pupils.
- Inspectors analysed 75 questionnaires completed by members of staff.
- Inspectors attended an assembly and observed the work of several tutor groups.
- Two of Her Majesty's Inspectors returned to the school on 22 April to complete the inspection. They visited an additional nine lessons, scrutinised students books, analysed assessment information and held meetings with the schools' leaders.

## Inspection team

Anthony Sharpe, Lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
John Daniell	Her Majesty's Inspector
Jennifer Carpenter	Additional Inspector
Colin Daglish	Additional Inspector
Christine Mayle	Additional Inspector
Tim Bristow	Her Majesty's Inspector
Paul Brooker	Her Majesty's Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- This school is much larger than most secondary schools.
- The very large majority of the student population are White British.
- The proportion of students who are disabled, or who have special educational needs is below average.
- The proportion of pupils for whom the school receives the pupil premium is lower than the national average. This is additional government funding for students who are eligible for free school meals and those in local authority care.
- The number of students from minority ethnic backgrounds is well below average, as is the proportion who speaks English as an additional language.
- A small number of students attend alternative provision and other vocational courses that are located away from the main school site. This includes courses provided at City College, Easton College and work-related courses in beauty and construction.
- The school meets the current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for the attainment and progress of students.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching, including in the sixth form, by:
  - ensuring that teachers have high expectations of the quality of students' work and the amount they will complete
  - making sure that lesson planning caters well for the needs of individual students, and groups of students and challenges learners of different abilities.
- Improve the achievement across the school by:
  - ensuring that all teachers take responsibility for addressing weaknesses in students' writing
  - increasing the rate of progress of disadvantaged students, and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs
  - closing the gap between these students and the achievement of other students nationally
  - ensuring that the sixth form builds on better AS level results to strengthen achievement at A level.

## Inspection judgements

### The leadership and management

### require improvement

- Results in 2014 show that senior and middle leaders did not appear to have had sufficient impact on improving teaching and achievement since the last inspection. This year, the better progress of different groups of students and the strengthening of teaching, for example in the science and mathematics departments, show that while not yet good, leadership is increasingly effective.
- The headteacher and other leaders have worked well together to raise the expectations of all staff and dismiss complacency. They have balanced well the need for support and challenge, and have had to make some difficult decisions to ensure that all the team are able to rise to these expectations.
- Senior leaders and governors have an accurate view of the school's recent and current performance. Following the disappointing results in 2014, they have taken appropriate action to strengthen teaching and assessment procedures. Consequently, teachers are keeping a careful check on the progress of students so that they do not slip behind.
- Senior leaders and governors are aware of the gap between students' achievement nationally, and disadvantaged students, disabled students and those who have special educational needs in this school. Steps have been taken to strengthen the leadership of this aspect of the school's provision. Assessment data is used effectively to target intervention and support for individual students, and ensure that support is both timely and sharply focused.
- Leaders have provided teachers with effective guidance to improve their teaching. For example, the 12 features of a good lesson are expectations that are understood by all. Leaders are knowledgeable about the different strengths and weaknesses of teachers and recognise that they now have to provide more bespoke training opportunities for teachers according to their needs.
- Middle leaders adopt different approaches to developing teaching, and the impact of their leadership is variable in this respect. Effective leadership in science, the humanities, design and technology and mathematics has established consistently strong routines, for example in marking. Whereas in the creative arts, modern foreign languages and information and communication technology the leadership of teaching has had less impact in improving consistency.
- Pupil premium funding is being used with increasing impact. Recent expenditure, for example, the crucial appointment of the student and family support worker in September 2014, has resulted in the barriers to learning for these students being identified and overcome. The inclusion team is effectively challenging middle leaders and teachers to ensure that they address the specific barriers to learning of these students. Stronger relationships have been established with the parents of these students to help them to be better prepared for the next stage in their education. The gaps in attainment still remain for these students, but the progress they make is much faster this academic year.
- The school endeavours to promote equality of opportunity well. The much greater attention to the progress of different groups is aiding this, but the school recognises that there is still more to do to ensure that all groups of students achieve as well as they can.
- Good relations are a strong feature of this school community. Discrimination is tackled well by good spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision within the curriculum and in assemblies.
- The curriculum in Key Stages 3 and 4 has breadth and balance, and benefits from recent changes made by senior staff. It prepares students well for life in modern Britain through relevant topics studied in the humanities and other subjects.
- The achievement of students who attend alternative provision is monitored carefully by the school. These students attend regularly and achieve well.

