

Ofsted  
Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk  
[www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)



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Mr Aron Whiles  
Headteacher  
Broadland High School  
Tunstead Road  
Hoveton  
Norwich  
Norfolk  
NR12 8QN

Dear Mr Whiles

### **Short inspection of Broadland High School**

Following my visit to the school on 27 April 2016 with Jacqueline Thornalley, Ofsted Inspector, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in November 2011.

### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. They provide pupils with good teaching, keep them safe and involve them fully in school life. Their impact is also demonstrated in the overall standards achieved by pupils which are consistently above those found nationally, and by the large proportions of pupils making and exceeding expected progress in English and mathematics. Significantly, this includes your most disadvantaged pupils who also make good progress.

Recent changes to the school's leadership have not adversely affected the school's performance. Senior leaders who have stepped up to lead the school until you took up your post this term have done a good job. They have looked after the welfare of pupils and staff, and maintained the focus on ensuring that pupils achieve what they are capable of attaining. Your arrival has been welcomed by pupils and staff. You acknowledge that with the full support of staff and governors, you are ideally placed to secure further improvements over the next few years, and make the school an outstanding one.

Pupils who met with us enthused about the school. When asked what they would like to see changed they said, 'not much', because they feel it provides them with a good education. They feel that teachers across all subjects could provide them with better-quality feedback about the quality of their work and what they need to do to improve it.

Pupils enjoy school and are proud to be part of it. They say that its small size means that everyone knows each other well, friendships are easily forged and staff are always approachable and caring. They value the additional support provided by staff, saying teachers are 'always there' to help and look after them.

Pupils of all abilities and interests are given extensive opportunities to contribute to the work of the school. They readily volunteer as sports leaders, librarians, counsellors and pupil listeners, and eagerly accept positions as team captains, prefects and members of the school parliament. Older pupils wear their badges with pride, especially the coveted star awards presented for winning multiple commendations. They are responding positively to your recent request to meet your high expectations and dress smartly in school uniform.

We found that pupils behave well, show good manners and conduct themselves sensibly and maturely around school. In lessons, they are respectful to staff and one another, and are able to work sociably and productively in small groups. At breaks and lunchtimes, they gather in friendship groups to eat and talk together, which contributes to the school's calm and orderly setting.

Senior leaders and governors know the school well. They have identified what works and what needs improving. Improvement plans rightly prioritise the main areas for further development, and identify who is responsible for making these improvements within the given timescales. You acknowledge that results in science fall well short of those achieved in other core subjects, and have taken steps to improve this. Older pupils commented favourably on the improved teaching they are now receiving in science, which is helping them to catch up.

At the time of the last inspection, school leaders were asked to improve the overall quality of teaching. This has been achieved through regular training, systematic lesson monitoring and some tough decisions made when the quality has dipped below what is expected. Your English department is leading the way, followed closely by mathematics in developing consistent approaches to teaching and learning that help to raise achievement. This is also having a knock-on effect in other subjects because pupils are applying their literacy and numeracy skills with increased confidence.

Your own monitoring reveals that some variability in teaching remains, and that more needs to be done to gain greater consistency. It also shows that there is outstanding teaching in parts of the school, but this is not widespread across all subjects.

## **Safeguarding is effective.**

The staff vetting record known as the single central record is maintained meticulously. Important checks are made of the backgrounds of all adults working in or visiting the school. Child protection procedures are firmly in place and managed effectively, including training and regular updates to keep staff informed of their duty to protect pupils. Time in assembly and tutorials is used effectively to teach pupils how to keep safe, and raise their awareness of the risks involved in using social media and the internet. All the parents and carers who responded by text during the inspection feel that school is a safe place to be for their children.