- Students value the advice and careers guidance they receive throughout the school. They are aware of the alternatives on offer for further study after Year 11, and they are encouraged to explore these choices.
- The local authority has supported the school since the last inspection, to raise achievement in the sixth form. The school takes advantage of support from a range of different providers, for example the advice in mathematics is contributing to the strengthening of the faculty.
- Arrangements for safeguarding students meet statutory requirements. Policies and procedures are in place, and are regularly reviewed. Staff receive regular training on child protection, and how to spot signs of abuse.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governance is increasingly effective. Since the last inspection, governors have developed a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and of achievement. Their work in holding senior and middle leaders to account is appropriately challenging. For example, they have challenged leaders about provision in mathematics and the leadership and outcomes of disabled students and those with special educational needs, both pertinent issues. They have noted that while there have been improvements there is still more to do. They have a secure understanding of assessment data and consequently they have an accurate view of the school's performance.
  - Governors ensure that procedures to manage the performance of teachers is in place. Governors are much better at ensuring that teachers are rewarded appropriately for their performance.

## The behaviour and safety of pupils

## requires improvement

### Behaviour

- The behaviour of students requires improvement. Attitudes to learning vary according to the quality of teaching students experience. Inspectors noted examples of low-level disruption in classes where the learning failed to engage students. Students' attitudes are not consistently positive in lessons because some teachers' expectations are not high enough. Some students take less pride in the presentation of their work and are not tackled to improve it by teachers.
- While inspectors observed some boisterous behaviour during break and lunchtimes, most students behave well outside of lessons. They generally take care of the school environment.
- Teaching assistants intervene effectively during lessons to secure better attitudes to learning of students showing signs of disengagement.
- Attendance is rising and is broadly average. Punctuality is generally good because the school has policies to challenge and improve this aspect of their behaviour.
- The behaviour of students attending alternative provision away from the school site is good.

### Safety

- The school's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Systems for safeguarding meet statutory requirements. Risk assessments are in place where appropriate. There are clear routines to follow-up poor attendance and monitor students who are taken off the school roll.
- The school maintains good records of the actions taken in response to serious incidents. Policies and procedures are reviewed regularly.
- Senior managers maintain good records of students excluded from school and review them regularly. Permanent exclusions are above average, but are falling. Fixed-term exclusions are lower than average and are also improving.
- Students feel safe in school. They report that when bullying takes place, the school responds effectively. Incidents of homophobic bullying are rare, as are racist incidents. Incidents of online bullying of students

do occur but students told inspectors that staff help them to deal with it effectively.

- The large majority of parents feel that students are kept safe at school. A significant proportion of parents do not feel that the school deals effectively with bullying. However, many parents also said that they have no knowledge of such incidents and could not, therefore, express a view.
- Systems for signing-in visitors are well established and effective.
- There are suitable procedures to ensure students who attend alternative provision away from the school are kept safe.

### **The quality of teaching**

### **requires improvement**

- Teaching requires improvement because the good features of teaching are not well enough developed across the school. For example, in some subjects, teachers do not use the assessment information about students well enough to plan the next steps in their learning. Others, for example as observed in mathematics, are proving very effective at this.
- The most-able students do not make as much progress as they could. It is evident that more is expected of these students in terms of the progress that they make over time, but it is not apparent from some of their books that the work that they are set is sufficiently challenging. Some disabled students and those with special educational needs do not get the support they need in lessons because teachers do not adapt work to address their specific learning needs.
- Generally, teachers keep a much closer eye on the progress of students than they did at the time of the last inspection and have much higher expectations of what they can achieve. However, this is not always reflected in the students' books. Some teachers accept work that is not of high enough quality, nor is there enough of it in some cases. For example, the presentation of work is not as good as it should be, and students perform to a higher level for some teachers than they do for others, because more is expected of them.
- In some subjects, middle leaders do not establish the academic strengths and weaknesses of students when they join the school. Without this information they are unable to plan learning effectively or accurately assess the impact of teaching in their subjects on students' progress.
- Students are aware of their target and current grades; some are unable to explain what they must do to improve them. However, others are very clear about the next steps that they must take and are complimentary about the advice they receive from teachers both in their books and face to face.
- Teaching assistants support students effectively in most lessons. Their subject knowledge is good, and they support learners well. In one textiles lesson, a teaching assistant with a high level of subject knowledge was deployed effectively to increase the rate of progress for students as they designed and made a skirt for their coursework.

### **The achievement of pupils**

### **requires improvement**

- Students' progress in 2013 and 2014 remained significantly below expectations for the school as a whole, and across many different groups of students, including girls and boys, those from disadvantaged backgrounds, and those who are disabled or who have special educational needs. The school's detailed assessment information indicates that, although there remains variability between different groups, progress has accelerated markedly this year. Inspection evidence supports the school's view that underachievement is being successfully addressed.
- The gap widened in 2014 between the attainment in English of the school's disadvantaged students and other students nationally, to more than one GCSE grade. The gap within the school also widened to just under one grade. In mathematics the gap between disadvantaged students and other students nationally

remained approximately one GCSE grade. The gap widened to more than a grade when compared to other students in the school. The attainment of disadvantaged students in the sixth form is broadly average.

- In the last academic year, the proportion of disadvantaged students making the expected progress in English and mathematics was lower than others in the school and nationally. The current performance of disadvantaged pupils indicates that this gap is narrowing. Approximately 54% of disadvantaged students are expected to gain five higher-grade GCSEs including English and mathematics, compared to 70% of their peers. While a gap still remains, this would represent a marked rise in standards for disadvantaged students.
- The progress of the most-able students is not as rapid as it could be and consequently the proportion that gained the higher grades A and A\* in their English and mathematics GCSE results was below average in 2014. The school's assessment information paints a much more positive picture for 2015.
- The school's own data raises concerns about the current progress of students who are disabled, or who have special educational needs. School leaders acknowledge that some students' needs are not being met in a number of lessons because, too often, teachers are unaware of students' overarching individual needs and how to support these. For example, where literacy skills are a barrier to learning in a range of subjects, teachers do not appear to take a common approach to addressing them with the student so that they are overcome.
- Students' progress over time is accelerating. Observations during the inspection found that in nearly all lessons it was good or required improvement.
- Early entries in GCSE English examinations have proved to be ineffective. School leaders decided to stop entering students early for examinations following a scrutiny of the results.
- Most students who attend alternative provision for part of the week make good progress.

### **The sixth form provision**

### **requires improvement**

- The proportion of students achieving A\* to B grades in A Level examinations is significantly below average. The proportion of Year 12 students attaining A\* to B grades at AS Level was also low but improved in 2014. Currently, attainment at AS level is rising, shown by the average point scores attained by students, and the proportion of them achieving grades A\* to E, as the school changes its entry criteria for courses.
- Progress in the sixth form declined to significantly below average in 2014. In other years it has been average. Current progress made by sixth form students is improving. The head of sixth form has introduced systems to track their academic progress more closely, and this is having a positive impact.
- Teaching over time in the sixth form requires improvement. In some subjects, there is limited interaction between teacher and students, and between students and their peers. This hampers the development of new skills and knowledge. In some lessons there was a lack of pace, due to a lack of challenge for learners.
- In the past, sixth form curriculum has not been fully appropriate for students. This has resulted in a significant proportion of students not continuing with their studies in Year 13. However, retention rates are starting to improve following changes to the curriculum and students value the guidance given regarding entry to the sixth form.
- The school has strengthened the leadership capacity in the sixth form. The recently appointed head of sixth form has a vision for improvement which is being supported and facilitated by senior leaders.

- Teachers' A level subject knowledge is good. In one Year 12 graphics lesson, the teacher's proficiency in industrial software helped students to progress well in their design work.
- Behaviour in the sixth form is good. Students are encouraged to be role models for the rest of the school. Students are clear on strategies they must take to ensure their own safety as young adults. They receive detailed information on child sexual exploitation, grooming and abusive relationships. Attendance in the sixth form is now tracked closely and is rising.



## 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>	121162
<b>Local authority</b>	Norfolk
<b>Inspection number</b>	453578

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>	1371
<b>Of which, number on roll in sixth form</b>	196
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Sally Porter
<b>Headteacher</b>	Andrew John
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	20 March 2013
<b>Telephone number</b>	01603 485266
<b>Fax number</b>	N/A
<b>Email address</b>	office@sprowstonhigh.org

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2015