## **Inspection findings**

- The 30 staff who completed the inspection questionnaire were overwhelmingly positive about the actions of leaders and managers, and said they enjoy working in the school. Similarly, most of the 56 parents and carers who also shared their views praised the work of the school, commenting favourably on the care and attention paid when pupils join in Year 7, and the extra support provided by pastoral staff.
- Standards are consistently high. The proportion of pupils achieving at least five GCSEs at grade A\* to C including English and mathematics has been above average for the past three years. Based on the below-average starting points of last year's Year 11 pupils, this represents remarkable progress.
- Pupils make exceptional progress in English and mathematics. In English, the proportions of pupils making or exceeding expected progress from entry to exit from the school have increased year on year and are currently very high. There is a similar rising trend in mathematics but this slowed in 2015, partly because not enough attention was paid to ensuring that a small proportion of disadvantaged pupils made sufficient progress. To prevent this from happening again, your senior leaders have tightened their procedures to monitor pupils' progress.
- Results show that actions to narrow the gaps in the achievement of disadvantaged pupils compared with others in the school are working. Whole-school strategies to raise achievement, coupled with additional support and care tailored to the individual needs of these pupils have enabled them to progress well and attain highly in English. Similar improvements are also evident in mathematics where gaps are closing, but at a slower rate.
- The small minority of pupils who have special educational needs or disability, particularly those with a statement or education, health and care plan make good progress because the support provided for them is matched to their particular need and their progress and welfare are routinely reviewed. Those without a statement or plan do not progress as well as others. This is partly because some pupils with long-standing health or medical issues miss some of their schooling, and also because the support provided for them is not thoroughly evaluated to gauge its full impact on their progress and welfare.

- In science, some weak teaching has limited the overall achievement of pupils of all abilities. Newly appointed staff have improved this situation, but further scope exists to make teaching much more consistent. The good teaching observed in English and mathematics does not extend into science. For example, in mathematics, teachers use their specialist knowledge and understanding of pupils' prior learning to set challenging, practical tasks that stimulate and engage pupils. In English, high expectations and tight timescales encourage pupils to work swiftly to complete tasks and share their findings with others. In science, too much teaching does not use time productively, capture pupils' interest or generate enough scientific discussion. English classrooms have wall displays and resources to stimulate pupils' interest. This rich, learning environment is not replicated in science laboratories.
- Assessment procedures in key stage 4 are firmly established and show that, currently, pupils are making good progress. You are predicting further improvement in overall results this year. Procedures in key stage 3 are new and not firmly embedded. You have replaced level descriptors with your own criteria based on the curriculum taught in each year. This suitable approach needs more time to become established, demonstrate its accuracy and ensure that pupils and parents understand it fully.
- Data shows that leaders of some foundation subjects are not doing enough to raise achievement and ensure that pupils achieve as well as they do in other subjects. Discussions with your senior leaders confirmed that targeted work is under way to improve this.
- The large majority of pupils attend school regularly, but this is undermined by the frequent absence of a small minority of pupils, some of whom are disadvantaged pupils. Your pastoral staff strive to improve this by routinely monitoring attendance and contacting the parents and carers of absent pupils. This is leading to improvement: data shows a rising trend in attendance over the last three years.
- Observations of pupils in and out of lessons and discussions with them confirmed that the vast majority behave well. Pupils say that they feel safe, free from bullying and that behaviour is usually good. However, they also feel that a very small minority spoil it for others by messing about in lessons, and not all teachers manage this as well as they should do. Prefects play an important role in supervising behaviour outside lessons but want to feel backed up by senior staff when they record incidents of poor behaviour at breaks and lunchtimes.
- Pupils are provided with a broad choice of GCSE subjects and a wide range of enrichment opportunities, especially in sport and the arts. Daily silent reading in tutorials and regular library visits ensure that reading has a high profile. When asked, almost all the older pupils we met could describe the book they were currently reading for pleasure. All pupils study GCSE religious education, enabling them to learn about different faiths, cultures and beliefs, gain a general understanding of fundamental British values and develop their spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness.

- Governors have reorganised their work to enhance their monitoring of the school's performance, support and challenge you and your staff, and take a lead role in securing the strategic development of the school as it considers converting to an academy. Staff at all levels are held increasingly accountable. Governors oversee the management of teachers' performance so that only those contributing towards the school's improvement move up the salary scale.
- You, your staff and governors are all committed to making further improvements. Good relations with the local authority have ensured that training and development are targeted towards those staff who need it most, and that the good practice within the school is shared with other local schools.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- improvements being made in science to the quality of teaching and learning and subject leadership are accelerated to enable pupils to achieve equally as well as they do in other core subjects
- teaching becomes consistently good across the school, and more outstanding teaching is spread throughout all subjects.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Norfolk. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

John Mitcheson  
**Her Majesty's Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

During the inspection, we met with you, your senior and some middle leaders, the chair and three other members of the governing body, two groups of pupils and a representative of the local authority. Together with senior leaders, we observed a range of lessons to see pupils at work. We reviewed school documents about self-evaluation and development planning, safeguarding including the single central record, and attendance and behaviour records. We also considered the responses from parents and staff.